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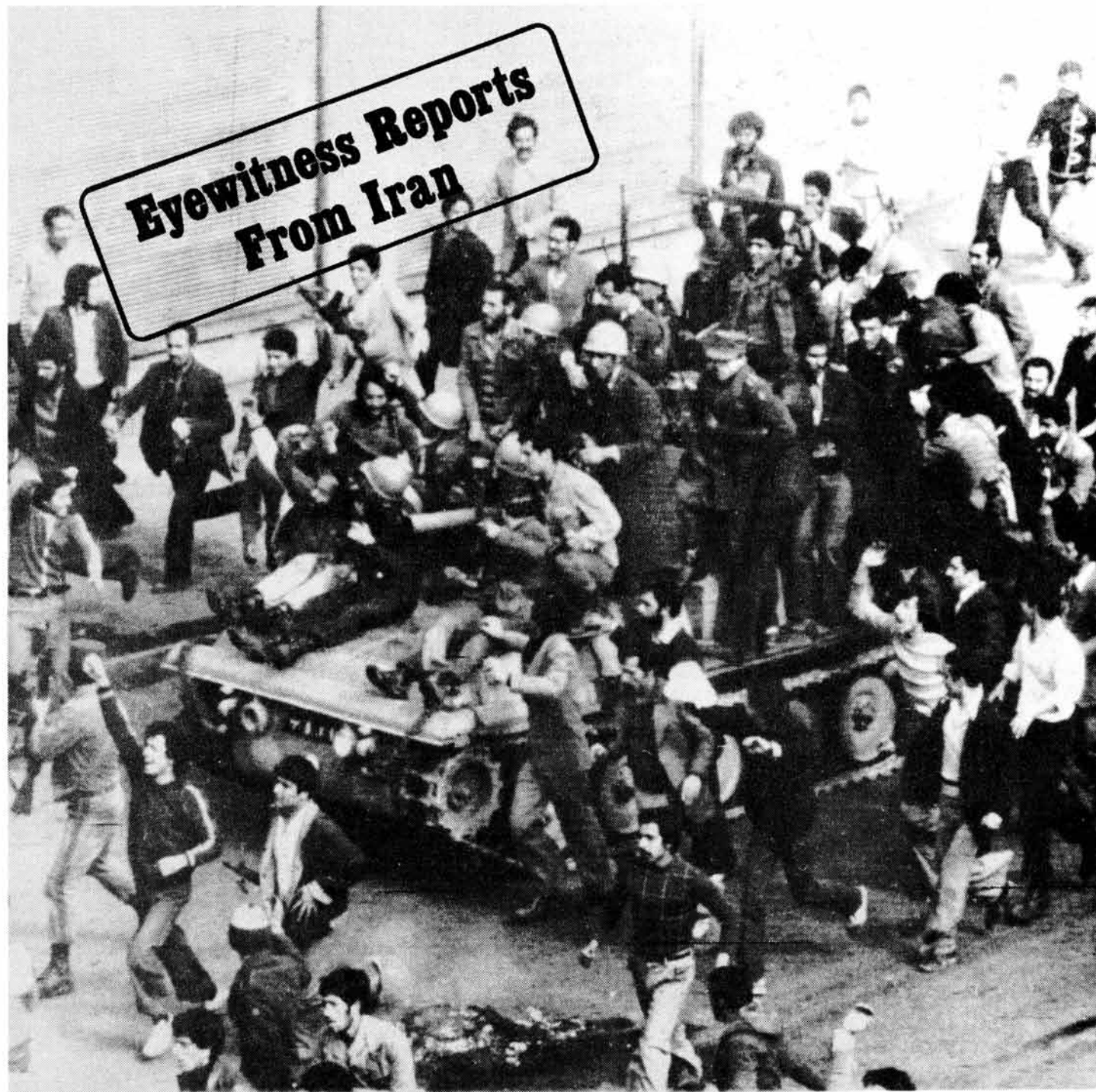
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HANDS OFF VIETNAM!

NEWS ANALYSIS

Hands Off Vietnam!

By Mary-Alice Waters

The invasion of Vietnam by troops of the People's Republic of China is the bitter fruit of a counterrevolutionary deal between U.S. imperialism and the Stalinist Peking bureaucracy. It is a contribution by the Chinese regime to Washington's escalating campaign against the Vietnamese revolution.

The U.S. government was clearly not surprised by the invasion. To the contrary, it had its response fully prepared when Chinese troops crossed the Vietnam border February 17.

"We call for the immediate withdrawal of Vietnamese troops from Cambodia and Chinese troops from Vietnam," said the official Carter administration spokesperson, linking the two from the outset.

An unnamed senior U.S. official openly suggested, "it was possible that Chinese troops might remain in Vietnam to be used in exchange for a withdrawal of Vietnamese forces now in Cambodia."

Chinese Vice-premier Teng Hsiao-p'ing had publicly raised the possibility of an attack on Vietnam during his week-long U.S. visit last month to firm up ties with the American capitalists. He told reporters that Vietnam ought to be "punished" and "taught some necessary lessons" in retaliation for its military support to Kampuchean insurgents who toppled the Pol Pot regime in January.

Washington's attempt to strike a pose of self-righteous "evenhandedness" toward recent events in Indochina is meant entirely for public consumption around the world. With the Peking bureaucracy desperately committed to massive trade and technological help from imperialism, it is unthinkable that it would launch a major military operation without first seeking assurances that it would not be read by Washington as inimical to imperialist interests.

The Carter administration knew of China's intentions and assured Teng last month that the operation would in no way sabotage the anticipated profitable trade. To the contrary, Teng got the message loud and clear that—off the record, of course—U.S. officials saw positive sides to the assault.

To reveal the U.S. government's actual attitude toward the Chinese invasion, however, just compare its calm reaction in recent days to the hysterical response in January to the war in Kampuchea. The U.S. government stridently condemned Hanoi for aiding the Kampuchean insur-

gents and declared its refusal to even discuss normalizing relations with Vietnam until all troops were withdrawn.

In stark contrast, on the very day that the Chinese invasion first hit the headlines, there were prominent stories on the same pages reporting Treasury Secretary Michael Blumenthal's visit this week to China aimed at nailing down large-scale trade deals.

Business as usual. Could the signals be any clearer?

Moscow's reaction to the invasion was initially cautious. It issued a statement demanding "an end to the aggression" and pledged to consult with Hanoi on the matter.

The revolutionary government in Cuba condemned the reactionary Chinese move, saying, "For Vietnam, we are ready to shed even our own blood," and pointed to the Washington-Peking axis.

Scope of Invasion

According to most news reports, Chinese troops appeared to have stopped at 5 to 7 miles inside the Vietnamese border, along most of its 480-mile stretch, by the second day of the invasion. A reported 100,000 Chinese troops were involved—backed up by tanks, artillery, fighter planes, and more support troops on the Chinese side of the border.

The Vietnamese government reported "terrible damage" and many civilian casualties, but said that it had inflicted several hundred casualties on the Chinese army and stopped its advance.

The statement released by Peking justifying the invasion brazenly called it a "counterattack to defend the country's borders."

There is a danger that the rightist Thai military dictatorship will exploit the situation to increase its military support to remnants of Pol Pot's army still fighting along the Thai-Kampuchean border.

The Chinese invasion also serves to encourage rightist guerrillas fighting the Pathet Lao government in Laos.

Behind China's Invasion

As the "News Analysis" in last week's issue explained, revolutionary developments in southern Vietnam over the past year and a resulting intensification of the "imperialist-orchestrated" campaign against the Vietnamese revolution provides the necessary context for understanding the Chinese government's escalating hostility toward Vietnam.

"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. . . .

"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."

China & Vietnam: Four Stages

Let's take a closer look at four stages in Peking's growing antagonism toward the Vietnamese revolution.

1. *During the Vietnam War.* The bureaucratic castes in both Moscow and Peking refused to supply adequate military assistance to Vietnam during its war to drive out the U.S. imperialists and the landlord-capitalist regime in Saigon (now Ho Chi Minh City).

This counterrevolutionary stinginess in the face of massive U.S. bombardment of Vietnam, which stemmed from the Stalinists' desire to deal with imperialism at the expense of the Indochinese struggle, was condemned by the Fourth International around the world.

In contrast to these policies of Peking and Moscow, the revolutionary government in Cuba raised the banner "Create two, three, many Vietnams!"

The low-point in the wartime Stalinist betrayal of the Vietnamese revolution came in 1972, when first Mao and then Brezhnev welcomed Nixon to Peking and Moscow at the height of U.S. bombing of North Vietnam, and the mining of Hai-phong harbor.

Despite the willingness of Moscow and Peking to stab Vietnam in the back to get imperialist help to build "socialism in one country," the combined power of the Vietnamese fighters and the antiwar movement in the United States and elsewhere nonetheless dealt a stunning blow to Washington's plans in Indochina.

In fact, it was from this position of weakness that the U.S. ruling class made a tactical shift away from its Cold War policies and turned to Moscow and Peking for help in containing the revolution. Washington's goal was to salvage some presence for capitalism in Indochina.

2. *Following the 1975 defeat of the U.S.-backed Saigon regime.* The Vietnamese Stalinists in Hanoi hoped to follow in the footsteps of Peking and Moscow by achieving their own "peaceful coexistence" with Washington. U.S. imperialism, however, refused even to establish diplomatic relations and imposed a tight economic blockade.

In addition, Washington rejected Vietnam's modest demand for \$4.75 billion in economic aid to repair the damage from nearly ten years of barbaric bombing that pockmarked the countryside, ruined rice paddies, defoliated forests, and levelled major sections of Hanoi and other cities.

Imperialism's hostility toward Vietnam stiffened following the popular mobilizations in 1976 and 1977, after the decision had been made to reunify the country.

Meanwhile, however, plans for the consummation of a Washington-Peking deal moved ahead. The Peking Stalinists looked for every opportunity to prove their reliability to the imperialists. A growing antagonism toward Vietnam was part of the bargain.

3. *The overturn of capitalism in southern Vietnam last year.* Faced with continuing imperialist pressure, internal economic sabotage by the remaining commercial capitalists in the south, and other pressing economic problems, the Vietnamese government last spring mobilized the urban population in Ho Chi Minh City and elsewhere to expropriate some 30,000 remaining private businesses.

These sweeping anticapitalist measures marked the consolidation of the entire country under a single planned economy—a major advance for the Indochinese revolution.

Washington, fearing that this revolutionary impulse could set the masses of Kampuchea, Thailand, and other Southeast Asian countries in motion, responded by tightening the screws on Vietnam even further. Peking's interest in promoting stability, not class struggle on China's borders, led it to adopt a parallel stance of deepening hostility to the Vietnamese regime.

With the eager assistance of the Chinese Stalinists, the imperialists launched an international hue and cry over the Vietnamese "boat people."

The majority of these refugees were comprised of expropriated merchants, traders, and their families. Using the fact that most of the former merchants were of Chinese national origin, Peking blasted the anticapitalist measures in Vietnam as racist, anti-Chinese moves. It urged the Chinese to flee Vietnam, raising the spectre of pogroms.

The hypocrisy of this combined Washington-Peking propaganda offensive was soon exposed by the refusal of the imperialist powers to accept any substantial numbers of the refugees, whom the Vietnamese government freely allowed to emigrate.

While calling on Chinese to flee Vietnam, Peking closed its own border to them in July!

The Peking bureaucracy made a further display to Washington last year by withdrawing its ambassador from Vietnam and cutting off economic aid, thereby reinforcing the imperialist embargo.

China also accelerated its troop build-up along the Vietnamese border in the months following the anticapitalist measures there. The first reports of border clashes date from these belligerent moves.

In November 1978, in response to these threats, Vietnam signed a mutual assistance pact with the Soviet Union.

There is a bitter irony to the Chinese regime's treacherous betrayal of Vietnam. It closely parallels the Kremlin's counterrevolutionary treatment of China some twenty years ago, when Khrushchev abruptly withdrew technicians and economic aid and refused to provide China with nuclear defense against a tightening imperialist military encirclement at that time.

4. *The toppling of Pol Pot.* The fourth stage, culminating in the Teng leadership's invasion, began in December and January, when Vietnamese forces aided insurgent Kampuchean forces in bringing down the tyrannical Pol Pot government in Kampuchea.

The Vietnamese rulers threw major military forces into the drive against Pol Pot's regime because they felt the tightening encirclement and the potential for eventual military probes by imperialism. With China moving closer into the embrace of Washington and making threatening moves on Vietnam's northern frontier, and with Pol Pot's army putting pressure on another of Vietnam's borders, Hanoi evidently felt the need to act quickly. It sought to establish a government in Kampuchea that would be less hell-bent on making a bloc against Vietnam with imperialism and its right-wing Asian vassals such as the Thai regime.

The Chinese government's strategic commitment to its drive for modernization through peaceful coexistence with American imperialism precludes any desire by Peking to become embroiled in an ex-

tended border war with Hanoi that would drain China's resources, increase instability throughout the area, and increase pressure on the Kremlin to come to Vietnam's assistance.

But in any war, elements of misjudgment and miscalculation can accelerate beyond the control of any one of the participants.

Most dangerous of all is the cover that China's invasion provides for Washington's maneuvers to advance imperialism's strategic goal of ultimately rolling back the social conquests of the Indochinese revolution.

Unlike Washington, Peking's aim in Southeast Asia is not to restore capitalism in Vietnam or provide an opening for a massive new influx of imperialist troops into the area. Either of these would directly threaten China. Peking's aim is to preserve stability on its borders to facilitate its dealings with imperialism.

Whatever the Stalinists' aims, however, their actions in Indochina in fact contribute to the goals of imperialism and pose a danger to the Chinese workers state, as well as to Vietnam.

Defenders of the Chinese and Indochinese revolutions must demand that Peking immediately and unconditionally withdraw its troops from Vietnam, and end its counterrevolutionary complicity with Washington's drive to roll back the revolution in Southeast Asia.

We must reject Carter's blackmail, linking Chinese withdrawal from Vietnam with withdrawal of Vietnamese military support to the new Kampuchean government.

Our demands must be:

Hands off Vietnam!

Chinese troops out now!

Stop the imperialist campaign against the Vietnamese revolution!

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The Insurrection in Tehran

[The following account of the February 9-12 insurrection in Tehran is based on the combined reports of a team of Trotskyist journalists on the scene. These were Brian Grogan of the British weekly *Socialist Challenge*; F. Eteffame of *Informations Ouvrières* and Michel Rovere of *Rouge*, both French newsweeklies; and Cindy Jaquith of the American weekly the *Militant*.]

* * *

TEHRAN—Sunday, February 11, saw the culmination of the insurrection in Iran. An uprising of unprecedented proportions overthrew the government of the Pahlavi monarchy.

The Iranian armed forces—with more personnel and weapons than those of British imperialism—crumbled in the face of popular defiance and a soldiers' rebellion.

The death knell of the shah's regime began when the army found itself incapable of keeping exiled religious leader Ayatollah Khomeini out of the country. The February 1 arrival of Khomeini, who is a symbol of the nationalist struggle here, accelerated the upsurge.

Workers had already been on a general strike for nearly 100 days.

Peasants had seized farm machinery, livestock, and some land.

The police stations were vacated in the villages.

After Khomeini's arrival cities such as the highly industrialized Isfahan were taken over by the population.

Airmen Join Protest

The event that directly led to the insurrection in Tehran was the February 8 demonstration of more than 1 million called by Khomeini to support Mehdi Bazargan, his appointed prime minister in the new provisional government.

Hundreds of airmen from the Doshan Tappeh air base marched in uniform in their own contingents. The day before, the airmen had gone to Khomeini's headquarters to declare their allegiance to his provisional government.

In the face of continued protests by the airmen and rapidly crumbling discipline on the air base, the elite troops of the Royal Guard were sent to attack Doshan Tappeh February 9 and prevent the airmen's example from spreading.

The battle of Doshan Tappeh began what developed into a nationwide uprising. Backed by the solidarity of the Tehran people, the airmen crushed the Royal Guard invasion.

While the airmen had been in the forefront of the opposition in the armed forces, the next three days revealed that the entire army was disintegrating. The horror of shooting one's brothers and sisters, the powerful appeal of the mammoth demonstrations against the shah, and the nationwide general strike had all had an impact on the soldiers.

Before this insurrection there was an element of doubt about what would happen when the army faced a real test. What in fact took place over the next three days was the army's collapse, which led to the Iranian people's victory over the monarchy.

Invasion by Royal Guard

At midnight on February 9, the silence of the curfew in southeast Tehran was suddenly broken by cries of "*Allahu akbar!*"

This slogan, which means "God is great," has become the battle cry of the Iranian people. It is both an expression of their defiance of the shah and a warning cry.

This time the shouts of "*Allahu akbar*" were coming from Doshan Tappeh air base. The airmen were appealing to everyone living in the surrounding area to help repel the Royal Guard invasion.

The air base had been alerted that guardsmen were rolling down from north of Tehran. The airmen began to organize defense. The ranks elected new officers to lead the battle. Arms were distributed.

As the cries for help reached residents of the area, there was a massive display of revolutionary solidarity.

Thousands poured out of their homes in defiance of the curfew and rushed to the air base. There they helped the airmen construct barricades.

Others massed in the streets to surround the guards from behind.

The battle lasted all night. Even when ground troops were sent in, they failed to reinforce the guards. The airmen and civilians captured some tanks.

Many guards were killed. Sixty-three people—the majority from the Royal Guards—died altogether.

Weapons Issued

By Saturday, February 10, the airmen had taken control of the area around the base.

They issued weapons to civilians. Anyone with an identification card showing they had served in the armed forces got a weapon.

Thousands began digging trenches and building barricades.

People took positions on rooftops.

By this time, the rest of the city had begun to mobilize. Cars raced up and down the streets honking their horns to spread the word.

People waved strips of white cloth—a symbol that medical supplies were needed. Signs were posted everywhere describing the types of blood and serum needed for the wounded.

Young people who had served as marshals in the recent demonstrations began organizing the streets. They blocked off some roads so that ambulances and cars of supporters could get to their destinations. Other streets were closed to protect people from gunfire. Everyone was urged to go to the hospitals with supplies.

We were in Ferdowsi Square at 1 p.m. Hundreds of people had gathered. Cars rushed back and forth with news of the battle going on about a mile away.

All of a sudden, there were cheers. A motorcycle sped by carrying a soldier who



Insurgents celebrate capture of munitions warehouse.

had come over to the side of the people.

He raised his machine gun in the air and gave a victory sign to the crowd. A few minutes later, another soldier rode past.

The entire city was soon in motion.

In a desperate move, the military authorities announced at 2 p.m. that the curfew would begin at 4:30 that afternoon. They hoped to isolate the airmen by driving the civilian population from the streets.

Curfew Defied

In a working-class neighborhood of southern Tehran, the immediate reaction was to defy the curfew.

But then there was an appeal from religious oppositionist Ayatollah Taleghani for people to return home and for the army to go back to the barracks. Many people started to get off the streets.

Shortly before 4:30, however, Khomeini called on the people to defy the curfew and protect the airmen. Immediately in both working-class areas and petty-bourgeois and wealthier sections of the city, the people massed in the streets.

They started fires in the middle of the streets and erected barricades. Tires were thrown in the flames to create a thick smoke that diffused tear gas and blocked the view of army helicopters.

In southern Tehran, the most combative area of the city, practically the whole population demonstrated in the streets. Huge barricades were built with cars and sandbags.

The army stood paralyzed. There were only scattered attempts by the Royal Guards to force people to obey the curfew.

In reality, the army had collapsed by Saturday evening. The government evacuated troops to areas outside the city because it was afraid to send its soldiers to confront the people.

That night, people began occupying police stations, taking weapons and files. On Shah Reza Avenue the trees and sidewalks were strewn with police reports and documents that had been thrown out the windows of a police station.

Although there was resistance from some cops, most of the police had long since gone into hiding.

On the western outskirts of the city, huge barricades were erected on the highways to Karaj, a town about forty kilometers away. This was to prevent other troops from invading Tehran.

And in Karaj, thousands of people surrounded the army base to prevent any troop movements.

Sunday Morning

On Sunday morning, masses of people poured onto army bases and into police stations in Tehran.

Royal Guards shot demonstrators at some locations, but most of the bases were deserted.

People seized anything they could find:

Revolt Sweeps Iranian Provinces

TEHRAN, Feb. 13—As word of the insurrection here spread throughout the country, the revolutionary forces in other provinces began mobilizing.

At first there were solidarity demonstrations in other cities. Then the people began to march on police stations and army garrisons.

In contrast to the situation in Tehran, resistance was greater on the part of the armed forces and the police. The masses in the other provinces generally did not have access to weapons. As a result, casualties among the revolutionary forces were proportionally higher.

In Tabriz, the center of the oppressed Azerbaijani nationality, an estimated 500 people were killed or injured before the military was defeated.

According to *Kayhan International*, thousands of people—apparently unarmed—marched on a police station February 11, demanding that the cops come over to the people's side. The police answered with tear gas and then with army troops.

The demonstrators dispersed and then returned fearlessly in the traditional white burial robes to take on the

police and army bare-handed.

Hundreds were gunned down from rooftops and by army tanks.

The police were able to escape with their secret files, but the masses eventually took over the city.

In Shiraz, security forces battled thousands for six hours February 11 before conceding defeat. Forty-four people died.

Armed only with Molotov cocktails, the crowds attacked police stations and arrested the cops.

Twenty-six died in Shah-e-rey. As in Tabriz and Shiraz, the people first urged the police to surrender and avoid bloodshed. But when the cops resisted, the gendarmeries were taken over.

In Gorgan, the scene of brutal shootings by the army in recent weeks, masses opened up the city prison and freed the prisoners in the course of taking control of their city.

Five to six hundred prisoners were also released during the battle to take over Hamadan.

And in Rasht, demonstrators seized the SAVAK headquarters. The six SAVAK agents all were killed.

machine guns, bayonets, helmets, walkie-talkies. They drove army trucks and tanks off the bases and into the streets.

At 10 a.m. Sunday morning at Ferdowsi Square, large groups of people—some with knives or clubs, some waving white strips of cloth—marched toward Fowfieh Square, near Doshan Tappeh air base.

The atmosphere was less tense now. People felt that victory was at hand.

At 12:30 p.m. there was an explosion of joy: "The radio has just announced that it is on the side of the people," someone told us. (Both the radio and television had been under military control.)

At 2 p.m., the radio announced that the army high command stated that it would no longer resist the people.

At many intersections there were hundreds of people with arms: rebel soldiers, airmen still wearing their blue uniforms, youth in green U.S. army jackets.

Several blocks from one of these intersections, a battle was still raging. Ambulances rushed back and forth. People were trying to take over a military police station.

These takeovers were spontaneous. While some members of two urban guerrilla groups, Fedayeen and Mujahadeen, participated, the decisive factors were the involvement of masses of people and the inability of the military to effectively resist. There was no real leadership or organization of the insurrection.

Other strategic buildings and symbols of

the monarchy fell—the general post office, SAVAK headquarters, the Gholestan Palace, where the shah held state ceremonies.

Prisoners Freed

Demonstrators stormed the walls of Qasr Prison where 3,000 political prisoners were held. All the prisoners were quickly brought out and taken to homes.

People marched on the Israeli embassy, a particularly hated symbol of imperialism. Guards and diplomatic personnel had already left.

Inside, people searched for files. They did retrieve some documents in English, although many had already been taken by Israeli authorities.

A banner was stretched across the embassy: "Down with Israel; victory to the Palestinians." The building was renamed "PLO embassy."

Meanwhile, at Tehran University, masses of students gathered. One team of women built barricades.

Someone had made a mock report card for the shah, giving him an F for human rights and an A-plus for stupidity. The card said: "Since the shah's father is not here to sign this report card, Jimmy Carter has signed it for him."

The celebration went on all afternoon. V signs were waved from cars, houses, and from the sidewalks.

Many cars and trucks passed by with the occupants waving their captured weapons. Army trucks, sometimes filled with

100 people, many of them armed, drove past.

There was a parade of tanks, covered with people, including some soldiers, down the main streets. The soldiers grinned and waved pictures of Khomeini.

A bus full of sailors went by, with their fists in the air.

One group of soldiers joined the celebration in front of the army hospital. We interviewed them. At first they were suspicious because we were foreigners. But when we explained we were against Carter and for the revolution, they opened up.

"We are very happy to be with the people," one soldier said with relief.

"I can't express my happiness," said another. "Tell the American people the truth."

Give Up Arms?

At 4 p.m., back at Ferdowsi Square, some mullahs were addressing people from trucks. They urged people to turn in their arms to religious authorities.

Earlier in the day, some mullahs had gone to an arms factory in an attempt to stop people from carrying out weapons.

People did not heed them. They held on to their arms.

At 8 p.m. Sunday night we turned on the television. The television workers who went on strike four months ago to protest military censorship had reclaimed the station.

"Good evening. This is the picture of the revolution," the announcer began. He urged people to come down to the station to protect it from possible attack.

"We want to help the nation get injured people to the hospitals," he explained.

The latest news was reported. Javad Saeed, head of the Majlis (the shah's fake parliament), had resigned, and the Majlis was dissolved. The announcer said there was an unconfirmed report that Bakhtiar had also resigned.

"He should have resigned earlier," the announcer commented, "then we would have had fewer martyrs."

Kavons Hematianpour

TEHRAN—Kavons Hematianpour, a twenty-year-old Trotskyist, was killed here by Royal Guards during the insurrection.

He was shot in the back on February 11 during the mass raid on the Eshratbad Barracks.

Hematianpour was a student at the Melli University. He belonged to a group in Iran that has declared its support for the Fourth International.

This group has now fused with other Trotskyist forces here to build the Socialist Workers Party.



One of 11,000 prisoners who broke out of Qasr jail.

Mehdi Bazargan, the prime minister appointed by Khomeini, then made a televised speech.

"The joint chiefs of staff support us," Bazargan claimed. He urged people not to take over any more military bases.

"Do not surround the headquarters of the joint chiefs of staff," he insisted. "Don't let disrupters damage anything."

The main theme of his speech was "have patience": rely on his government and the "good faith" of the generals.

But outside in the streets, the people were relying on themselves. Battles were still raging at one officer training base.

The television announcer appealed for people to go there to aid the freedom fighters.

Revolutionary TV

Other appeals were made through the TV, which had become sort of an organizer in the situation. The electrical workers asked people to use less electricity so there would be adequate power for the hospitals, which were still receiving the wounded.

The firefighters called in to warn that the officers' training base, which had fallen to the people, was on fire and the flames could spread to the surrounding

residential area. The firefighters asked for aid as well.

On Monday morning, February 12, 3,500 prisoners from Ghezel Hesar Prison and thousands from Evin Prison were released.

Many of the prisoners from Evin had been severely tortured. One had had his tongue cut out and another was paralyzed.

A final bastion of the old regime, the Saltatnad Abad complex—which included the central SAVAK headquarters, garrison of the royal guard, and a number of jails—fell.

Four of the top generals were killed, and many others captured.

In its dying breath, the monarchy killed more than 1,000 people in Tehran and the other cities throughout Iran that followed the example.

The great mass insurrectionary uprising of Tehran, although it broke out in a spontaneous way, climaxed a tremendous mass upsurge that toppled the Pahlavi monarchy and has now opened a new stage in the Iranian revolution.

We give the last words of this episode to one Iranian worker with whom we spoke:

"Not even the Agha [referring to Khomeini] could have foreseen such great things three days ago." he told us. □

Masses Bring Murderers to Justice

TEHRAN, Feb. 13—In the wake of the overthrow of the shah's monarchy, the Iranian people are bringing the crimes of his bloodstained regime before the world.

Many of the most hated figures in the monarchy were captured by groups of armed insurgents before they could escape from the country. Those arrested included former Prime Minister Shahpur Bakhtiar; Special Forces Commander Manuchehr Khosrowdad, a fierce shah loyalist; the martial law administrators in Tehran and Isfahan; and numerous other military officials.

In a dramatic exposé of their crimes, some of the criminals have been brought before television cameras to answer for their deeds. Gen. Nematollah Nassiri, hated head of SAVAK, the shah's secret police, was confronted by angry reporters, SAVAK victims, and their relatives on February 12.

Television here broadcast the entire news conference with Nassiri twice. The top SAVAK cop claimed total innocence. He even had the gall to deny any knowledge of torture by SAVAK agents.

Kahlil Rezaiee, father of four guerrillas murdered by SAVAK, was at the news conference. "What did my children do to you that you killed them?" he demanded of Nassiri. "Why did you torture them so much?"

A former political prisoner directly countered Nassiri's lies. "But wasn't it you who beat me in a SAVAK prison, and particularly hit me over the ear?" he asked.

"It wasn't me," Nassiri stonily replied.

At another news conference the arrested military brass faced the media. Lt. Gen. Amir Hossein Rabii, former commander of the air force, revealed there that the Bakhtiar regime had plotted to bomb east Tehran during the middle of the insurrection.

"Bakhtiar called me at 9 o'clock in the

morning [of February 11] to bomb with F-4s a weapons factory overrun by the people of Jaleh Square, I told him I could not kill people," said Rabii.

The planned bombing was eventually called off, probably when the regime realized that there were not enough airmen left to reliably carry out the attack.

In fact, at the Royal Guard's Lavizan base, the troops were preparing for a different kind of air force bombing run. Guards who have defected from the base report that anti-aircraft missiles had been readied because it was feared rebel airmen would bomb the base, one of the last bastions of the monarchy.

Former ministers of the shah's regime, now incarcerated, also appeared at the news conference. Ex-Premier Amir-Abbas Hoveyda conceded to reporters that "there was a system of repression under the monarchy." But he denied any personal responsibility for this repression.

Questioned about the shah's own role in crushing human rights, Hoveyda snapped: "Ask him, not me. I only answer for myself."

Hoveyda said he and the others under arrest had been treated very well by their captors.

Some fifty Americans here were also arrested as insurgents searched for U.S.

military and CIA personnel. All have now been released unharmed, with the exception of three Bell Helicopter representatives.

The three were captured after two rebel fighters were shot from a room at the Hilton Hotel. Armed groups occupied the hotel and arrested the three men, whom they believed fired the shots.

One of the Bell officials was a former four-star general in the U.S. Army. Another was a "security specialist" for the company. Radios and receivers were found in their rooms.

In addition to putting the enemies of the Iranian people on TV to answer the charges against them, the media here have featured what the people found when they took over the shah's prisons and torture chambers.

One article in *Kayhan* described the scene inside Comité, a SAVAK headquarters built especially to deal with guerrillas. The report explained that people found many implements of torture. A popular idea here now is to preserve the building intact as a permanent exhibition of the shah's crimes.

The television station visited the central SAVAK headquarters. Cameras wound their way through a maze of underground tunnels used to secretly move prisoners from one building to another.

Then they focused on bloodstains left on the sidewalk outside the building.

SAVAK had placed land mines around its headquarters to ward off attacks. One mine exploded, killing a youth, as the first wave of insurgents attacked the building.



Thousands of people were killed by shah's army before regime was destroyed. Those responsible must pay for their crimes.



Iranian Workers Take Over From Bosses

By Michel Rovere

[The following has been excerpted from an article in the February 9-15 issue of the French Trotskyist weekly *Rouge*. The translation is by *Intercontinental Press/Inprecor*.]

TEHRAN—Since September the struggles of Iran's blue-collar and wage workers have become the backbone of the mass movement.

While these battles began around strictly economic questions, directly political demands quickly became the main focus. Over the course of the last few months the strikes have become increasingly self-organized. Workers have held general assemblies, elected delegates (subject to recall) to carry out negotiations, and formed functioning strike committees. The plants and office buildings have become genuine centers of political education.

The bank workers union, after Khomeini's return, issued a statement announcing that tellers' windows would be open every other day, "the day in between being reserved for discussion among striking workers" on "the political situation and the future of the revolution."

Here in Tehran, since the Ministry of Information is at present in no condition to impose the slightest form of censorship, printers have decided to work double shifts, day and night, to make available as rapidly as possible the works of Marx and Lenin, which have been banned for twenty-five years.

Workers in the printing industry explain that they have not yet had enough time to form a union, but that during breaks all the workers gather together to go over the latest newspapers and discuss the situation.

Strikers in telecommunications have set up an exposition on the third floor of the Iran Telephone Company, where the public can view films, posters, photographs, and sketches of the latest political developments. The strikers regularly organize political meetings, to which they invite opposition figures and political leaders, as well as religious leaders such as Ayatollah Taleghani.

The workers who operate nonautomated equipment for international calls "select according to urgency and political criteria" those that will be given priority.

Neighborhood committees have sprung up almost everywhere. To avoid hardship for the population and, in the long run, resentment against the striking oil workers, the religious hierarchy decided to

organize the allotment and distribution of gasoline, heating oil, and kerosene, neighborhood by neighborhood.

The same decision was made regarding other necessities of life. After a campaign among shopkeepers to keep them from taking advantage of the situation by raising prices, committees formed by religious leaders organized people's cooperatives in the workers neighborhoods of south Tehran, selling veal, milk, chicken, and rice at low prices.

The development of these instances of self-administration, which could lead to the reemergence of "anjomans," the "Iranian soviets" of the constitutional revolution of 1905-06, is clearly a factor shaking the Pahlavi state to its foundations, particularly if it spreads to a general movement for the recall of the mayors and other local officials. But being strictly dependent, even in its composition, on the religious hierarchy, it thereby also reflects many contradictions.

Ahwaz, in the southern province of Khuzestan, is the center of the oil workers struggle. It was there, even before Abadan, where the first oil workers strike committee was formed. Before returning to work and assuring sufficient production to meet domestic needs, the workers demanded and won the release of their jailed comrades, the right to verify the complete halt of oil exports, and the immediate withdrawal of the army from the entire province.

As the troops were withdrawn, civilians chosen by the clergy were placed in charge of assuring safety in the city. Sixty Islamic food cooperatives were opened, providing the 150,000 residents of the city with the necessities of life at low cost.

But a few days before Khomeini's arrival, heavy rains resulted in catastrophic floods in Ahwaz. When municipal employees refused to call off their strike—which they had vowed to maintain until the ayatollah's return—the clergy used "volunteers" to "replace" the strikers.

This was the first example of what threatens to occur on a massive scale when, once an Islamic regime is proclaimed, the clergy and moderate opposition explain that "it is necessary to know how to end strikes." A foretaste of this came with the formation of a "Committee for the Coordination of Strikes," appointed directly by Khomeini and headed by Bazargan, who is now the prime minister.

Bazargan, who had taken part in the negotiations in early January for a return

to minimal production in the oil fields, has tried for the last two weeks to demonstrate the "spirit of responsibility" and "good sense" the movement is capable of, ordering a return to work in sectors deemed "in the public interest." But despite the prestige of Khomeini's name, which was used to pressure the strikers, not all went smoothly.

In the post office, during the last week of January, one group of workers announced to the press that they were returning to work on the basis of the appeal launched by Bazargan's committee. But another group announced that they would not return so long as two of their imprisoned colleagues remained behind bars. They decided in a mass meeting to occupy the lobby of the main post office.

Bazargan encountered similar difficulties in the banks. There, after the massacre of students January 26 and January 28, some of the employees wanted to call a week-long total strike, while the rest favored striking every other day.

But the most open conflict broke out in Ahwaz. Earlier this month one of the leaders of the strike committee resigned, after the management of the National Iranian Oil Company issued a statement denouncing the presence and activities of "leftist and non-Islamic elements" among the oil workers.

In an open letter to the oil workers, Mohammad Javad Khatani gave as the reason for his resignation the "repressive atmosphere prevailing in Ahwaz and the usurpation by a delegation from Khomeini, headed by Bazargan, of the responsibilities formerly assumed by the striking workers."

Khatani also blasted the "group of opportunists who are exploiting the death of the treacherous regime and trying to monopolize the entire revolution through the suppression of pluralism and freedom of expression, under the pretext of preventing divisiveness."

Contrary to the statements of the oil company that only a tiny minority of activists share this view, observers estimate that Khatani's position has the support of a very large number of workers.

To cite one example, railway employees took tank cars out of service after learning that some rail workers were opposed to the decision made by the Bazargan leadership to increase oil production. They explained: "After all, the workers fought for freedom at least as long as the religious movement did." □

'Forward to Immediate Convocation of Constituent Assembly!'

[The following statement was issued by the Socialist Workers Party, Iranian section of the Fourth International.]

* * *

The last bastions of the Pahlavi monarchy fell with the Bakhtiar government, the generals, and the American imperialist advisers. This historic victory has paved the way for winning freedom and throwing off the yoke of imperialism, autocracy, and backwardness.

Today it is clear that artillery, tanks, and machine guns cannot break the will of the people. Today it is clear that to win freedom we had to overthrow the army and government of the Pahlavi court and its capitalist parasites.

The workers and all the toilers, the real producers in society, displayed a tremendous solidarity throughout the country in their brave and historic struggle.

A new power is arising. A power of the workers and toilers in city and countryside. The power of tens of millions of the oppressed and downtrodden.

It is this power which can free our country from all the vestiges of dictatorship, poverty, and backwardness and rebuild the society on a new basis.

The fight to establish a democratic regime, which has been the central fight in this century, has never been so close to being won. The Socialist Workers Party, which has been founded on the basis of a fusion of Trotskyist forces adhering to the Fourth International, hails this victory.

Historical obstacles to freedom and progress represented by the monarchy have been shattered. The next step for all the workers and toilers can be summarized in one sentence: Forward to the immediate convocation of the constituent assembly.

The present victory was won by the oppressed of Iran, and it is the result of the stubborn and self-sacrificing struggle of tens of millions.

The future government that can free Iran from the evils of imperialist domination, the terror of autocracy, and historical backwardness must also be decided by the people themselves.

It is only the masses themselves who, through discussion leading to decisions, can offer a real solution to the crisis forced upon our society by imperialism and absolutism.

The immediate convocation of a fully representative constituent assembly in which all critical forces can participate is the only way that the will of the people can find true expression. Such an assembly that represents the sovereign people will not be responsible to any authority but the people themselves and will recognize no power above it.

It should be based on direct, equal, and secret ballot.

Literates and illiterates should have voting rights.

The high school youth who have displayed so much daring and self-sacrifice should vote.

The soldiers, those sons of the workers and peasants, who have solidarized with the revolution, should have the right to vote.

All the women and men of this land should be able to participate in the elections for the constituent assembly.

The mass struggle organizations that shattered the rule of the autocracy should oversee the elections.

No government appointed from above can bring freedom to Iran or defend the gains of the revolution against the imperialist powers and reactionary forces. This is possible only by relying on the power that made the present victory possible—the power of the masses—and by expanding and deepening the mass struggles, such as the occupation of and protection of factories by the workers, expansion of the armed reservations in the neighborhoods, and the opening of the secret files of SAVAK crimes, the opening of the books of the imperialist firms by the workers and employees, the exposure of the crimes of the Pahlavi terror over the last twenty-five years, and bringing those responsible to the justice of the workers and toilers.

The constituent assembly, the expression of the people's will, will defend and support all these struggles, and through democratic discussion will decide the big and small questions, from that of nationalizing imperialist companies, mines, and banks (which will aid the poor peasants) to ending the national oppression of Azerbaijan, Kurdistan, and Baluchistan, to win-

ning equal rights for women, to guaranteeing freedom of expression and assembly, to workers' control of the factories.

It is only through the immediate convocation of the constituent assembly that the people can be sovereign.

The central question facing the constituent assembly will be deciding on a future government. The Socialist Workers Party proposes the establishment of a workers and peasants republic, that is, a government that supports the struggle of the workers and toilers in the city and countryside.

The problems facing Iranian society, from political repression to backwardness and poverty, cannot be resolved by a capitalist government. No capitalist government will nationalize industry, encourage the seizure and distribution of land to the peasantry, or the liberation of Kurdistan, Azerbaijan, and Baluchistan from the yoke of national oppression.

The train of the revolution should not be stopped halfway, because this will result in it being pushed back again.

Government by internal or external exploiters should be ended.

With the establishment of a workers and peasants republic the historical demands of political and economic independence will become a reality and the chains of backwardness, poverty, and political repression will be broken and the door opened to an era of freedom and abundance.

The masses achieved the present gigantic victory by their own power and only by relying on our own forces can we guarantee the final victory of the revolution.

Long live the Iranian revolution!

For the convocation of the constituent assembly! □

Four Trotskyist Groups Fuse

TEHRAN—At a news conference here January 22, the Iranian Socialist Workers Party (Hezbe Kargarane Socialist) was announced. On the heels of the victorious insurrection February 9-12, four groups that for years had worked to establish the party of the Iranian revolution declared they had fused to found the Socialist Workers Party.

Two of the four groups were formed in exile by supporters of the Fourth International, the world Trotskyist organization: the Sattar League, in North America, and the Iranian Supporters of the Fourth International in the Near East and Europe.

The third group, also in exile, was the Iranian Supporters of the Organizing

Committee for the Reconstruction of the Fourth International (OCRFI).

These three organizations fused with a group that had developed in Iran under the dictatorship and that had recently declared its support for the Fourth International.

Supporters of the new revolutionary party have decided to publish an independent socialist weekly called *Kargar* (the *Worker*). The new paper will incorporate *Che Bayad Kard* (What Is To Be Done), which was previously published by activists in the Iranian Supporters of the Fourth International in the Near East and Europe and the group of Trotskyists that developed in Iran.

—Cindy Jaquith

Iranian Masses Show the Way for Workers Around the World

[The following statement was issued February 14 by the Political Committee of the Socialist Workers Party. We have taken the text from the February 23 issue of the *Militant*.]

* * *

Revolution strips away the layers of falsehood that disguise the relations between classes; it reveals the real foundations of society. So it has been in Iran.

From February 9 to 12, the old regime crumbled under the blows of a popular insurrection. Ministers and generals fled into hiding. Discipline over the ranks of the army disintegrated. Governmental power had disappeared.

The workers, peasants, and soldiers were in an unparalleled position to organize their own government and begin reconstructing Iranian society.

Committees arose spontaneously and in many areas took over the direction of traffic, the evacuation of those wounded in the fighting, and the maintenance of public services in Tehran—a city of 5 million.

Popular defense guards, or “Islamic marshals,” were also in control of the major cities of Isfahan, Mashad, Qum, Kermanshah, and Shiraz, as well as dozens of smaller towns and villages throughout the country.

Insurgent soldiers began to elect their own officers. They joined with workers to disarm the few elite military units loyal to the monarchy. Meanwhile, popular committees directed the process of arming the masses, cleaning out police stations, rounding up SAVAK agents, and breaking open the shah’s prisons.

Workers in rifle assembly plants ended their strike to assemble weapons for the workers.

Workers took over some key installations and communications centers and used them to help organize the uprising.

Workers committees had already been running Iran’s giant refineries and oil fields—the country’s main industry—for weeks. They needed no help from executives of the imperialist oil cartel nor from bureaucrats appointed in Tehran.

The Iranian revolution demonstrated that the working masses do not need bosses or bankers, they do not need officers or cops, they do not need capitalists or landlords in order for society to function.

The overthrow of the shah’s monarchy is a victory for the American workers no less than for the people of Iran.

It is a victory for working people all over the world, who will be encouraged in their struggles and heartened with the knowl-

edge that what the Iranian people did, *we can do as well.*

Only one thing was lacking in Iran. Only one thing has prevented the working masses from completing their victory by taking power into their own hands.

Revolutionary Party

There was no revolutionary party, composed in its big majority of workers, experienced in the struggles of the oppressed and exploited, and enjoying the respect of the masses.

Such a party would be the clearest voice explaining the need for the toilers to extend throughout the country their own independent organizations—in the factories, barracks, and villages—and to declare them to be the workers and peasants republic of Iran.

The Trotskyist forces, most of whom have recently returned to Iran from forced exile, are now unified in the Hezbe Kargarane Socialist—the Socialist Workers Party of Iran—and have set out to build such a party.

The bourgeois forces—organized around Ayatollah Khomeini, and led by Mehdi Bazargan and Karim Sanjabi of the National Front—are now racing to establish a stable capitalist regime. They have declared—from above—a provisional government. They are desperately trying to get the workers to give up their arms, get off the streets and back to work. Their efforts are being backed by the Carter administration.

Explaining Washington’s fears, *New York Times* reporter Nicholas Gage noted February 13 that “nearly every young man on the street is now armed.

“The possession of such weapons has given the people a sense of personal power that is the opposite of their earlier experience, and they seem unlikely to put down their weapons easily to return to the routine of daily life.”

Furthermore, “Once these radicalized young people and workers do go back to their factories and schools, they will be ripe for overtures from the Communists, especially if they feel the new Government’s many promises to them are not being fulfilled quickly and completely.”

The reported attack on the U.S. embassy in Tehran February 14—by persons whose identities and motives are still unclear—has been seized upon by the Bazargan forces to intensify demands that the masses give up their arms.

Instead of relying on the masses who overthrew the dictatorship, Bazargan has turned to some of the same officers respon-

sible for shooting down demonstrators and protecting the monarchy. On February 12, he named Maj. Gen. Mohammed Wali Qaraneh, a long time stalwart of the shah’s officer corps, as the new chief of staff for the Iranian army.

Mohammed Ali Nowruzi, the deputy chief of police under the shah, has been appointed acting chief of police by Bazargan.

But the shah’s executioners have not changed their spots, and the Iranian masses know it. That is why they have responded so reluctantly—and sometimes not at all—to repeated appeals to turn in their arms.

Orders from officials handpicked by Khomeini or anyone else will not help the masses to move forward in their struggle for freedom and a better life. What will be decisive is what the masses can do to organize politically in their own interests.

The strike committees and neighborhood committees that are already running many industries and some towns can take responsibility for distributing food and fuel as well as other consumer goods, and for organizing production.

If these tasks are left to the capitalists, they will make sure the result is shortages, unemployment, speculation in essential goods, and inflation.

In the countryside, committees of poor peasants can organize the distribution of agricultural equipment and land.

Elected Committees

Elected committees of the revolutionary masses are not new to Iran. Known as *anjomans*, such committees sprang up during the Constitutional Revolution of 1906 and again in the revolutionary upsurge during and after World War II. Similar committees were called *soviets* (councils) when they arose in Russia in 1905 and 1917.

Joined together in federations on a regional and nationwide basis, such *anjomans* could become the government—democratic and responsive to the needs of the masses, unlike any government appointed from above.

Even on a local level, such committees can counter the appointment of new officials from above and fight for prompt and democratic elections for a constituent assembly—not an appointed or declared “constituent assembly” under the thumb of Bazargan.

Rank-and-file soldiers throughout the country will play a crucial role in this process. They can take advantage of being “confined to barracks” to hold discussions,

form their own committees, and elect representatives to the workers, soldiers, and peasants *anjomans*.

The ranks of the armed forces themselves are in the best position to identify the nests of conspirators in the military staffs and to take action against them. To assure that the army is responsible to the *anjomans*, the soldiers will have to purge the entire officer corps and elect new officers *from the ranks*.

Alongside the soldiers, the workers who have fought so valiantly against the monarchy are sure to feel the need to hold onto their weapons and organize a militia to defend their gains and enforce the decisions made by their elected deputies.

The Iranian revolution has reached a crossroads. The struggle will go on, through numerous ups and downs. But with the successful insurrection against the monarchy, and the defeat of one of U.S. imperialism's major allies in the Mideast, the struggle of the Iranian people has already pointed to fundamental lessons about our own society.

Capitalists Not Needed

The first has already been mentioned, and it is no less true in the United States than in Iran: *the working people keep the country running, and the working people can and should run the country.*

In Iran, the capitalist class didn't help society. Just the opposite. Under their rule, agriculture stagnated. A fertile country that had previously been self-sufficient in food has to import about half of its agricultural products.

Capitalism in Iran meant imported luxuries for a privileged minority, and lack of decent housing and even sewage systems for the vast majority.

Under capitalist rule, Iran's "one crop" oil-based economy was distorted and dominated by a handful of British and American monopolies.

And above all, capitalism in Iran meant the "American shah," with his CIA-trained torturers, and his U.S.-trained and U.S.-armed military machine. The shah who outlawed democratic trade unions, filled the jails with political prisoners, denied equality to women, and trampled on the rights of the oppressed nationalities.

What about the United States? Does the American ruling class help advance American society?

The capitalists themselves are telling us that we have to take cuts in our standard of living.

They are slashing social services, closing down hospitals, schools, and child care. They are attacking wages, union rights, and the few rules supposed to assure safety on the job. They are pushing workers to the point of collapse with speed-up and forced overtime.

While workers' living standards go



**"It ended up taking only three months for events in Iran to go from the unthinkable to the inevitable."
New York Times**



down, taxes and inflation keep going up, up, up. And the escalating military budget underlines the real threat of war, when what the workers want is peace.

When we balk at paying their price, the giant corporations threaten us with shortages of basic necessities, from food to fuel.

American workers, like Iranian workers, need a society based on human needs, not on private profits. And only the working class can lead the masses in establishing such a socialist society.

A second lesson of the Iranian revolution also applies to the United States, no less than to Iran: *the capitalist class is a lot weaker than it looks.*

What Iranians Faced

Just look at what the Iranian people faced. The shah's secret police operated in every factory, every college, and every neighborhood. People were imprisoned and tortured merely for reading "suspicious" books.

Behind the secret police stood a 430,000-strong military establishment armed with billions of dollars worth of the most modern weapons the Pentagon could provide.

Not only did the shah have the support of every imperialist government, he could also count on friendly relations with both Moscow and Peking.

Finally, the shah had control of billions of dollars in oil money and was promising rapid economic progress.

But all the things that looked to rulers around the world like the basis for stability in Iran turned into their opposite with a speed that took the shah and his supporters completely by surprise.

As one of the leading mouthpieces for U.S. imperialism, the *New York Times* declared in a February 13 editorial, "It ended up taking only three months for events in Iran to go from the unthinkable to the inevitable."

The shah's petrodollars and the economic expansion they fueled turned into a

trap for the regime. Millions of peasants, driven out of the countryside and into the cities by economic pressure, swelled the ranks of the working class and the urban poor.

The giant arms budget and the shah's imperialist advisers became a point of resentment and anger instead of a prop for the peacock throne.

In the last analysis, the shah's tyranny rested not on its repressive apparatus but on the illusion among the masses that they had to bow to the regime. Once the vast majority of society had shed that illusion—through months of determined and self-sacrificing struggle—no amount of arms could stop them.

Guns and tanks, after all, no matter how sophisticated, are only as reliable as the hands that fire them. And these are the hands of workers and peasants in uniform, not the employers or their cops. When the ranks of the army came over to the revolution, the fate of the shah's regime was sealed.

Display of Weakness

What about capitalism in the United States? Is it as strong as it appears?

The real weakness of the American ruling class has been highlighted precisely by the revolution in Iran. One of Washington's most important clients has been booted out of office by a popular revolution, and despite the enormous military might at his disposal, *Carter was unable to stop it.*

In December, Carter ordered a naval task force to Iran—and then stopped it halfway.

In January, Carter had to be content with flying twelve unarmed jets to Saudi Arabia as a "show of strength." And the government of Spain, fearful of the reaction of its own people, refused to let the jets refuel on its territory.

With the outbreak of the insurrection in



Soldiers, airmen, civilians in action February 10.

Tehran, Carter announced plans to fly sixty-nine marines and six helicopters to Turkey. But he was quickly told by the Turkish government that any such move was "out of the question."

It is a far cry from the days when Lyndon Johnson, with more than 30,000 troops already in Vietnam, was able to invade the Dominican Republic with another 24,000 U.S. Marines.

The truth is that the American rulers are afraid of the working class at home. That is why they could be forced out of Vietnam, and that is why they have been unable to use the American military machine in the same way since then.

But they never cease trying and probing. As long as the capitalists rule in the United States, the danger of a desperate military action by the imperialists remains—including in Iran.

Blows to Imperialism

Meanwhile, a weakened imperialist system is facing new political blows.

- In Africa, since the collapse of the Portuguese empire the Black liberation struggle has been on the rise, and it is being helped by the army of revolutionary Cuba.

- The reactionary Pol Pot regime in Kampuchea has just been toppled, in a process Washington fears could lead to a deepening of the Indochinese revolution.

- British workers have smashed the government's 5 percent wage limit and are carrying out a campaign of militant strikes that sets a potent example for workers in the United States and around the world.

- Revolution in Iran has shattered the Mideast deal worked out under Carter's urging at Camp David, while inspiring Palestinian freedom fighters. And it has undermined the stability of capitalist governments from Pakistan to Saudi Arabia to Turkey.

The Offensive at Home

Determined to make the workers bear the cost of the worldwide economic crisis of capitalism, the U.S. rulers have been ruthlessly tightening the squeeze on the living standards of the working class at home. Millions of workers know they are under attack and are eager to fight back.

Only one thing has enabled the American capitalists to carry out their austerity drive with some success. That is the illusion of the masses that there is no alternative to relying on and collaborating with the capitalists and their political agents.

This illusion is instilled and enforced by the class-collaborationist misleaders of the labor movement and other organizations of the oppressed, who keep the masses politically enslaved to the Democratic and Republican parties.

Through their revolution, the Iranian people have shown how quickly that illusion can crumble, how quickly the working class can sweep the exploiters aside. The same thing can happen here once the workers see a leadership that rejects collaboration and stands for struggle against the exploiters on every level.

The Iranian insurrection has once again shown the necessity of building a revolutionary socialist party here in the United States—a party composed of workers who have absorbed the lessons of previous struggles and can help lead our class to political power in the stronghold of world imperialism.

Death in a Soweto Jail

Details on the death of Nata Edgar Ndaba in April 1978 were revealed in a Johannesburg courtroom January 18 during the trial of police Sgt. Joseph Murray, who has been charged with culpable homicide in Ndaba's death.

Constable E. Nkosi testified at the trial that he was in a charge office in Soweto when Murray came in with Ndaba, who had just been arrested. Nkosi said that Ndaba looked "like a man who had been beaten." In the charge office, Nkosi said, Murray hit Ndaba.

According to Nkosi, Murray then had another white policeman fetch a dog. While Murray was writing out the charges, he ordered the dog to "rem hom" (get him). The dog pounced on Ndaba, dragged him to the ground, and bit him. Murray did not call off the dog until he had finished writing. Nkosi said he later saw the dog's teeth marks all over Ndaba's body.

Ndaba was then taken to Baragwanath Hospital in Soweto, where he died of his injuries.

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A Stinging Defeat for U.S. Imperialism

By Fred Murphy

Virtually helpless in face of the collapse of the Pahlavi monarchy and its military hierarchy, Washington reacted to the victorious insurrection in Iran by rapidly firming up its ties with the new provisional government appointed by Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini. The U.S. imperialists now see the regime of Prime Minister Mehdi Bazargan as the only immediate hope for preserving their interests in the country.

President Carter said at a February 12 news conference (the day after the insurrection) that he hoped "the differences that have divided the people of Iran for so many months can now be ended. As has been the case throughout this period, we have been in touch with those in control of the Government of Iran, and we stand ready to work with them."

On February 16 the State Department announced that diplomatic recognition had been formally extended to the new government, and that U.S. Ambassador William Sullivan was seeking to meet with Bazargan "to discuss the policies and programs and future outlook of the government in Tehran."

No official response to these overtures has yet been reported in the Western press, but Massoud Amini, an aide to Foreign Minister Karim Sanjabi, told the *Wall Street Journal* that Sanjabi was hoping for "good and friendly relations" with Washington.

Mr. Sanjabi, he said, would probably urge a continued military relationship with the U.S. "We bought your weapons and we need to keep them in good condition," said Mr. Amini. . . .

Mr. Amini also said Mr. Sanjabi would urge the new government to stay on good terms with Western banks, such as Chase Manhattan Bank and Citibank, both major lenders to Iran. "Our economic development depends on working with Chase and other banks," Mr. Amini said. [*Wall Street Journal*, February 14.]

For months many disparate forces marched together under the label "Khomeini's people," because all were united in their determination to bring down the last vestiges of the shah's dictatorship. However, there is no such consensus concerning the economic and social order that should now be established. The task of the Bazargan government was summed up in an unusually blunt way by a "foreign diplomat" quoted in the February 16 *New York Times*. Discussing Sanjabi's role, he noted:

"His mission is to preserve the continuing hegemony of the national bourgeoisie

of Iran and to protect it from the revolutionary forces unleashed by a year of strife, strikes, and militancy."

This will not be an easy task, as *Times* correspondent James M. Markham explained in a February 15 dispatch:

. . . it is evident that [Bazargan] and his new chief of staff of the armed forces, Maj. Gen. Mohammed Wali Qaraneh, are hastening to put what is left of the once imposing Iranian military establishment back together again. But having watched the disintegration of the Shah's Imperial Guard when it confronted the armed population of Tehran, both the Prime Minister and his chief of staff will most likely want to avoid a confrontation with the left that could shatter what is left of the army.

The Yankees Go Home

After an armed attack on the U.S. embassy in Tehran February 14, the State Department ordered a full-scale evacuation of most of the approximately 7,000 Americans still in Iran. Under the circumstances, this move was basically an expression of weakness. Carter feared that a furor might be whipped up inside the United States by flag-waving right-wingers if Americans came under further attack. A Tehran embassy representative admitted, "We cannot protect American lives in Iran."

But as events of the last weeks have shown, it is not so easy for the American government to intervene. So Washington was reduced to relying on the good graces of its former opponent, Khomeini, to ensure the Americans' safety as they left Iran. "There is no way we could get those people out by using force," a White House official explained. "We just have to wheedle them out the best we can."

To secure use of Turkish air bases for the operation, Washington had to pledge that its planes would be unarmed and that no military personnel other than the planes' normal crews would be involved. Earlier, Ankara had vetoed a plan to send sixty-nine U.S. marines to Turkey as a step toward deployment at the Tehran embassy.

When the "evacuation" began February 15, the first group of Americans was escorted to the airport by an Iranian militia detachment. All were carefully screened and searched to ensure that no SAVAK agents were taking the opportunity to escape.

The U.S. capitalist press tried to make the best of the situation, hoping to use it to poison the view of American working people toward their Iranian brothers and

sisters. An example of this was a *New York Daily News* account on February 17 of how some Americans supposedly spent "six days of terror barricaded in hotels and homes in bullet-spattered Tehran."

The Iranian masses undoubtedly welcome the flight of most remaining U.S. civilian advisers and businessmen as an important victory in their anti-imperialist struggle. It adds momentum to the fight to eliminate U.S. domination of the Iranian economy, and sets an example for the soldiers, who can step up efforts to force the remaining U.S. military advisers out as well.

Bazargan's government, on the other hand, was disappointed by the flight of U.S. citizens. "We hope they will be able to return soon," Foreign Minister Sanjabi said.

Bluster Against Moscow

Washington vented its frustration and anger at the heavy blow suffered in Iran with a series of diplomatic blasts aimed at the Kremlin.

After the assault on the U.S. embassy in Tehran, the Soviet news agency Tass had pointed out that the shah's secret police "had been the creation of the Central Intelligence Agency, and SAVAK agents have long been organizing various provocations to create a pretext for open military interference by the United States in Iran."

This could hardly have come as much of a revelation to Iranians. Nonetheless, U.S. Ambassador Malcolm Toon in Moscow was ordered to tell the Soviet rulers "to consider the damaging effects of such propaganda on stability in Iran and on U.S.-Soviet relations."

Washington saw another opportunity to lash out at Moscow in the February 14 death of Adolph Dubs, U.S. ambassador to Afghanistan. Dubs was apparently kidnapped by right-wing opponents of the Taraki regime. When Afghan police attacked the hotel room where Dubs's captors were holed up, the ambassador died in the crossfire.

Washington alleged that Soviet advisers had accompanied the Afghan cops and had acted recklessly, thus contributing to Dubs's death. Soviet Ambassador Dobrynin was called onto the carpet by the State Department and asked for "a full report" on the Kabul events, which Washington claimed were "impossible to justify."

But it soon became known that the kidnapers had been threatening to kill

Dubs within ten minutes if the Afghani authorities did not meet their demand for the release of someone Kabul said was not even in the country, much less a prisoner. *Washington Post* correspondent Thomas Lippman reported from Kabul February 16 that "the prevailing diplomatic opinion here is that . . . when the security forces stormed the room, they did so in the sincere belief that it was the only way to save [Dubs]."

In fact, "State Department sources" cited in the February 15 *Washington Post* had already admitted the flimsy basis for the U.S. charges. They "stressed the belief that the Soviets, if they were involved in the decision to storm the hotel room, were not trying to harm Dubs or cause problems for the United States." And U.S. embassy officials in Kabul even told the *New York Times* on February 16 that the Soviet advisers "had agreed with American advice to use delaying tactics in dealing with the terrorists!"

In talking to the press, State Department officials have made a point of referring to how the alleged Soviet transgressions could endanger the current talks on a strategic arms limitation treaty (SALT)—something Moscow wants very badly. "It ought to be very clear that things such as this cannot help but affect the climate in which such a treaty might have to be considered in this country," an official told the *New York Daily News*.

Consolation From Brown

While the U.S.-supported Bakhtiar regime was in its last days, Pentagon chief Harold Brown toured the Mideast to reassure other U.S. allies who were reportedly "terrified" by the upsurge in Iran.

The "central theme" of Brown's trip to Saudi Arabia, Jordan, Israel, and Egypt, according to Kenneth Bacon of the *Wall Street Journal*, was "that after nearly a decade of retreat induced by the Vietnam

war, the U.S. plans to be more aggressive in defending its economic and security interests in the Middle East and elsewhere."

"We're going to play a more active role in the area," a Brown aide told Bacon. "That is a line no American has been taking with them for a long time, at least since Vietnam."

According to a report in the February 11 *New York Times*, Brown and the Saudi rulers even discussed "the creation of a 'quick-strike force' of American paratroopers and marines to be used in case of a request for help by Saudi Arabia or other oil-producing Gulf nations. . . ."

Brown's Mideast clients are no doubt a bit skeptical, having just witnessed a revolution Washington was helpless to stop. Such promises are nonetheless a chilling reminder of what the American imperialists would do in a minute if they thought they could get away with it. □

America's Racist Rulers Slam the Gates

Why Won't Washington Let All the 'Boat People' In?

By Dan Dickeson

Since late 1978, the plight of emigrés from Vietnam, in particular the so-called boat people, has become one of the main themes of imperialist propaganda against the Vietnamese revolution. A look at the facts, however, shows that this professed sympathy for the emigrés is just as phony as the capitalist politicians' new-found concern for Cambodia's national sovereignty.

Since capitalism was abolished in southern Vietnam last year, hundreds of thousands of persons have fled the country, many making the dangerous journey by boat to neighboring capitalist states.

Although the boat people left Vietnam expecting to settle in advanced capitalist countries, only a fraction have actually been admitted as refugees. Imperialist governments have left most of them stranded in Southeast Asia, packed into overcrowded camps for "illegal immigrants" or even forced to stay aboard the ships they traveled in.

The current wave of emigration began after the Vietnamese government closed down over 30,000 capitalist enterprises in March 1978. This action was condemned by the regime in China, which accused Hanoi of persecuting people of Chinese origin, and warned all ethnic Chinese in Vietnam to get out. In the next four months an estimated 160,000 persons fled across the border into China.

This was apparently more than Peking

had bargained for. In July, the Chinese regime closed its border to any more immigrants. After July, increasing numbers of people began leaving Vietnam by boat, sailing across the South China Sea to Malaysia, Thailand, the Philippines, and Hong Kong. By November, the rate of emigration had risen to more than 20,000 a month. "Refugee" transport became a thriving underground business in the region. Some cargo ships picked up over a thousand fare-paying passengers from Vietnam at a time.

The December 12 *Washington Post* estimated the total number of boat people to date at 85,000.

The pace of emigration to Malaysia and Thailand rapidly exceeded the ability of local relief agencies to provide shelter for the emigrés. Since officials from the major imperialist countries have turned down most of the prospective immigrants, the populations of "temporary" transit camps grow steadily larger.

The situation has become worst in Malaysia, where most of the boat people land. The growing refugee population has strained social services and food supplies on the country's impoverished east coast. In some places Malaysian villagers have reacted by attacking boats carrying Vietnamese, forcing them back out to sea. Hundreds of people drowned in November and December when their overloaded craft capsized in storms off the coast.

The Malaysian government tried to ease the situation by allowing Vietnamese to land on the uninhabited offshore island of Pulau Bidong. But by the end of 1978, more than 30,000 people were crowded together on the tiny island.

Officials have emphasized that Malaysia is willing to provide temporary asylum for the boat people, so long as other countries agree to accept them for settlement. In particular, they have insisted that the United States government has a responsibility to take in the stranded emigrés.

Malaysian Home Minister Muhammad Ghazali bin Shafie, in a public appeal to American President Carter, stated that "countries who contributed toward the creation of this problem just cannot turn their heads and wish it away. They are not fulfilling their obligations in the context of human rights simply by offering money to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and dictating at a distance what Malaysia should or should not do. Conscience money is not the answer." (November 28 *New York Times*.)

Of those boat people who have been accepted as immigrants, most have gone to France, the United States, Australia, and Canada. Other imperialist countries, including West Germany, Britain, Belgium, the Netherlands, and Switzerland, have been taking in only a few hundred each year. Out of six hundred boat people who made their way to Japan, only five have

been accepted as permanent residents.

Yet even as they turn away the hapless emigrés, the governments of all these countries have tried to blame Hanoi for the boat people's plight.

The capitalist press internationally has taken up the claim that socialist measures

Emigration rose dramatically following September floods . . .

destroyed Vietnam's economy, forcing people to flee.

What are the facts? Why have so many fled Vietnam, despite the danger and uncertainty of a boat trip across the South China Sea?

Interviews conducted in Malaysian transit camps indicate that about 85 percent of the emigrés are ethnic Chinese. Many came from Cholon, the Chinese district of Ho Chi Minh City that was a center of private trade before the 1978 nationalizations.

Home Minister Ghazali noted, referring to the emigrés, that "the early ones were just frightened people, but these newcomers are Chinese and merchants and they just don't fit in Vietnam. They don't want to go into communes and farms and they can't trade under that socialist system. Because they have money, they can get out. Apparently the government does not object. It does precious little to stop them." (December 11 *Washington Post*.)

The rate of emigration rose dramatically following the floods in September, which destroyed an estimated 83 percent of Vietnam's autumn rice crop. Rice had been rationed in Vietnam even before the floods.

The escalation of fighting on the Cambodian border, which brought increased draft calls for the Vietnamese armed forces, was another factor cited by emigrés among their reasons for leaving.

The picture that emerges from interviews with the boat people is mainly one of the urban petty bourgeoisie who have lost their traditional way of life as small traders, entrepreneurs, and usurers.

From the standpoint of the vast majority of the Vietnamese, however, nationalization of private trade was an important step forward. A planned economy and massive international aid is needed to increase production, control prices, and eliminate unemployment.

Ethnic Chinese in Vietnam, as in other Southeast Asian countries, have historically been the object of racial prejudice, and the Chinese community in Vietnam has clearly been apprehensive about this. But there is no evidence of a Vietnamese government policy of discrimination or persecution of ethnic Chinese as Chinese, nor of an attempt to drive them out of the country.

In December, when the cargo ship *Tung*

An arrived in the Philippines with 2,400 emigrés aboard and local authorities refused to let them land, the only government in the world that offered to take in the desperate passengers was Hanoi.

The imperialists are blaming Hanoi for the tragedy of the boat people as part of their ongoing campaign to isolate Vietnam. In January, the Australian government cited "Hanoi's refugee policy" as one of its reasons for suspending economic assistance.

An editorial in the January 5 *Far Eastern Economic Review* was more blunt: "The whole of Asia must concertededly warn Vietnam that it cannot look forward to friendly relations and cooperation with its neighbors if it persists in endangering the hard-won stability of the region by spewing out its unwanted masses."

This propaganda is designed to divert attention from the imperialists' own responsibility for the plight of the boat people.

The American war against Vietnam, the refusal of Washington and its allies to pay war reparations, and their withholding of economic aid have helped create the economic hardships people are fleeing from.

The desperate situation of the stranded emigrés themselves is the direct responsibility of the imperialists. The boat people left Vietnam believing that governments that had always claimed concern for their way of life would be willing to help them. But the racist immigration policies of those governments are a far cry from the ideals they claim to uphold.

The imperialists want Hanoi to restrict emigration . . .

The immigration laws are designed strictly to serve capitalist interests. They aim to keep the masses of the colonial world trapped in poverty.

Most capitalist regimes make exceptions in their immigration laws for emigrés from the workers states. They do this not out of humanitarian motives, but on the basis of a cold political calculation.

Where Stalinist bureaucrats deny people the democratic right to emigrate, capitalist regimes can seize a chance to pose as defenders of democracy. In recent years, for example, West European and American capitalist politicians have made a big show of denouncing Moscow's violation of the Helsinki accords on freedom of travel. And they gladly admit all who are allowed to leave the Soviet Union. The number of Soviet emigrés is limited, and the cost of settling them is small compared to what the capitalists gain by discrediting "socialism" in the eyes of their own workers.

But in a case where Hanoi decides to

respect the right of people to emigrate, and tens of thousands leave, the imperialists' maneuver backfires.

When Saigon was liberated in 1975, a total of 130,000 Vietnamese—including many native capitalists and collaborators of the puppet regime—were flown out of the country in a highly publicized effort to refurbish Washington's "humanitarian" image. But four years later, when tens of thousands of Vietnamese come fleeing economic hardships, Washington turns most of them away.

Despite all their talk, America's racist rulers have no more compassion for the stranded Vietnamese boat people than they do for the millions of Malaysians, Thais or Filipinos who would flee to the U.S. if they could. Washington simply recognizes that a certain number of Vietnamese immigrants are useful for propaganda purposes.

The imperialists are looking for a way to stop the massive flow of emigrés from Vietnam, without taking open responsibility for it.

While some capitalist regimes have made the "humanitarian" gesture of increasing slightly their quotas for Vietnamese, the total quota for all receiving countries has been kept far below the current rate of emigration.

The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees announced in December that the combined quota for refugees from all of Indochina in the coming year would be 82,250. At a time when more than 200,000 people are waiting in transit camps, and 20,000 more are leaving Vietnam each month, this quota guarantees that the populations of the camps will continue to mushroom. Sooner or later this will cause Southeast Asian regimes to resort to desperate measures to keep boat people out.

At the same time, the imperialists are pressuring Hanoi to forcibly stop people from leaving. Of course they cannot openly call on Hanoi to do what they condemn Moscow for. But when they talk about withholding diplomatic recognition or economic aid "because of Hanoi's refugee policy," the meaning is not lost on anyone.

The crocodile tears being shed for the stranded emigrés by the imperialists are part of a larger propaganda campaign to isolate and discredit the Vietnamese revolution. This campaign must be fought, including by pinning responsibility for the tragedy of the boat people right where it belongs.

Working people in the advanced capitalist countries should demand of their own governments to take in all the emigrés who want to come.

They should also demand massive aid for Vietnam. The U.S. government in particular should grant diplomatic recognition to Hanoi, lift the trade embargo, and immediately provide as a first step the \$3.25 billion in reconstruction aid pledged by Richard Nixon in 1973. □

Working Class Takes the Offensive in Britain

By Brian Grogan

LONDON—Britain is in the midst of its biggest wage upsurge since 1974. What is at stake, however, is not the success of this or that wage dispute, but whose answer to the overall crisis is going to be accepted.

Nor is it the bosses' inability to afford this or that wage claim, even in the present range of 15% to 20%, that is at issue (although rises of much more than 10% in the public sector would cause serious economic difficulties). Rather, it is the manifest failure of the Labour government so far to resolve the crisis in the interests of the bosses, without at the same time sufficiently demoralizing the working class to make the Tory confrontationist alternative really viable.

In this situation a general election cannot long be delayed. It is this intertwining of the mass struggle with the moves to a general election that gives Labour's winter crisis such an acute aspect.

When Callaghan postponed the general election in October of last year he took a calculated risk. He assumed that the trade-union leaders would once again force his wage-cutting policies down workers' throats. He had done this for three rounds, even though the last round had not been endorsed by the Trades Union Congress (TUC).

He had gauged well the mettle of the TUC leaders. When the first serious challenge to Phase 3 of the incomes policy was mounted by the Fire Brigades Union early last year, the TUC leadership cold-bloodedly scabbed on it. This time around, despite paper resolutions, he thought they would be able to do as much again. What he never imagined was a rank-and-file revolt.

Why should he have? Events seemed to be moving his way. The results of his austerity policies had reassured the International Monetary Fund and this, together with the benefits to the balance of payments of North Sea oil, had given the pound a certain amount of stability—particularly in relation to the dollar.

With a decline in inflation and a small upturn in the economy, he thought that the revival in his popularity would continue. One more wage round would do the trick.

His confidence was high, having already defused a major crisis in Scotland. Labour's turn for devolved government [limited autonomy] for Scotland and Wales had transformed the situation. Whereas the bourgeois Scottish Nationalist Party (SNP) had begun to threaten Labour's heartland and to command a third of the

popular vote (equal to the vote for Labour or for the Tories), now Labour had come back up to 50% of the vote. All recent byelections indicated that Labour was beginning to roll back the SNP threat.

To be sure, the social crisis continues to deepen. Labour's right-wing policies continue to create the basis for the growth of racist sentiments on which the fascists breed. But the initiative of the revolutionaries—particularly the formation of the Anti-Nazi League—have marginalized the National Front, the largest fascist organization. It no longer poses an electoral threat to some Labour seats.

True, such action has boosted the influence of revolutionaries, who had focused the radicalization of tens of thousands of young people. But these would be a threat only for the future. So too with the radicalization of women, who are still prepared to mobilize in massive numbers against any threat to existing abortion rights, and most recently in their fight to "reclaim the night."* But such developments, while very important, have not yet resulted in a coherent opposition right down the line.

Three months after postponing the general election Callaghan is, if anything, facing a bigger wage offensive than that which led to the fall of Edward Heath's Tory government in 1974.

A political crisis, with overtones of hysteria, has developed. In the first place, this has been in response to the lorry drivers strike, in particular to their successful early picketing, which threatened to close down large sections of industry and stop the export of goods.

The situation took on added drama because it immediately followed the breaking of the 5% wage-increase limit by a series of powerful groups. Most notable were the Ford workers, who won a 17% raise after a nine-week strike. Callaghan's 5% policy was in tatters and his claim to be able to use the trade-union leaders to control the rank and file seriously undermined.

What will finally determine this is the outcome of the claim of the low-paid public-sector manual workers. Breaches in the private sector can be blamed on weak-

kneed employers or even the Tories, since they had opposed his 5% policy (albeit from the right) and had been instrumental in defeating the proposal to bring sanctions against private firms that breached the pay guidelines.

But the government is the employer of the 1.5 million public-sector manual workers, who cover everything from school-dinner ladies to hospital, sewage, and garbage workers. If the line is not held here, then in will come the miners and the power workers with massive claims to make up for loss of earnings over the past years of austerity. Then everyone else.

A Political Crisis

This revolt seriously challenges Callaghan's overall strategy—a strategy that has hitherto received the blessing of the most influential bourgeois sectors. But it would be a profound error to see in this period a rerun of 1970-74, when an elemental wage upsurge grew in breadth and depth and finally brought down the hated Tory government.

For then there was an obvious political alternative of a Labour government, which allowed essentially sectoral struggles to find a general political focus. Not so today. True, the 5% policy is in tatters. But what lies behind it—the alliance with the trade-union leaders—is far from dead.

At present there is little doubt that the initiative has passed out of the hands of the government and the trade-union leaders and into the hands of the rank-and-file leadership—essentially at the level of the shop stewards. But this may not last long.

For the stewards, while many of them are aware of the political problems, pose no clear alternative answer to them that would allow for a political generalization of what still remain sectoral disputes. Even if these confrontations are aimed at smashing the 5%, they are posed in "special case" terms. In fact, these struggles are operating with the assumption that the limited economic upturn of the past year can allow sectoral gains. The challenge they are making to the government does not yet constitute a political break with the argument that got the masses to accept the "social contract" in the first place.

For most of the working class the political arguments of the government and the bureaucracy in 1975 (when the austerity program was first imposed) had been an answer to the problems posed by the world recession. They accepted the government's case for austerity as a short-term necessity

*On the evening of January 20, "2,000 women marched through London's Soho, centre of porn shops and strip shows, to demand an end to rape and violence; for a woman's right to be out on the streets at night without escort; to Reclaim the Night for women." (*Socialist Challenge*, January 25.)—IP/1

to allow for the reexpansion of capitalism, which they were assured would lead to a return to full employment, a rising standard of living, and expanded social services. The priority was the "fight against inflation."

With the recent apparent strengthening of the British economy—an improved balance of payments situation, an apparently healthy decline of inflation to single digits, and a limited consumer-led upturn—workers are assuming that the period of belt-tightening is at an end. This explains the way in which the various claims are being justified—Ford on the basis of its massive profits, for example, and the public sector on the basis of the "going rate."

The future, however, is far from one of an expanding capitalism, as will become very quickly apparent. So unless a socialist alternative emerges, the situation is open for Callaghan to regain the initiative and relaunch the offensive. This, if linked with some minor concessions and demagogic attacks on the bosses over prices, could undermine the offensive of the workers.

In the last analysis, in the present political context a serious threat to call an election, let alone the actual calling of one, would be enough to seriously undermine this offensive. In any event it is the generation of this atmosphere by both the Labour government and the Tories that facilitates the placing of political obstacles in front of the struggle.

A New Social Contract?

The collapse of the 5% policy has seriously dented the credibility of Callaghan's strategy among the bourgeoisie. This has given Thatcher, the leader of the Tories, her opening. The Tories have used

The Tories want the courts to hog-tie strikers . . .

every action to dramatize the situation, in order to pose the central political questions around which they could win an election—essentially the theme of "Who rules: Parliament or the unions?"

The phenomenal early success of the lorry drivers (especially through the use of flying pickets) and the solidity of the action of the public-sector workers manifested in their one-day national strike January 22 has led to the problem of essential supplies and services being raised.

In the first weeks of the lorry strike, in many cities the actual decision about what moved and who got permission to deliver goods was completely in the hands of the pickets. To take just one example of many, in Hull, on the Yorkshire coast, the lorry drivers got the agreement of the dockers to block all movement of goods into the port. They then stationed flying pickets on all

the roads leading into the city. This effectively cut the city off, except for those goods the lorry drivers themselves deemed essential. To take another example, from the public sector, hospital ancillary workers are refusing to serve private patients.

Talk of the existence of "two powers," of "anarchy," of "blood and violence" began to abound in Parliament and in the media. A massive campaign was launched for the adoption of emergency powers and the sending in of troops through the calling of a "state of emergency."

But the central object of the agitation was the question of picketing. A new word has come into British politics to describe the phenomena of what they called "secondary picketing." What Callaghan had promised the bourgeoisie was control of the power of the unions—that is, control of rank-and-file action—by "moderate" leaders. If, as seems to be the case, Callaghan can no longer deliver the goods, then another answer has to be found.

Essentially what the Tories are demanding is the use of the courts to hog-tie the rank and file, which the bureaucracy is having ever more difficulties in keeping down. The proposals are to make wage contracts enforceable by law, to open up the unions to claims for damages resulting from "blacking" action (thereby forcing the union bureaucracy to expel militants from the factories and the unions on pain of union funds being requisitioned), and to step up police and court action against pickets.

In a nutshell they are proposing the introduction into Britain of a version of the notorious U.S. Taft-Hartley act, from which the term "secondary picketing" is taken.

While these demands, especially around picketing, are getting some backing from the bourgeoisie, Thatcher's confrontationist orientation is not seen as being entirely appropriate in the present relationship of forces. The Thatcher team's attractiveness to the bourgeoisie is not aided by their need to make a lot of noise, even if without much content, to mobilize their petty-bourgeois base in face of an imminent general election.

This has given the cue to the Liberals, but most especially to ex-Tory leader Heath, to begin campaigning for a "government of national unity." While such an eventuality is ruled out before an election, it might become a real possibility in the likely outcome of a hung Parliament after the elections. It is also in such a context that the current cautious demands for a six-months' wage freeze might become a real possibility.

The offensive against picketing and for "law and order" by the Tories and the bosses organization, the Confederation of British Industries (CBI), has put Callaghan under tremendous pressure. For him the calling of a "state of emergency"

would be a mammoth political defeat. It would be to admit the total failure of his strategy and call up memories of the famous "three-day week"—the last gasp of the previous Tory administration under Edward Heath. It was Labour's opposition to this that had given them so much credibility in that period. In fact Callaghan's only hope is to recommit his alliance with the trade-union leaders, even at the expense of giving certain limited concessions to the rank and file.

The offering of such concessions has for the first time brought Callaghan into conflict with the bourgeoisie. His package delivered to the House of Commons January 18 is just a first step, but even this brought bleatings from the CBI. It was not the breaking of his own 5% ceiling through his measly offer of a £3.50 rise to the low paid that provoked this response. Rather, it was his stated intention to strengthen the Prices Commission and particularly his proposal to remove the clause that restricts action against price rises by firms whose profits will be affected.

Of course, these measures are mere demagoguery. But the CBI correctly thinks that this will encourage rank-and-file demands to dip into profits and not wages or social services as a solution to the crisis. This is what they see as dangerous.

Simultaneously, Callaghan is not above utilizing the Tory campaign for his own ends in order to politically undermine rank-and-file action and also to try to put some backbone into the trade-union leaders. Callaghan has already forced the TUC and particularly Moss Evans, the leader of the two-million-strong Transport and General Workers Union (T&GWU), which organizes the lorry drivers, to draw up a "code of conduct" for picketing. In fact it was "left" leader Kitson who was given the job of policing this new code. The struggle was therefore unnecessarily drawn out and the 20%-plus settlement fell just short of the workers' full claim.

At the same time, in a futile effort to break the strike, Callaghan called on backward sections of the class to deliberately cross picket lines and gave encouragement to the wives of some drivers to demonstrate against it.

The train drivers leaders are similarly buckling under. For a number of weeks now train drivers have been taking two days of strike action a week. They chose Tuesdays and Thursdays so as to cause maximum disruption with the least loss of wages. This action, combined with the lorry drivers' strike and the public-sector dispute, is what has given such an appearance of gigantic disruption over the past weeks. Rail union leaders have now called it off in favour of nebulous agreements to negotiate through an "independent tribunal."

Undoubtedly, the current negotiations to put together a new "social contract" are aimed at undermining the public sector

manual workers' fight against low pay. There can be no question as to the militancy and determination of the rank and file. The magnificent day of action on January 22 saw more than 1.5 million workers on strike. A demonstration of 80,000 workers on the same day ended in a mass meeting the rank and file took over with the resounding message "All Out."

Rank-and-file walkouts have already occurred in some localities, preempting the bureaucracy's attempts to control the strike through "selective action." The aim of the bureaucrats is simply to create pressure to win the government to their own pet schemes, which are a far cry from the demands of the full claim for £60 and a thirty-five-hour week.

The bureaucrats propose a way ahead not on the basis of struggle but through a public enquiry to investigate "comparability" with workers in the private sector. For this they are prepared to go along with the increases being spread out over two or three years and even to give up the strike weapon in some sectors, like the hospitals.

The militants will fight very strongly against such a sellout, of course. They are putting massive pressure on the bureaucracy for action. When openings are given to them through the "selective actions" proposed by the bureaucrats, a massive response is forthcoming that goes beyond the intentions of the top officials. So even this limited action is having an immediate impact.

Refuse is beginning to pile up, hospitals are being disrupted, schools are being closed, and water is not being purified in many areas. All-out action would very quickly bring the government to its knees. But the bureaucracy is holding out against this. Each of the public-sector unions is "doing its own thing."

Clearly what militants should fight for is the formation of a public-sector union alliance both at the top and through the formation of joint shop steward and strike committees comprising delegates from all groups of workers on strike. Union officials and union resources should be put at the disposal of such joint rank-and-file delegate committees.

The potential influence of the militants can be gauged from the fact that such a strike committee has already been set up in the London region of the National Union of Public Employees (NUPE), the biggest union involved. The low-pay action committees now being formed around the country, which involve militant activists, must be dedicated to generalizing this. It would, of course, be silly for these activist committees to counterpose themselves as *the* rank-and-file leadership.

The success or failure of this strike will be greatly influenced by who wins the political argument. The longer it lasts solely on the basis of sectoral militancy, the more the government will be able politically to undermine it.

Already a softening up process is underway. Denis Healy, the chancellor of the exchequer, has echoed the call of the governor of the Bank of England, who wants any rises beyond the government's limit to be taken back in higher taxes and

All-out action would bring the government to its knees . . .

massive cuts in public expenditure, leading to a big increase in unemployment.

Cabinet minister William Rodgers has entered the fray with a call for a total wage freeze for six months "to give workers time to reflect," if the union leaders are not able to control the situation and cut down the size of the claims. This follows on Callaghan's successful use of the threat of a "state of emergency" to get the bureaucracy to control the rank-and-file picketing initiatives. All these approaches rely on politically confusing the rank and file in order to strengthen the bureaucracy's hold.

Recall the TUC!

Quite simply then, support for the present wage offensive implies the simultaneous projection of a socialist alternative to Callaghan. This is the exact opposite of the current proposal for the TUC to renegotiate a new "social contract" with Callaghan.

The alternative is very simple. The TUC should immediately be recalled—in the first place to develop maximum solidarity with the present wage offensive. Powerful sections like the miners and power workers who have claims pending should be encouraged to bring forward their claims alongside those at present in struggle, particularly the public-sector manual workers.

At such a congress a plan would have to be drawn up to prepare the fight against the threatened assault on the right to picket. But most important of all, the TUC could begin to outline a global action program that would, quite simply, turn on their head the formulas that have guided the Labour government's austerity program.

The aim of Labour's austerity has been to pump resources from the working class into profits through wage restraint, cuts in the social services, and the creation of massive unemployment. A policy in the interests of workers would have to nationalize the decisive capitalist sectors under workers control and project a workers plan for the economy.

Elements on which such a program could be elaborated already exist. The fight for a thirty-five-hour week to begin to tackle unemployment is already a component of most major wage claims. The

obvious corollary of this is work-sharing with no loss of pay.

Similarly, most claims argue the case for a wage increase in terms of the need to make up for losses during the period of the social contract. Why not translate this into a demand that wages should rise simultaneously with a rise in the cost of living as calculated through trade-union committees?

Added to this should be all the experience gained in the present wage round, in which strike committees have begun to impose certain elements of workers control in arrogating decisions about "essential supplies" to themselves.

The fight for a recalled TUC must be posed as an outcome of the present struggles. A fight for local cross-sectoral committees involving all those prepared to struggle, perhaps as subcommittees of Trades Councils, would be vital steps. These could then be linked into the convening of regional TUC conferences. Such an approach would make it very difficult for the government and the bureaucrats to use a recalled TUC as a way of legitimizing a new "social contract" dreamed up behind the backs of the workers in struggle.

Recall the Labour Party Conference!

The adoption of a global socialist alternative becomes more acute as we move to a general election. What mandate does Callaghan have for his current policies? The last Labour Party Conference rejected them by a 2-to-1 majority and called for an active campaign against the 5% ceiling on wage increases. What mandate does he or the TUC leaders have for promulgating a new "social contract"?

Both the Labour Party and the TUC are committed to "free collective bargaining." To be sure, a fight is going on in the Labour Party National Executive Committee over a new Labour Party manifesto. But this is being fought behind the scenes. A recalled Labour Party Conference would bring this fight out into the open and be subject to elaboration by those forces actually involved in the struggle against Callaghan.

We should not underestimate the problems already posed for the government by the simple rejection of its 5% policy by the last Labour Party Conference. The convening of a conference now would put big obstacles in front of the present bureaucratic attempts to cobble together some new social contract. With the elaboration and adoption of a new manifesto committed to socialist policies, a basis would be laid for the removal of Callaghan and all those, both inside and outside the cabinet, who support austerity from their leading roles in the labour movement.

Those left MPs who have declared their support for the present wages offensive have a special responsibility in this fight, which must be started now. They could do worse than begin with a declaration of

intent to vote against the upcoming budget, whose major elements have been revealed in the recent white paper on estimates. This budget clearly follows in the steps of all the other right-wing budgets of the Callaghan government. All the present chattering about an alternative manifesto could be counterposed to this budget and offered as a framework within which the present wages fight could be developed.

But the prospect of such an undertaking has paralyzed the Labour Left and the NEC. They have been unable to offer any alternative whatsoever except to demand that the government give some concessions to the TUC to allow them to keep control of their base. What they choose to ignore is that Callaghan is quite prepared to make such limited concessions—but with the aim of recouping the ground and relaunching the offensive.

Return a Labour Government!

Despite the bankruptcy of the Labour Left and the viciousness of the Labour government, all socialists must still campaign for the return of a Labour government. No encouragement can be given to demand for a withdrawal by trade unionists from the (financial) political levy to demand for a withdrawal by trade unionists from the (financial) political levy to the Labour Party. Either of these developments could only reinforce the grip of the right wing on the Labour movement. We lose everything by handing over to the Tories the task of defeating the right-wing leaders of Labour at the polls.

In reality, the developments of the last few months have indicated that events are moving in exactly the opposite direction. Despite the surface appearance of a downturn up to the beginning of 1977, the fact of a Labour administration can, if handled correctly, only reinforce the building of a socialist alternative.

The old Leninist adage that "we support Labour like the rope supports a hanging man" is now coming into its own. For the broad vanguard inside the working class is now being forced to question the political perspective of their leaders in government and in the TUC as they have experienced the variants of right-wing policy that was supposed "in the long run" to have brought them prosperity.

Class-struggle policies are still far from being supported by a majority inside the working class. But the leaders of the present strikes at the stewards level have been forced to weigh the political problems posed. Two fundamental lessons vital to the construction of a class-struggle left wing are now being assimilated by the broad vanguard.

In the first place, the folly of relying on the top union officials is now being understood by the vanguard. This vanguard is vulnerable to the maneuvers of the bureaucracy so long as it lacks a global political

alternative. Nonetheless many more militants are now prepared to support the building of class-struggle groupings in the union, because of the growing skepticism in the "broad Left" formations, sponsored by the Communist Party, which are tied to the maneuvers of the left trade-union leaders.

An important grouping of militants crystallized around the Ford's Workers Group during the course of the strike. It continues to organize militants on the shop floor oriented toward recomposing the shop stewards leadership on a class-struggle basis.

Similarly, inside the National Union of Public Employees, the Campaign for Action in NUPE (CAN) is beginning to organize in the same way and has a potential of really rooting itself in the present strikes.

So, too, in British Leyland, despite the defeat of the recent wage struggle, a similar grouping has been formed around "Stewards for the Annual Review," which is presently to be put on a more long-term footing. Similar groupings already exist in some of the white-collar unions, like teachers, local government, and the major civil-service unions.

These class-struggle formations are based on another lesson of the last years. That is the futility of attempting to "go around" the official and semi-official structures. Such an orientation was animated by the Socialist Workers Party and embodied in their Rank and File formations and the Right to Work Campaign. These outfits have seen a decline and crisis over the past period. The theorizing on which much of this was based in the recent period—the supposed "bureaucratization" of the senior stewards and convenors—is now seen, even by themselves, as so much poppycock in the face of the present stewards-led offensive.

As the SWP too are now beginning to understand, the stewards movement had been politically, not socially, incorporated into the bureaucracy's class-

collaborationist project. As they are equally beginning to understand, the key to fighting this is the projection of a "socialist alternative."

'Socialist Unity'

One of the best ways of projecting this is the standing of revolutionary left candidates in the elections. There is no contradiction between this and the call for the return of a Labour government. Indeed, in this situation it is a dereliction of revolutionary duty not to seek each and every means to project such a socialist alternative and give it equal emphasis to that of calling for a Labour government. Otherwise it might be mistakenly assumed that this call is equivalent to endorsing Callaghan's right-wing policies.

Of course, given the context in which the coming election is going to be fought, an intervention into the electoral arena must be linked up at every level with the class-struggle fights that are under way not only on the wage front but also in the fight against racism and fascist violence, in the fight for women's rights and women's liberation, in the fight for the withdrawal of troops from Ireland, and in solidarity with the struggles in Iran and South Africa.

It is quite false therefore to counterpose standing candidates against Labour to activism. But activism around single issues is in itself inadequate. The crying need is for the projection of a *global* alternative to Callaghan, and this demands the projection of an *overall* action program.

This is why Socialist Unity—a class-struggle electoral alliance—will be standing a number of candidates in the elections in carefully chosen constituencies. There is general agreement on the revolutionary left with the action program. To refuse common action in the elections when such agreement exists can in this situation aid no one but Callaghan.

January 28, 1979

Deutscher Prize Awarded to Bahro

The Isaac Deutscher Memorial Prize for 1978 has been awarded to Rudolf Bahro for his book *The Alternative in Eastern Europe*, recently published in English translation by New Left Books. The prize, first presented in 1969 to Martin Nicolaus, confers a monetary award of £100.

Bahro, a Communist oppositionist, was arrested by East German authorities in 1977 following publication of his book by the publishing house of the West German trade-union federation. He was subsequently tried in secret and sentenced to eight years in prison on crude charges of "betraying state secrets" and working for

some unnamed "intelligence agency."

The next Deutscher Memorial Prize will be awarded in the fall of 1979. Works, whether published or in typescript, should be submitted by May 1 to: The Isaac Deutscher Memorial Prize, c/o Lloyds Bank, 68 Warwick Square, London SW1, England.

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Pol Pot Regime—Was It a Workers State?

By Fred Feldman and Steve Clark

[The following article appeared in the February 23 issue of the *Militant*, a revolutionary-socialist newsweekly published in New York.]

* * *

Under the impact of the Vietnamese revolution and the U.S. war in Indochina, a deep class polarization began to develop in Kampuchea (Cambodia) in the 1960s.

In an effort to keep the Kampuchean workers and peasants under control, Prince Norodom Sihanouk brought several prominent pro-Stalinist intellectuals into his cabinet in 1962. These included Khieu Samphan and Hou Youn, later central figures in the Pol Pot regime toppled earlier this year.

Continuing mass unrest, particularly in the countryside, and mounting imperialist pressure, convinced Prince Sihanouk by the spring of 1967 that this maneuver was serving no purpose, so he drove the Stalinists out of his cabinet. They quickly went underground.

The Vietnamese National Liberation Front (NLF) had established base camps, hospitals, and headquarters in the eastern part of Kampuchea. In exchange for toleration of these bases by Sihanouk, the Vietnamese Stalinist leaders offered political support to his landlord-capitalist government. Nonetheless, the struggle for agrarian reform and national independence of the Vietnamese masses won wide support from the peasants, students, and workers of Kampuchea, whether of Khmer or Vietnamese nationality.

The Kampuchean ruling classes, including Sihanouk, became worried that the deepening of the Vietnamese revolution would inspire the Kampuchean masses to follow its example. These worries were confirmed in 1967, when a massive peasant uprising took place in the main rice-growing district of Battambang. The rebellion was brutally crushed. But in its aftermath, guerrilla forces led by the relatively young Cambodian Communist Party began to grow. By 1970, they had an armed force of about 4,000.

Unlike the Vietnamese CP, the Kampuchean CP traced its roots only to the early 1950s. And the grouping that came to dominate the Pol Pot regime, including Ieng Sary and Khieu Samphan, took the party's leadership only in the late 1960s.

The U.S. imperialists placed increasing pressure on Sihanouk to fully throw in with Washington and to allow U.S. and Saigon forces to occupy eastern Kampu-

chea. Sihanouk moved steadily to the right, but continued to resist the most extreme U.S. demands.

In March 1970, while visiting abroad, Sihanouk was toppled by a U.S. supported coup. The bulk of Kampuchea's ruling circles supported the new government of Gen. Lon Nol, who called for help from Washington and the Thieu regime in a



U.S. troops invade in 1970.

military effort to drive the NLF out of eastern Kampuchea.

The Hanoi government and National Liberation Front now reversed their policy of supporting the Pnompenh regime. "The Vietnamese Communists," wrote Malcolm Caldwell and Lek Tan in *Cambodia in the Southeast Asian War*, "hitherto scrupulously correct in their behavior, began passing out arms to disaffected Cambodian groups and helping them with military training. These groups consisted of Cambodian peasants, Cambodians of Vietnamese extraction, and rubber plantation workers—long radical and now incensed by U.S. and ARVN (Saigon army) assaults on their work places and living quarters. . . ."

With Vietnamese help and endorsement from Sihanouk, the Kampuchean Stalinists became the leaders of a peasant army—the National United Front of Kampuchea (FUNK)—that eventually grew to 50,000 or more. The rebellion quickly spread throughout eastern Kampuchea and then to the whole countryside. (Sihanouk dubbed the guerrillas the "Khmer Rouge," a label the CP leaders themselves then adopted.)

Sihanouk's call for armed resistance to the U.S. puppets deprived Lon Nol's regime of its last shred of legitimacy in the peasants' eyes and gave them confidence to begin instituting a land reform and settling accounts with landlords, tax-

collectors, usurers, corrupt local officials, and other oppressors.

U.S. forces who had invaded Kampuchea in May 1970 were forced by massive protests in the United States to withdraw the following month. After that, the peasant rebels won the vast bulk of the countryside and held on to it until the fall of Lon Nol in April 1975.

As in Vietnam, the military command structure that headed the peasant army was not revolutionary socialist, but Stalinist. The Kampuchean CP, and thus the FUNK, adhered to the strategy of "people's war," which called for peasants fighting in the countryside to the exclusion of the revolutionary mobilization of the urban working class and poor.

As part of this strategy, the Khmer Rouge leaders gave political support to representatives of the old ruling classes, most notably Sihanouk himself and his backers—deadly enemies of the workers and peasants.

Like the National Liberation Front's in Vietnam, the FUNK's program promised to preserve capitalism after the fall of the old regime.

With this perspective, the rebel forces had no interest in forging an anticapitalist alliance with the working class, students, and urban poor. It failed to take advantage of the massive anti-Lon Nol, antiwar, and anti-U.S. demonstrations that shook Pnompenh and other Kampuchean cities in 1972.

To the contrary, the Khmer Rouge leaders viewed the cities as enemy bastions to be conquered. The civil war thus settled into a long siege by the peasant army, in which villages, rice paddies, and forests became free-fire zones for U.S. bombers.

Nonetheless, the urban masses erupted in struggle again in the first months of 1975, as the Khmer Rouge closed in on Pnompenh and other major cities. Demonstrations broke out calling for an immediate end of the war and denouncing Lon Nol and his U.S. backers.

When the first Khmer Rouge troops marched into Pnompenh, they were greeted tumultuously by workers, students, village refugees, and rank-and-file soldiers, who were convinced that an era of war and imperialist domination was ending.

"Three hours after the surrender," reported an April 18 Associated Press dispatch, "thousands of students paraded along the main boulevards, waving banners to greet the Communist forces."

"Communist troops reportedly embraced Government soldiers and lifted them

aboard personnel carriers for a victory parade along the waterfront."

"The popular enthusiasm is evident," said Patrice de Beer in a dispatch from Pnompenh to the Paris daily *Le Monde*. "Groups form around the insurgents, who often carry American weapons. They are young, happy, surprised by their easy success. The Republican soldiers quickly put up white flags. Processions form in the streets and the refugees are starting to go home."

U.S. Destruction

The Khmer Rouge commanders had come to power in a country whose economic and social structure had been devastated by five years of barbaric U.S. bombing, puppet rule, and civil war.

More than 400,000 tons of bombs pounded the Kampuchean countryside from 1970 to 1973. During the five-year civil war, about 600,000 people were killed, and an equal number wounded, in a population of about 7 million. Hundreds of villages were destroyed.

The systematic bombing of communications, transport, and irrigation networks and the killing of hundreds of thousands of draft animals, compounded the ruin of agriculture.

Millions of refugees were driven into the cities. Pnompenh swelled from 600,000 to nearly 3 million. Industrial production was more than cut in half.

Several thousand people had starved to death during the last months of the war, as food supplies dwindled in the cities. With typical imperialist brutality, Washington cut off rice shipments when Lon Nol's fall became certain.

The mobilization of the urban masses that greeted the FUNK opened the door to the establishment of a workers and peasants government in Kampuchea. Such a government could then have brought to bear the power of the workers, urban poor, and peasants against domestic and foreign exploiters to begin solving the grave problems facing the country.

The work of repairing the damage done by the war and moving forward required the further mobilization of the working class and peasant masses to expropriate the capitalists and landlords, demolishing the old capitalist state and economic relations, root and branch.

This would have laid the foundation for a qualitative step forward in social and economic organization—a planned economy.

The irreplaceable role of working-class mobilizations was clearly evident in the Russian and Cuban revolutions. But the anticapitalist struggles of the working class were equally decisive, even though subjected to bureaucratic direction and control, when Stalinist governments were forced to overturn capitalism in Vietnam, China, Yugoslavia, and Soviet-occupied Eastern Europe.

The Khmer Rouge commanders, however, quickly demonstrated they had no intention of organizing and relying on the masses to overcome Kampuchea's social crisis or of acting in their interests.

Having come to power on the crest of a revolutionary upsurge in the countryside, they not only brutally smashed and dispersed the urban population, but they drove back the land seizures and redistribution begun by the peasants.

This counterrevolutionary assault on the toiling masses by the Khmer Rouge leaders signaled that the new government was preserving rather than abolishing the outmoded capitalist system. The crushing blows dealt to the workers and peasants paved the way for new capitalist layers to begin taking shape among the petty bourgeoisie in the state apparatus and the nooks and crannies of the economy.

This view of the Pol Pot regime contrasts sharply with the attempts by the capitalist press to portray it as a "Communist" nation. The bourgeois media leap at any chance to smear socialism by falsely identifying it with brutal, totalitarian regimes.

For different reasons, the majority of the radical press also viewed the Pol Pot regime as "socialist."

In fact, the *Militant* was virtually alone last January in not analyzing the Vietnam-Kampuchea war as a conflict between "two Communist nations."

Why did the *Militant* differ? To understand this, let's look more closely at how the popular jubilation that greeted the Khmer Rouge victory over Lon Nol was transformed into massive suffering and the opening of a reactionary offensive against the workers and peasants.

Forced Evacuation of Cities

"Using loudspeakers, or simply shouting and brandishing weapons," wrote Sidney Schanberg in the May 9, 1975, *New York Times*, "they swept through the streets, ordering people out of their houses. At first we thought the order applied only to the rich in villas, but we quickly saw that it was for everyone as the streets became clogged with a sorrowful exodus."

"In Phnom Penh, two million people suddenly moved out of the city en masse in stunned silence. . . ."

"Hospitals jammed with wounded were emptied, right down to the last patient. They went—limping, crawling, on crutches, carried on relatives' backs, wheeled on their hospital beds. . . ."

Similar forced evacuations were carried out in other cities, including Battambang and the port of Kompong Som. At least 3 million people were involved in the exodus. How many died is unknown. But adequate medical care—already much reduced by war and U.S. cutoff of aid—was almost impossible to obtain.

The urban population was scattered against its will over the countryside and set to work growing rice, repairing dikes,

building dams and canals, digging irrigation ditches, and carving out other projects aimed at restoring and extending agricultural production.

Few were exempted from the forced evacuation. But the top leadership of the Khmer Rouge soon established its administrative centers in the finest government buildings in Pnompenh, remaining there until the Cambodian rebels and Vietnamese troops closed in on the city earlier this year.

Apologists for the Khmer Rouge regime in its early stages, such as George Hildebrand and Gareth Porter in their book *Cambodia: Starvation and Revolution*, initially sought to excuse the brutal evacuation by pointing to the famine threat.

Even Porter and Hildebrand, however, acknowledged the regime's actual political evaluation of the working class by stressing that the urban population was economically "unproductive."

Top leaders of the new regime defend the forced exodus by citing "security" dangers. Thus Pol Pot stated in Peking on October 4, 1977:

"This [evacuation] was decided on before victory was won, that is, in February 1975, because we knew that before the smashing of all sorts of enemy spy organizations, our strength was not great enough to defend the revolutionary regime. . . ."

"But when we crushed them, it was difficult for them to stage a comeback. Their forces were scattered in various cooperatives which are in our own grip."

The Kampuchean rulers never considered for a moment relying on the working people and the urban poor to stamp out counterrevolutionary threats. They never considered calling a general strike to crush the remains of the old regime, as Fidel Castro did when Batista fell on December 31, 1958.

They didn't even go as far as the Vietnamese Stalinists, who countered capitalist economic sabotage by encouraging workers committees under their control to



Khmer Rouge enter Pnompenh.

seize factories in the last hours of the Saigon puppet regime.

The Khmer Rouge leaders saw the exploited and oppressed of the cities not as a potential popular base for a new revolutionary regime, but as irreconcilable class enemies. Proclaiming the need to crush "enemy agents," the regime actually crushed the Kampuchean working class and its urban allies.

A Possibility Foreseen by Trotsky

Despite the extreme character of the measures taken by the Pol Pot regime, such policies offer no puzzle if it is understood that Stalinist and other petty-bourgeois nationalist currents are alien from the working class in program and, in China and Indochina, in social composition as well.

Many radicals, however, assume the opposite: that a Stalinist leadership that comes to power in a revolutionary upsurge must inevitably overturn capitalism and institute a workers state. This error led some radicals to prettify the counterrevolutionary acts of the Khmer Rouge commanders, calling them a "unique," or "bizarre" form of socialist revolution.

In fact, developments such as those under Pol Pot were foreseen as a possibility by the exiled Bolshevik leader Leon Trotsky in 1932, in an article titled "Peasant War in China and the Proletariat" (see *Trotsky on China*, published by Pathfinder Press).

After the Stalinist policy of supporting Chiang Kai-shek had led to the defeat of the Chinese revolution of 1925-27, in which the working class had been the driving force, the surviving Chinese Communists retreated to the countryside and began guerrilla war. Having lost its former base in the cities, the party's composition was transformed in a few years from overwhelmingly working class to almost entirely peasant.

Trotsky urged Chinese workers to support the peasant guerrillas against Chiang Kai-shek as part of the anti-imperialist struggle. But he cautioned that their victory would not necessarily lead the Chinese workers to power.

"The commanding stratum of the Chinese 'Red Army' has no doubt succeeded in inculcating itself with the habit of issuing commands," wrote Trotsky. "The absence of a strong revolutionary party and mass organizations of the proletariat renders control over the commanding stratum virtually impossible. The commanders and commissars appear in the guise of absolute masters of the situation and upon occupying the cities will be rather apt to look down from above on the workers. . . ."

"Thus, in China the causes and grounds for conflict between the army, which is peasant in composition and petty bourgeois in leadership, and the workers not only are not eliminated but, on the contrary, all the circumstances are such as to



Khmer Rouge soldier orders residents out of capital.

greatly increase the possibility and even the inevitability of such conflicts; and in addition the chances of the proletariat are far less favorable to begin with than was the case in Russia."

When the peasant armies marched into China's cities in 1949, the Maoist leaders did implement an anti-working-class policy, although not mass evacuations as in Kampuchea. They banned strikes and demonstrations. They sought to draw capitalist forces into the government.

But when the Chinese government was compelled to take on U.S. imperialism in the Korean War, it had to change course. Land reform was extended to all of southern China. (Previous waves of reform had affected only the North.)

The resulting peasant mobilizations spurred urban anticapitalist mobilizations beginning in 1951. A workers and peasants government thus came into being and began carrying out—under the auspices of the Maoist bureaucracy—the urban mobilizations and economic measures that in 1953 transformed China into a workers state.

Because of these factors, the dangers that Trotsky had foreseen in China—although present after the 1949 revolution—did not prevent the destruction of capitalism and ending of imperialist domination.

In Kampuchea, however, the conflict Trotsky warned of took on an extremely sharp form, resulting in defeat for the working people. The counterrevolutionary course of a Stalinist-led peasant army that Trotsky had foreseen occurred in fact under the Cambodian CP with the consolidation of Pol Pot's regime.

The total urban evacuation forced through by Pol Pot's gang dispersed the working class and ruled out the possibility of a workers and farmers government in Kampuchea such as the one that toppled capitalism in China. This initial step was quickly reinforced by imposition of ruthless totalitarian measures on a mass scale.

The totally undemocratic and secretive character of the Khmer Rouge leadership contributed to an atmosphere of fear and intimidation. Not only did the population have no opportunity to elect its leaders and discuss their failings, but systematic efforts were made for a time to even conceal the identity of the leaders.

Instead, the Khmer Rouge apparatus was described simply as the "Angkar" (the organization). Only in September 1977 were the Kampuchean people informed of what foreign observers had taken for granted: at the head of the Angkar was the Kampuchean Communist Party.

Khmer Rouge Policies

In the Western press, the Pol Pot tyranny was commonly portrayed as seeking to return to an undefined but precapitalist agricultural past by transforming the whole population into peasants.

But the precapitalist modes of production (whether Asiatic or feudal) grew up over centuries, shaped by complex social and economic forces; they can't be reproduced in a matter of a few years, even if a certain number of policies are implemented that seem to contradict the direction of historical development.

The top Khmer Rouge leaders were not impoverished rural folk with horizons limited to the village. They were Paris-

educated, several of them specializing in the economic problems of the "third world." Moreover, they were adherents of Stalinist politics.

For such a grouping, reversion to precapitalist relations of production seemed as unrealistic as it was in fact.

Vice-premier Ieng Sary summarized the economic goals of the regime at the September 5, 1975, session of the United Nations General Assembly:

"[Our] economic policy consists of considering agriculture as the base and industry as the predominant factor. Agriculture supplies the raw materials for industry, which in turn serves to develop agriculture. Our objective is to make our country a modern agricultural and industrial country."

And a radio broadcast promised, "The larger the quantity of rice we can export, the greater will be the possibility of importing machine tools, various engines, and other equipment for Cambodia's economic development."

These statements contain the fundamental economic strategy of the Kampuchean regime under Pol Pot. The new regime aimed to maximize exploitation of labor and minimize consumption, so as to become self-sufficient in food and accumulate an agricultural surplus that could be sold on the world market. Through these exports, it would finance industrialization.

Not a Workers State

The defeat of Lon Nol's imperialist-backed forces was a devastating blow to Kampuchea's bourgeoisie, almost all of whom had fled by the fall of Lon Nol in 1975. The government came into the hands of the "Angkar," as did all urban property and a growing portion of the agricultural land.

For some commentators, this was enough to prove that capitalism had been overthrown in Kampuchea.

But the nationalization of property is not by itself sufficient to establish a workers state. The intervention of the workers—the only force in modern society capable of

establishing and maintaining a progressive economic structure—is needed.

The nationalizations in Kampuchea came about not through mobilizations of the working class—even limited and controlled ones—but following the Khmer Rouge's crushing of the urban workers.

The expropriation of the capitalists by the workers, and the transformation of industry into public property, creates the possibility for the coordination of the means of production under a national (and ultimately international) economic plan.

Economic isolation, bureaucratic mismanagement, and military spending imposed by imperialist encirclement keeps living standards in many workers states relatively low (but usually rising). Nonetheless, the planned economy makes possible vast expansion in fields such as medical care, education, care for the elderly, as well as the expansion of the size and weight of the working class. This is a reflection of the growing replacement of production for profit by production for use.

Who Defends Expropriations?

Even in the workers states ruled by bureaucratic castes, it is only the working class that is the ultimate guardian of the expropriation of the capitalists and of coordinated economic planning.

Trotsky regarded the bureaucratic caste in the Soviet Union as a threat to the new property forms created by the Russian revolution, because of its rapacious drive for private consumption and privileges.

The bureaucracy "continues to preserve state property only to the extent that it fears the proletariat," wrote Trotsky in *The Revolution Betrayed*. It is that well-grounded fear that has preserved planned economy in the Soviet Union, for all its distortions, in the half-century since the Stalinist bureaucracy took the reins of government.

Property in a workers state does not belong to the bureaucracy, despite its monopoly of political power. The Chinese and Soviet bureaucrats would discover this soon enough if they tried to carry out

anything like the cutbacks in public services that Pol Pot's regime undertook, much less try to return nationalized property to private ownership. The Polish Stalinists have found it difficult to even impose price increases without setting off profound working-class explosions.

In its drive to restrict consumption and accumulate a surplus to fund capitalist industrialization, on the other hand, the Khmer Rouge apparatus eliminated most public education; nearly abolished professional health care and hospitals; closed libraries and other cultural institutions; ended phone and mail service; stopped publishing books or newspapers; and slashed recreation and entertainment.

Labor was intensified to an extreme. The twelve-hour day was institutionalized. Days off were reduced. The "unproductive"—and politically suspect—working class was set to work in the rice paddies. And child labor became universal.

"Did you not have child labor at the beginning of your industrial revolution?" one Pol Pot official told *Washington Post* correspondent Elizabeth Becker during her visit to Kampuchea last December.

And one Pnompenh broadcast boasted, "Democratic Kampuchea is one huge work-site."

If Pol Pot's Kampuchea was a workers state, even with grave bureaucratic distortions, then revolutionary socialists would have to defend the possibility that such a state can come into being and in *no way whatsoever* mark a social and historical advance for the working class.

Revolutionists defend from imperialism or internal capitalist restoration the progressive economic conquests of the toilers in grotesquely bureaucratized workers states such as the Soviet Union and China.

But what would the world working class find to defend in the criminal social and economic policies imposed on the Kampuchean masses by Pol Pot? Nothing!

The Kampuchean working class had no stake whatever in the nationalization of property, carried out without its participation, by the petty bourgeoisie in the Angkar. These were the actions of a new bourgeoisie gestating in the state apparatus. They were not anticapitalist actions by the Kampuchean workers.

Driven from the cities and denied any direct participation in transforming society, the Kampuchean working class had neither a reason nor the capacity to defend the regime's nationalizations. These measures did not even begin to solve any of the social and economic problems facing the Kampuchean masses, from industrialization to real independence from imperialism.

In fact, the policies of the Pol Pot regime rolled back the revolutionary process that had unfolded in the fight against Lon Nol, setting back Kampuchean society.

Despite the scope of the nationalizations,



Work brigade constructing irrigation dikes.

the degree of disintegration of the Lon Nol regime, and the wartime devastation of the Kampuchean economy, the nationalizations under Pol Pot have numerous parallels in history.

They are in the same family with the extensive nationalizations by regimes in Egypt, Burma, Mozambique, and Angola, which were the opposite of social overturns by the workers, even those accomplished under bureaucratic leaderships.

And they bear no resemblance whatever to the revolutionary mass expropriations led by the Russian Bolsheviks, or by the Castro government in Cuba.

Neocolonial regimes are frequently forced to foster the primitive accumulation of capital through the state apparatus.

Such regimes cannot shatter the economic foundations that keep them under the thumb of imperialism. And they continue to require imperialist backing as their ultimate weapon against the struggles of the workers and peasants. In the end, therefore, these regimes do not and cannot maintain nationalized property or achieve independence from imperialism.

Aside from instances where unprofitable enterprises are taken over by the state, nationalizations undertaken without the mobilization of the working class against the employers and their agents prove transitory.

Imperialist economic dominance reasserts itself through control over the world market and sources of investment capital. New capitalist elements grow up among the petty bourgeoisie in the state apparatus and among the traders in the countryside and city. These elements press first for the relaxation of controls, and ultimately for the denationalization of profitable properties.

This has already happened in Egypt and Burma. It presses today on Mozambique and Angola. It lay in Kampuchea's future, had the Pol Pot regime managed to survive.

Since the masses have no fundamental stake in the state-owned property of these capitalist neocolonies, denationalization can take place without provoking a civil war. Such peaceful reversion to private property could never occur in any of the workers states. It would meet massive popular resistance and even split the bureaucratic parasites who live off the proceeds of these social conquests.

In addition to the brutal dispersal of the working class, another indication of the capitalist character of the Pol Pot regime was its drastic reversal of the agrarian revolution that the peasants had begun to carry out during their struggle first against Sihanouk, and later Lon Nol.

"Land to the tillers" was the furthest thing from the minds of the Khmer Rouge commanders who controlled Kampuchea from 1975 until their overthrow last month.

The response of the regime to the pass-

ing of the famine danger and the growth of an agricultural surplus was not to ease the pressure on the rural work force or to increase its well being. To the contrary, draconian measures were instituted to assure that the peasants placed the product of their labor at the disposal of the Angkar.

At first most of the population was organized into low-level cooperatives, writes François Ponchaud in his book, *Cambodia: Year Zero*. In these cooperatives, "the land and means of production remain the peasants' property but are placed at the disposal of the co-operative for use by all."

But by the end of 1975 the regime adopted measures expropriating the poor peasants. So-called high-level cooperatives were declared. In these, "all means of production were pooled and the harvest belonged to the co-operative, which distributed it according to the deserts and needs of every individual. . . . But families still preserved some measure of freedom as regards the arrangement of their meals. This relative autonomy was also abolished in January 1976, when 'communities' (*sahakum*) were set up: food was no longer distributed, meals were eaten communally, and the only thing that belonged to anybody outright was his physical strength, which he contributed to the cooperative."

The new set-up allowed the rulers to assure themselves greater control over the harvest. The mislabeled "communal dining," for instance, was *literally* forced belt-tightening to assure that peasants would have no right to keep a store of rice for their own use, rather than for accumulation.

A growing number of state farms were also instituted, where the product went directly to the state. This was commonly referred to as the "Angkar's land," according to François Ponchaud.

To forestall any outbreak of opposition to this reactionary attack on the peasant masses, thousands of peasants were forced from their homes and moved to the fertile but underpopulated Northeast.

From this point on, the outbreak of uprisings (often involving sections of the Khmer Rouge apparatus in the East), and a vastly increased flow of refugees into neighboring countries, signaled that the Angkar was losing the support it once had among the peasants.

They, no less than the former city-dwellers, came to view the Pol Pot regime as tyrants.

These militarized agricultural "communities" were qualitatively different from the agrarian policies accompanying any revolutionary social overturn anywhere in the world, even those carried out in a distorted and bureaucratic way.

For revolutionists, the key task is to forge a lasting political alliance between the workers and poor peasants to topple the capitalists and the landlords and begin

the reconstruction of society on a new basis. That requires full support to the poor peasants' demands for agricultural plots of their own, as well as easy access to the machinery, feed, and fertilizer to work it.

It was by fighting to implement *this* that the Bolsheviks won the poor peasants to the side of the proletarian revolution in Russia, and this is the course being followed by the revolutionary government in Cuba today.

The socialist goal of reorganizing agriculture on a more efficient, collective basis can only be accomplished as the peasants *voluntarily* conclude that this will advance their own well-being and that of society as a whole. Forced collectivizations—not to

The regime's isolation was never as great as has been claimed . . .

mention the extreme capitalist accumulation squeezed out of the peasants by the Pol Pot regime—are an obstacle both to forging an alliance with the workers and to convincing peasants of the greater productivity of cooperative labor on a large scale.

The Khmer Rouge rulers used much of the agricultural surplus thus accumulated to renew some industries and open new ones. François Ponchaud reported as early as 1976 that "the rehabilitation of industry has definitely been launched."

Summarizing official radio broadcasts, he reported, "Mention is made of textile factories in Phnom Penh. . . . At Battambang the radio mentions a jute factory and a textile mill. . . . Elsewhere, there are silk-weaving factories, a fish-pickling factory at Kompong Ampel, a salt works at Kampot, a small blast-furnace at Phnom Dek, another on Mt. Aurel, and a cement works. . . ."

One of the chief industries of Cambodia, rubber, was moving back into full production by the end of 1978.

Of course, industry could not be revived even on this limited scale without reviving urban life. Estimates of the size of Pnompenh at the end of 1975 ranged from a few thousand persons to over 100,000 (the government's claim). By the end of 1978 the government claimed that 200,000 persons lived in the city and its suburbs. Reporters who visited the city at the end of 1978 said workers traveled to the outskirts for work in the factories and returned home in the evening.

The necessity of providing for a more skilled work force required the regime to begin opening makeshift schools and hospitals in more areas.

But the workers who had formerly lived in the cities often did not return. Instead, Chinese technicians, Khmer Rouge sol-

diers, peasants fresh from the fields, and children operated many factories.

The shift in the composition of the work force served the political needs of the Khmer Rouge leaders—assuring, they hoped, a relatively inexperienced working class that would more readily submit to militarized discipline and intensive exploitation.

Go It Alone?

The capitalist press made much of the Pol Pot regime's alleged aim to develop completely on its own, having little or nothing to do with the rest of the world.

The regime did resort to xenophobic demagoguery to rationalize its policy of conserving foreign exchange by minimizing imports. It also sought to bar outsiders from visiting Kampuchea to witness the brutal measures it was implementing.

But the regime's isolation was never as great as has often been claimed. From the start, it had close ties with China and North Korea, and a little later ties were forged with Yugoslavia and Romania.

And the Angkar's stated goal was always to become a major exporter of rice and agricultural products, and an importer of modern tools and machinery.

By August 1976, when its border with Thailand officially opened, Kampuchea was importing industrial and other products from there.

Trade relations were also established with Singapore, Malaysia, Indonesia, the Philippines, Japan, Madagascar, and other African nations.

Toward the end of 1978, the regime reopened the temples of Angkor Wat. Tourist service was in the hands of Thai businessmen.

And Japanese capital began to eye Kampuchea with interest. "Behind Japan's desire to aid Cambodia is also the desire to

see that it is economically viable," reported the November 10 *Far Eastern Economic Review*.

White-Jacketed Servants

In her reports from Phnompenh last December, the *Washington Post's* Elizabeth Becker made much of the "pursuit of total equality" by the Angkar leaders. But the military command structure and government apparatus were also accompanied by a hierarchy of privilege. Ponchaud reports that regular-army troops "are better equipped and better fed, and do not perform agricultural work." They and other officials also reportedly had access to the remaining stores of foreign medicines.

At the top, privileges took on greater scope. U.S. reporter Richard Dudman described meeting Pol Pot in the "stately palace of the former French governor-general in Phnom Penh." He noted "the curtained, partially opened windows of the reception room which was decorated with tropical flowers and furnished with colorful rugs and rows of overstuffed chairs." He was surprised to notice Pol Pot's "white-jacketed servants."

While insisting on an austere existence—devoid of entertainment, telephones, books, doctors, schools, or other "Western" frills—for the masses, the Angkar leaders had not neglected to grant themselves a somewhat better deal.

A Barter Economy?

The legal abolition of paper money and coin circulation by the Angkar has also been pointed to as evidence that it must have overturned capitalism.

But this formal abolition proves nothing. No regime—capitalist or noncapitalist—has yet been able to do without currency. No workers state, even the most economically developed, has reached a production

level adequate to meet human needs without currency as a circulating medium.

The measure could only be temporary in Kampuchea, as well as artificial. Although there were few consumer goods to be had, all goods—including rice—continued to be valued in terms of *riel*, the old Kampuchean currency. In the countryside, this was supplemented by large-scale smuggling, the use of rice as money, and undoubtedly other forms.

Washington Post correspondent Elizabeth Becker reported that at the Kampong Cham cooperative, "the rice is 'sold' to the central government in Phnom Penh. The cooperative receives a credit for the rice—4 *riel* per ton—and uses those credits to purchase things it cannot produce such as gasoline for its tractors.

"The accounts of each cooperative are kept on a national registry in Phnom Penh, an official told us.

"That is not so unusual," he said. "In your country you don't use money often. You use credit cards and checks."

The expansion of the Cambodian economy and its external trade would have inevitably forced the regime to reestablish the legal circulation of paper money and coins. But for the moment, its formal suppression coincided with the central goal of the Angkar leadership: minimizing consumption, while maximizing the exploitation of the work force—thus maximizing the accumulation of wealth in their own hands.

Ties With Imperialism

The drive toward primitive accumulation of capital, and fear of the domestic opposition this inevitably inspired, was pushing the Pol Pot regime toward closer links with imperialism in the last year of its existence.

The mass mobilizations that overturned capitalist property relations in South Vietnam in the spring of 1978 alarmed the imperialists and terrified their neocolonial satraps. This intensified the imperialist drive to isolate Vietnam and made them more alert to the possibility of using a weak, war-torn, but nonetheless capitalist, Kampuchea as a buffer against the Vietnamese revolution.

The extreme, and seemingly bizarre, aspects of the Kampuchean regime were not the product of any special irrationality of the Pol Pot regime. They were part and parcel of the profound irrationality and inhumanity that marks the world capitalist system in its advanced decay.

There were only two roads open to Kampuchean society. Along the road of a workers and peasants government, the masses could have been mobilized to overturn capitalism and move Kampuchean society forward. That road being rejected by the Kampuchean Stalinists, everything, from the forced dispersal of the working class to rural counterrevolution, flowed logically. These repressive policies were



Phnompenh last December.

Klassekampen (Norway)



Kampuchean troops on maneuver near Vietnam border in September.

Klassekampen (Norway)

built into the drive toward rapid capitalist accumulation.

The capitalist character of the regime also explains why imperialist powers near the scene such as Australia viewed the Pol Pot regime as a "buffer between communist Vietnam and non-communist Thailand" (November 10 *Far Eastern Economic Review*).

The overturn of Pol Pot opens a new period for the Kampuchean workers and peasants.

How can they advance the struggle for democratic rights? For land reform? For freedom from imperialist domination? For socialism?

The Pol Pot regime demonstrated its readiness to sell out the nation's independence when it sent the old imperialist puppet Sihanouk to represent it at the United Nations and call for a UN and U.S. military invasion against the Kampuchean rebels and Vietnamese troops.

Far from repudiating Sihanouk's call, Pol Pot's deputy, Ieng Sary, reaffirmed the former monarch's role as the regime's principal spokesman abroad. And Ieng Sary had high praise for Carter's indications of support.

The Pol Pot forces have also been in deepening collusion with the neocolonial military dictatorship in Thailand.

What a revealing end for a regime that claimed to oppose all foreign influences!

Pol Pot's representatives have also not hesitated to call on the rightist forces that supported Lon Nol to join them in fighting the new Kampuchean government.

Such moves are logical. The class character of the Pol Pot government compelled it in its death agony to look toward every counterrevolutionary force that ever infested Kampuchea. This petty-bourgeois, Stalinist-led gang had nothing to do with Kampuchean sovereignty or independence

from imperialism. It was a deadly enemy of the working class and socialism.

Which Way Forward?

It is likely that the Kampuchean masses will seek to take advantage of the openings provided by the fall of this capitalist tyranny to advance their class interests. They will want arms from the new government to defend themselves against punitive raids by Pol Pot's remaining followers, and to extirpate every trace of the tyranny.

And they will press for the creation of a workers and peasants government that will pursue policies in their interests.

A workers and peasants government would establish such basic public services as education and medical care for all, abolish compulsory labor for young children, and reduce the workday and workweek. It could mobilize the working people for public ownership of industry, blocking the re-emergence of a capitalist class in the transition period.

The peasants and workers will seek to return to their own homes.

The peasants will want a real land reform—including the right to own their own plots of land and draft animals, or to work with others on a cooperative basis, depending on *the desires of the poor peasants themselves*.

Working people will find new opportunities to press for workers' control of production and democratic economic planning; for the right to think, write and speak as they please; and for the elementary right to form political parties and elect their own government.

The Vietnamese rulers, who militarily predominate at present among the anti-Pol Pot forces, cannot be counted on to advance such a revolutionary program. A deep-going socialist transformation in Kampuchea could undermine their bureau-

cratic control in Vietnam, and threaten their efforts to achieve "peaceful coexistence" with the imperialists and their regional satellites.

The leaders of the new Kampuchean regime—who originate in a series of splits from Pol Pot's CP—can also be counted on to try to keep the masses in a bureaucratic grip.

But the peasants and workers who make up the rank and file of the Vietnamese armed forces and Cambodian rebel troops may well respond differently. Such demands will help them in their struggle against bureaucratic misrule.

Despite the fondness Western journalists have for racist phrases about the "ancient hatred" between the Kampuchean and Vietnamese peoples, recent decades in Indochina have often demonstrated the unifying power of the common class interests that the Vietnamese and Kampuchean masses share.

The Kampuchean liberation struggle has been saddled with the misleadership of a Stalinist party. In 1975, this gang and their allies carried out one of history's most grisly betrayals, transforming the revolutionary victory that had been won into a counterrevolutionary reign of terror and exploitation.

No wing of the Stalinist movement can be counted on to advance the interests of the workers and peasants. The Kampuchean masses, like the oppressed in other countries, need a mass working-class party committed to a program of revolutionary internationalism.

Along this road the Kampuchean workers and peasants—who for a decade fought and suffered so much in the struggle for liberation—can take the next steps forward in the struggle against imperialism and for democratic rights and socialism. □

Selections From the Left

[The entire column this week is devoted to assessments of the Cuban revolution, which celebrated its twentieth anniversary January 1, 1979, and of the Cuban role in Africa.]

* * *

世界革命

"*Sekai Kakumei*" (World Revolution), central organ of the Japan Revolutionary Communist League (Japanese section of the Fourth International). Published weekly in Tokyo.

The January 29 issue has a special series of articles on the twentieth anniversary of the Cuban revolution. Goro Hayashi writes on the theme of how Cuba became "a stronghold of the world revolution."

"Led by Castro and Guevara, the Cuban people carried on an inspiring struggle, confronting the hardships they faced and defending the Cuban workers state. They did this in two ways.

"First of all, they transcended the petty-bourgeois limitations of the revolution in its initial phase. They expropriated the foreign corporations and launched an agrarian reform. Manuel Urrutia, the representative of the native bourgeoisie, was driven out of Cuba by the mass mobilizations.

"Secondly, the Cubans fought back against the U.S.-imposed encirclement of their country by seeking to extend the revolution to the rest of Latin America. . . .

"Their internationalist struggle, which included the foundation of OLAS and Guevara's call to 'create two, three, many Vietnams,' roused the spirit of radical youth and militants of the oppressed peoples throughout the world. And this proletarian internationalism remains alive today, twenty years after the revolution. It can be seen in Cuba's participation in the freedom struggles of the African people, as in Angola. . . .

"We support the Cubans' intervention in defense of the Angolan liberation struggle against the South African forces urged on by U.S. imperialism. And we support their intervention to defend the Ethiopian revolution against counterrevolutionary intervention by Somalia and the Sudan with the support of Egypt and Saudi Arabia.

"But we are opposed to the way the Cubans help hold back the revolutions in those countries through their support to military bonapartist rule by the MPLA and Mengistu, to the repression of oppositionists, and especially to the oppression of national minorities. . . .

"But in spite of these limitations, Cuba's

participation in African liberation struggles is making an important contribution to the advance of the African revolution."

Hayashi explains that the task of revolutionists is to defend Cuba by helping to extend the socialist revolution. "This is what will enable the Cuban leadership to press ahead with socialist construction in Cuba while maintaining their proletarian internationalist policy and avoiding the danger of subordination to the Kremlin."

The same issue also contains a summary of the history of the Cuban revolution, along with a speech by American Trotskyist James Harris describing the impact of the Cuban revolution within the United States.

COMBATE

"*Combat*," weekly organ of the Central Committee of the Revolutionary Communist League, section of the Fourth International in the Spanish state.

An article on the Eritrean liberation struggle in the January 18-24 issue states: "The positions held by the 'socialist bloc,' and by the USSR and Cuba in particular, warrant further analysis.

"While supporting Eritrean independence at the outset, they changed their position to favor the Dergue and lent full economic and military support to its military intervention in Eritrea. While at the beginning this involved only loans, arms deliveries, and military advisers, it was converted some time ago into direct intervention by Cuban and Soviet troops in Eritrea. . . .

"The immediate withdrawal of Soviet, Cuban, and Ethiopian troops from Eritrean territory, and the defense of the right to self-determination, are the basic demands that revolutionary Marxists put forward at this time. We think they should be taken up in the support that the workers parties and trade unions must give to the struggle of the Eritrean people."

was tun

"*What Is To Be Done*," weekly paper of the International Marxist Group. Published in Frankfurt, West Germany.

As its first article on the twentieth anniversary of the Cuban revolution, *Was Tun* published February 8 the full text of the introduction to the book *Dynamics of the Cuban Revolution* by Joseph Hansen.

The article was announced on the cover as answering the following questions:

"Che's and Fidel's revolution was an example for millions. Cuba's involvement

in Angola was supported by the left, but not its involvement in Ethiopia and Eritrea. What is the balance sheet of the Cuban revolution, what is the character of the regime?"

NEISTI

"*Spark*," published monthly in Reykjavik, Iceland, by the Revolutionary Communist League, sympathizing organization of the Fourth International.

In the December 18 issue, Gunnar assesses the Cuban role in the Ogaden war. He indicates that his article is based on material published in *Intercontinental Press/Inprecor*.

"Somalia's invasion of the Ogaden desert was carried out under the pretext of coming to the aid of the Somali people there, to free them from the yoke of the Ethiopian government. It is true that the Ogaden is inhabited by Somalis . . . but the question of whether they should be part of Ethiopia or Somalia is for them to decide. . . . The Somali invasion was supported financially and militarily by countries that saw their interests best served by crushing the Ethiopian revolution. This shows that the real aim of the invasion was to assure the hold of the capitalist class on Ethiopia.

"With Cuban support, the Ethiopians were able to get the invaders off their back. So, it is still an open question what the class struggles now going on in the country will lead to."

Socialist Challenge

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

In an article on Ethiopia in the January 25 issue, Richard Carver outlines the toll in civilian casualties, refugees, disease, and famine created by the Addis Ababa regime's late-1978 offensive in Eritrea. He cites communiqués from the Eritrean People's Liberation Front, reports by journalists, and testimony by refugees pointing to Soviet and Cuban military involvement in the fighting.

"These reports are not definitive proof," Carver writes. "But they offer strong evidence of one of the most brutal crimes against socialism by its self-styled proponents. . . .

"The political evidence of Cuban and Soviet support for the Derg, the Ethiopian ruling military council, is there for all to

see. Mengistu, the Derg leader, is the regular recipient of large arms supplies from the Soviet Union and treacherily panegyrics in *Granma*, the Cuban party paper."

Carver notes that the "Soviet Union and Cuba have had well-publicised differences with the Derg" on its handling of the national question. "But these were more pragmatic than principled. . . ."

"Cuban caution was . . . prompted by a residual internationalism combined with guilt at past associations with Eritrea. They argued it out with Mengistu, but finally gave way so as not to lose their ally. . . ."

"As in Angola the Cubans are doubtless moved by some healthy considerations. But the root of the betrayal in Eritrea lies in their failure to understand that support for the Ethiopian revolution is not the same thing as support for the Derg—indeed the two are incompatible.

"The reasons for such mistakes—the initial peculiarities of the Cuban revolution, the all-important role of a single crop in the Cuban economy, the absence of socialist democracy, and dependence on the Soviet Union—lie outside the scope of this article.

"But effectively the Cubans fall into line with Soviet foreign policy, which flows from far more cynical considerations. . . ."

rouge

"Red," revolutionary communist weekly. Published in Paris.

Among the numerous articles on Cuba published the month before *Rouge* reverted to a weekly format, four stand out.

1.

In his introduction to a six-page article, "Cuba Twenty Years After," in the December 29-January 1 issue, Michel Rovere states:

"The reality in Cuba today is the liberation of political prisoners, not all of whom were saboteurs or counterrevolutionaries who landed at dawn on the beaches of Camaguey. That poses a problem.

"The reality is the role of Cuban troops in Africa, in Angola and Ethiopia, where they stopped imperialist military offensives but are also helping maintain and build states that are neither workers nor socialist. . . . And that poses a problem.

"The reality is the congresses of the trade-union federation and the Cuban CP, which resemble as closely as brothers the Kremlin's ritual gatherings. While we attach less importance to symbols than to realities, we must ask ourselves whether these are not "symptoms" of a greater and already well-advanced disease."

In the section reviewing Cuba's role in Latin America, Rovere writes:

"The series of defeats from 1973 to 1976 (the coups in Chile and Uruguay, the coup in Peru in August 1975, the coup in Argentina) were the signal for a new deepening in the rightward course of Cuban foreign policy, and of its growing political integration into the 'international communist movement.'

"To be sure, this policy has not yet led to Cuba's directly supporting a reformist party that has concretely organized a defeat in a situation of revolutionary or prerevolutionary crisis. But it remains to be seen what the repercussions would be, including inside the Cuban CP, when a new rise of revolution occurs in countries like Brazil and Peru in the next few years."

2.

In the January 3 issue, Livio Maitan writes:

"We reject with equal firmness both apologetic interpretations that concentrate exclusively on the [Cuban revolution's] unquestionable historical gains, and hasty condemnations that often simply replace wild illusions of the past.

"We are convinced that in the Cuban workers state a whole series of contradictions peculiar to a society in transition operate more profoundly than they do in the other workers states. . . ."

"These contradictions have objective roots and can in no way be surmounted easily and quickly. The Fidel leadership appears to be conscious of this and seems to have made efforts to attenuate them and create conditions for overcoming them."

At the same time, Maitan says, the "gap between words and deeds" seems to be "growing dangerously." Cited in particular are Havana's policy of "support to the construction of a neocolonial state" in Angola and of "saying nothing" about the "extremely harsh repression of the liberation movement" in Eritrea.

3.

In the January 4 issue, Claude Gabriel asks:

"Is there a major difference in Ethiopia between the Soviet policy of supplying officers and matériel for use against the Eritrean people and the Cuban policy of remaining 'content' with training Ethiopian troops and assuring their logistics?"

"Is there a difference between Soviet support to saber-rattling 'Marxist-Leninist' regimes from the Congo to Madagascar, from Benin to Addis Ababa, and Castro's apologetic statements on these same regimes?"

"The reality is that there is not. The Cuban presence in Africa engenders new contradictions within peaceful coexistence not because Cuba is 'destabilizing' the continent but because of the simple fact that class struggles are developing there.

"The Soviet and Cuban response to these struggles is support for populist regimes, petty-bourgeois nationalist leaderships,

and a supposed 'noncapitalist road.'"

4.

In a full-page article in the January 31 issue of *Rouge*, reader Joël Lussac reports his impressions from a recent visit to Cuba as a tourist:

"The Cuban people daily confront bureaucratic red tape, rationing, inevitable lines, military, police, and speeches. All this amounts to so many characteristic traits of a pathological regime that wears itself out in trying to hide behind opportunist rhetoric, a lamentable parody of what is supposed to be an ongoing dialogue with the people. In reality this is only the affirmation of an institutional void, a void that borders on the absurd—the void of a military dictatorship that legitimizes its rule in the name of a 'revolutionary' ideology."

An accompanying poem from a volume by Armando Valladares entitled "Prisoner of Castro" is introduced with an editorial note that describes the Cuban prison system as the "Gulag of the tropics."

la gauche

"The Left," French-language paper of the Revolutionary Workers League, Belgian section of the Fourth International. Published weekly in Brussels.

The January 11 issue reprints the article by Claude Gabriel cited above, with an editorial note stating that it "expresses our point of view on the subject."

Internationalen

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

A full-page article in the February 2 issue takes up the questions of bureaucratization and subordination to Moscow. The aim, it is explained, is to prepare for a more extensive discussion of the Cuban revolution.

Internationalen says that the article is not intended to offer definitive conclusions. It does, however, respond to some arguments that have been raised:

"All available information indicates that while there has been continued bureaucratization, the Cuban bureaucracy by no means enjoys privileges of the same scope as those in other workers states.

"While power remains strongly centralized, it seems that the historic leaders of the revolutionary war continue to be in close touch with the masses. . . ."

"It has been maintained that the Cubans' direct military support for the MPLA regime in Angola and Mengistu's regime

in Ethiopia is conclusive proof of the Cuban leadership's subordination to the Kremlin.

"That is scarcely a tenable argument.

"The Cubans maintain that their support to these two African regimes does not involve political identification with them. These are two legal regimes that asked Cuba's help in their fight against military aggression. And the Cuban leadership considers it Cuba's internationalist duty to defend the advances of the world revolution against reactionary attacks.

"Peaceful coexistence, which is the fundamental principle of the Kremlin's international policy, hardly takes the form of giving direct military support. It is one thing to provide weapons and advisers, but sending troops involves putting in question the policy of peaceful coexistence."

As for Cuban participation in the fight against the Eritrean liberation groups, the article says that the reports are contradictory.

LUTTE OUVRIERE

"Workers Struggle," presents the views of the Revolutionary Workers League. Published fortnightly in Québec.

In the February 6 issue, Etienne Lemieux draws a critical balance sheet of the last ten years of the Cuban revolution:

"Toward the end of the 1960s a number of factors pressed a new course on the Cuban revolution. These included the deterioration of the Cuban economy, material aid from the Kremlin that became more and more subject to political conditions, the assassination of Che in Bolivia, and the growing influence of the Stalinists of the PSP [the old Cuban CP] within the Cuban leadership.

"The new orientation was reflected in foreign policy, for example, when Castro gave his support to the Soviet aggression in Czechoslovakia. A series of Stalinist 'theories' began to be internalized. These included revolution by stages (leading to support for reformist bourgeois regimes in Latin America), peaceful coexistence, a policy of Popular Fronts, 'peaceful transition to socialism,' and the theory of 'socialism in one country.' . . . This constitutes a grave strain on the political gains of the first years of the Cuban revolution."

QUÉ HACER?

"What Is to Be Done?" Fortnightly newspaper of the Socialist Workers Organization, a sympathizing organization of the Fourth International in Costa Rica. Published in San José.

The January 30-February 14 issue hails the twentieth anniversary of the revolution. After summing up the many gains

the Cuban people have made, and the lessons of Cuba for Latin American revolutionists, the article states:

"Nonetheless, the road of the Cuban revolution is not clear of dangers. Some of these are to be found within the Castro leadership itself, which has permitted the development of bureaucratic privileges in Cuba, prejudicing workers democracy."

Regarding foreign policy, *Que Hacer?* notes that "many valiant peoples and revolutionists have taken inspiration from the actions of the Cuban revolution. The defeat of the invading troops of the racist South African government at the hands of the Cuban army in Angola helped to spark the Black upsurge in South Africa."

However, "Cuba has more and more come to imitate the 'peaceful coexistence' line of the Kremlin rulers. This leads to supporting bourgeois regimes such as the Peruvian military junta, and bloody dictatorships like the Ethiopian Dergue against the liberation struggles of the peoples of the Ogaden and Eritrea."

The article takes up the Castro government's recent moves to release 3,000 counterrevolutionary prisoners: "In this way Castro is exposing Carter's demagogy about human rights. This strengthens the Cuban people in their demand for Carter to put an end to all bellicose maneuvers against Cuba, return the Guantánamo military base, lift the economic blockade that has been in effect since 1963, and establish relations with the Cuban workers state."

THE MILITANT

A socialist weekly published in the interests of the working people. Printed in New York City.

Fred Feldman reports from Pittsburgh in the January 19 issue that "defense of the Cuban revolution and its internationalist course in Africa was the central theme of a December 31 rally here to celebrate the revolution's twentieth anniversary. . . .

"The rally, attended by well over 600 people, was part of the eighteenth national convention of the Young Socialist Alliance."

The *Militant* prints excerpts from a speech given at the rally by José G. Pérez, a Cuban-American who is the editor of the Spanish-language socialist fortnightly *Perspectiva Mundial*.

"By preparing to release 3,000 imprisoned counterrevolutionaries," Pérez said, "Fidel took the U.S. government's sanctimonious human rights rhetoric and crammed it right down Jimmy Carter's throat.

"An aspect of this is the Cuban regime's new dialogue with the Cuban community abroad. A growing section of the Cuban community—probably a majority—is for ending the U.S. military threats and the economic blockade against Cuba. And a

smaller layer supports the revolution itself. . . .

"This is a tremendous responsibility and opportunity for us. We should participate in this process in the Cuban community, winning support for ending the blockade and U.S. military aggression against Cuba."

Another speaker at the Pittsburgh rally was Jack Barnes, national secretary of the U.S. Socialist Workers Party. His talk was reprinted in the February 19 issue of *Intercontinental Press/Inprecor*.

INFORMATIONS OUVRIERES

"Workers News," open forum for the class struggle. Published weekly in Paris.

The most recent article on developments in Cuba, printed in the October 18-25 issue, took note of the approaching death of Ramón Mercader:

"Thirty-eight years after murdering Trotsky, he is dying of bone cancer in Cuba, where Castro has taken good care of him. . . .

"Three years ago, Castro—who denounced the Trotskyists at the 'Tricontinental' in terms Stalin himself would not have disavowed—received him as a token of his fine counterrevolutionary cooperation with the Kremlin bureaucracy. This Castro—was he not the same one who lent a hand to the Chilean popular front against the workers and peasants. . . .?"

rood

"Red," Flemish weekly paper of the Revolutionary Workers League, Belgian section of the Fourth International.

An article in the January 5 issue asks: "Has the Cuban revolution fulfilled the hopes that the revolutionary generation of the 1960s throughout the world placed in it?"

Rood describes the development of the team around Castro into a revolutionary leadership and the emergence of "Havana as a symbol of consistent struggle against imperialism." But after the defeat of Che Guevara's attempt to mount a guerrilla struggle in Bolivia, "the wind began to shift direction."

"Cuban diplomacy became oriented more and more to the Soviet Union. Fidel Castro endorsed the intervention in Czechoslovakia. Havana described military dictatorships such as the one in Peru and the Torrijos government [in Panama] as 'progressive regimes.' . . .

"Angola might be cited against this. There Cuba played a positive role. It helped to halt an imperialist offensive. But it is also helping to maintain and build up a regime that has little to do with social-

ism. In the case of Angola, however, the Cuban leadership can be given the benefit of the doubt. But that is not true of the massive aid it gives to the military dictatorship of Mengistu in Ethiopia and its active support of the genocide in Eritrea."

In its analysis of developments inside Cuba, *Rood* focuses on the first congress of the Cuban Communist Party in 1975 and its aftermath:

"This congress was followed by an 'institutionalization,' by the setting up of organs of people's power. But, as was feared at the time they were established, they have proved not to be instruments of the autonomous activity of the masses. Just as the Cuban press is very reminiscent of that in the East European countries, so these bodies seem very similar to the mass organizations in the bureaucratic countries."

**Lutte
Ouvrière**

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

Lutte Ouvrière takes note of the twentieth anniversary of the Cuban revolution in its January 6 issue. The French weekly states that "for many, particularly for a good number of militants in the underdeveloped countries, Cuba still remains a symbol" because it was able to achieve real independence from U.S. imperialism despite its close proximity.

An article by Alan Lemoine then proceeds to recount the events of 1959 and part of 1960 in order to show that Fidel Castro's actions were motivated by consistent nationalism rather than by socialist ideology.

"It was American imperialism's policies," writes Lemoine, "that pushed Castro to give the Cuban revolution an increasingly radical direction."

While Castro's "merit" lies in the fact that he carried out "certain social and economic reforms" despite threats of military intervention from the United States, that does not make him, in Lemoine's eyes, "an internationalist revolutionary."

Since the article takes the revolution only to the point where U.S.-owned property was confiscated, *Lutte Ouvrière* does not have to mention the subsequent full-scale nationalization of the property of the Cuban bourgeoisie and does not have to explain why it believes that Cuba is still not a workers state.

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Palestinians Are Target

State Department Confirms Israeli Tortures

By Fred Murphy

The U.S. State Department's annual report on human rights in Israel, sent to Congress at the end of January, has touched off howls of protest from Israeli officials and American Zionists.

The report notes that "allegations about the routine use of torture involving psychological and physical pressures and instances of brutality by Israeli officials during interrogation of Arab security suspects have been publicized widely."

While the State Department tries to avoid lending credence to Arabs who, in its words, "continue to allege both publicly and privately that mistreatment of detainees is a systematic practice," it does state that "the accumulation of reports, some from credible sources, makes it appear that instances of mistreatment have occurred."

Predictably, Israeli Justice Minister Shmuel Tamir called this charge "utterly false, baseless and libelous" and an attempt "to smear our country and way of life" on behalf of "murderers." Prime Minister Begin said the brutality charge was "completely false, absolutely untrue."

In New York, Henry Siegman of the American Jewish Congress denounced "the old, trumped-up allegations" and said it was "regrettable that the State Department should allow itself to be a party to the continuing and unjustifiable slander of a friendly and democratic state."

In fact, the systematic use of torture by Israeli authorities against Palestinian prisoners was rigorously documented in an extensive 1977 investigation by reporters

from the London *Sunday Times*. The paper printed an extensive rebuttal by the Israeli government, which totally failed to refute the charges. (See *Intercontinental Press*, July 4, 1977, p. 762; and August 8, 1977, p. 901.)

Evidence that the Israelis continue to practice systematic torture was provided in excerpts from classified State Department cablegrams printed in the *Washington Post* February 8. These concluded that "physical mistreatment is systematically used on many Arab security suspects interrogated on the West Bank."

The cables were based on reporting by U.S. consular official Alexandra U. Johnson, who often interviewed West Bank Arabs applying for U.S. visas at the American consulate in Jerusalem.

Johnson was denied tenure in her Foreign Service post in January after a six-year probationary period. "It is my own belief that I was fired because of my human rights reporting," she told the *New York Times* February 8.

For their part, the editors of the *New York Times* considered the State Department's report on Israeli human-rights violations an example of "clumsy public relations."

"The United States has urgent business in the Middle East but none of it justifies a sudden preoccupation with alleged 'instances' of Israeli mistreatment of Palestinians," they complained on February 9. "Why rile the Israelis . . .?"

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Fidel Castro Speaks on Twentieth Anniversary of Revolution

'Cuba Can't Be Pressured, Intimidated, Bribed, or Bought!'

[The following speech was given by Fidel Castro in Havana January 1, 1979, the twentieth anniversary of the Cuban revolution. We are printing the text in two parts, of which this is the first. The transcript was taken from the January 14 issue of the English-language edition of *Granma*.]

* * *

Chance would have it that, after a long, hard struggle, the Revolution triumphed in our country on January 1. And for once that first day of a new year meant for Cuba that an old world ended with the last page of the calendar and a new world was born. It was a change not of years but rather of centuries, and perhaps millennia. It isn't that Cuba was as old as Greece or Rome, but the class society of exploitation and ignominy that was doomed that day to disappear was older than Greece or Rome. Marx was very right when he said that the coming of socialism was the end of the prehistory of mankind.

Perhaps not even we ourselves were fully aware of how great a step January 1, 1959, was to be in the history of our homeland and of the Americas—that January 1 that was also a tremendous event in the development of the world revolutionary movement.

Forty-one years and two months after the glorious October Revolution, the first socialist revolution in the western hemisphere began. Four and a half centuries after the discovery of America, a society that was the fruit of that conquest; of the extermination of the aboriginal population; and of colonization, slavery, capitalism, neocolonialism and imperialism was to know its first truly deep and irreversible change. This change took place at the very doors of the most powerful imperialist country in the world.

When we evaluate the significance of that event today, it is with great emotion and gratitude that we recall the self-sacrifice and modesty of the combatants who made it possible to carry out this task in the history of Cuba and the Americas.

January 1, 1959, truly culminated the heroic struggle begun in Yara nearly 100 years earlier. Our generation had the honor of playing an outstanding role in the victorious conclusion of that long battle. It will be up to historians to analyze in depth the political and social phenomenon that made our people be the first of all those of our suffering America to march along the path of socialism. This cannot be explained exclusively by factors of circumstance or through the cold, schematic interpretation of the inexorable laws that govern the development of human society.

The Cuban people; their history-making, difficult and lonely battle for emancipation in the last century; their beautiful, heroic fighting traditions; and their unyielding will to fight have a merit that cannot be diminished or detracted from. Without ideas and clear concepts, revolution is impossible, even though the objective conditions for it may exist. Without energetic, firm, decisive and intelligent struggle, plus an enormous dose of boldness, revolution is impossible.

Impossible to imagine worse circumstances than those created by the military coup d'état of March 10, 1952, for effecting a social change as thoroughgoing and definitive as the one that was to come less than seven years later. Completely corrupt, incompetent governments had destroyed the people's hope. A stage of unprecedented repression, abuse and official violence was unleashed throughout the country. Imperialist domination in all fields was accentuated more than ever. McCarthyism was at its peak, and the cold war pervaded the international political climate. Cuba

was, without a doubt, after Puerto Rico, the nation most tied to U.S. domination in the Americas. The large landowners and bourgeoisie, trusting to the power of the empire and to the well-armed and well-trained repressive forces, never thought seriously about the possibility of a socialist revolution in our homeland. But the neocolonialist regime rested not only on force of arms; the ideological base of that society consisted of a virtually invulnerable system of information, propaganda and education, reactionary ideas and theories and anticommunist prejudices.

The workers' organizations had been taken over by sellout leaders and agents in the pay of reaction, with full official complicity and support. The communist movement, unquestionably a minority among the people, was persecuted as implacably as the ideas it upheld.

Impossible to forget those terrible days that followed the brutal coup of March 10. It wasn't easy to discern a path through the thick foliage of that political forest. The ideas of Marxism-Leninism were not seen universally as the immense sun that now illuminates an entire people but were seen only as fine rays of light that filtered through the thick foliage, indicating, as a necessary compass, how the revolutionary way out of the situation could be explained, which way it would lie and in what it would consist. The situation in Cuba in 1952 indeed subjected the solidity and strength of a political theory to a very difficult test.

The March 10 coup had fallen on the national conscience as a crushing blow deeply wounding to the spirit of a people that, even though they didn't yet have a revolutionary political awareness, detested abuse, injustice, crime, imposition and force with all its heart. They were a people filled with a sense of shame, a people from whom the corruption, vice and politicking of the neocolonized Republic couldn't do away with the seeds of heroism and love of freedom and of the homeland planted in our independence struggles in Yara, Jimaguayú, Baraguá, Baire, Dos Ríos and Punta Brava and nurtured with José Martí's constant, eternally inspiring teachings of human dignity. (APPLAUSE)

It would not have been fitting for Marxist-Leninist revolutionaries to be unaware of the worth and strength of those moral factors of our national character. We have been, are and will always be a rebellious, unyielding people; we have been, are and will always be a fighting, combative people; we have been, are and will be a patriotic people. In addition, we are now and will always be an internationalist people. (APPLAUSE)

Could the tyranny installed on March 10 be eternal? Could imperialist domination over our land be eternal? Could corruption and crime be eternal? Could the pitiless exploitation of our workers and peasants be eternal? Could vice and injustice be eternal? Could oppression and ignorance or the abuse of human dignity in our homeland be eternal? No! A thousand times No!

The tyranny's strength lay in its arms, in terror, in ignorance. The strength of the revolution lay in the justice of our ideas and in the people, in their courage and traditions, and in the exploited workers and peasants, the noble students and the humble young people. Because they were unarmed, with no money or connections and no ways to acquire weapons, they had to start from the idea that the arms they needed were well cared for and oiled in the enemy's garrisons.

The people needed leaders. The leaders were among the people. The people always produced its leaders in every stage of our revolutionary struggles. Leaders do not shape peoples; it is the peoples that shape their leaders.



1959 rally hits U.S. based counterrevolutionaries.

None of the men who later were to lead the victorious ranks of the Rebel Army on January 1, 1959, had gone to a military academy or had ever been lionized by the press. And, with but few exceptions, none of the ones who later were to figure in the Political Bureau and the Central Committee of the Party or in the leadership of the Government were known then.

The bourgeois press, the bourgeois parties and imperialism had hammered out other names, other figures, other leaders. Today, millions of our young people and children have never even heard of them, and many of our adults have forgotten them.

But we had to fight. I repeat that there is no revolution without a struggle. No social changes are possible without the tenacious, consistent struggle of the peoples and their revolutionary vanguard. Marxism-Leninism gives us theory; the struggle gives us victory.

At times, the difficulties are incredibly great, and you may be dealt bitter reverses. The forms of struggle may even change frequently, but there is only one path: to struggle, struggle and struggle. (APPLAUSE)

In Cuba, it may be categorically stated that revolutionary power was won exclusively by our people. At that stage we couldn't receive any kind of foreign aid, and the arms with which we fought were supplied exclusively to the Batista army, from which we took them in one battle after another.

It is impossible to forget the days that led up to January 1, 1959. Hard fighting was going on all over the country. While the underground fighters in the cities risked their lives, defying death with incomparable courage, up to the very last, the Rebel Army, with 3,000 tireless veterans (the approximate figure of armed men it had in December 1958), fought tirelessly and inflicted one defeat after another on an adversary whose total forces ran to 80,000 men. Alongside the revolutionary army marched all the people.

That was an unforgettable, history-making day that we are celebrating today, one on which our workers unanimously went over the heads of their official "leaders" and carried out the Rebel Army's instructions to take a decisive part in the battle, throwing themselves into the general strike that paralyzed the country completely, helped to destroy imperialism's coup maneuver and facilitated controlling and disarming the rest of the enemy units in less than 72 hours. All the people took part in the final battle—a beautiful and exemplary revolutionary event that changed forever the history of our homeland.

At approximately this same time 20 years ago, the march begun in the Moncada on the 26th of July, 1953, reached its goal in Santiago de Cuba. (APPLAUSE) The tyranny installed on March 10, 1952, lay shattered at the people's feet.

In our Report to the 1st Congress of the Party, we made a review of the revolutionary process up through 1975; during the ceremony marking the 25th anniversary of the attack on the Moncada, held a few months ago, we spoke on important matters of international

politics. There is no need to go into those topics and ideas here today.

What strong feelings and deep reflections, however, does the celebration of this 20th anniversary of the revolutionary triumph evoke? First of all, there is a feeling of healthy pride. Together, we have overcome incredible obstacles; together, we have achieved tremendous victories in all fields. Together, we have forged our Marxist-Leninist Party (APPLAUSE) and its combative and heroic young people, select vanguards of fighters whose ranks are filled with the best sons and daughters of our people; together, we have created our powerful mass organizations, rivers of people turned into force, organization and consciousness; together, we have created our socialist state, its organs of people's power and its fine institutions; and we are working tenaciously to build its economic base. Together, we have organized and supported our Ministry of the Interior, our efficient, staunch bulwark in the struggle against the enemy (APPLAUSE); together, we have continued developing and nurturing, with our arms and with our blood, the glorious Rebel Army, (APPLAUSE) protagonist of the January 1 victory, from whose undefeated columns of the past sprang our brave and undefeated Revolutionary Armed Forces of the present, the people's shield that cannot be vanquished, a Spartan example of internationalist spirit and the legitimate pride of the Revolution, to which today, on the anniversary of its greatest combat glory, we pay it the tribute so richly deserved. (APPLAUSE) Together, we have achieved tremendous material, moral and social successes; together, we have given our homeland a prestigious, outstanding place in the world; together, we have worked in the furrow of history.

Not only have we defended the integrity of our homeland; we have also stood firm in defending the integrity of our ideas. (APPLAUSE)

Up until January 1, imperialism was our indirect adversary; our direct adversary was Batista. After January, imperialism was our adversary directly. Before January, we fought to become the masters of our destiny; after January, we fought to defend this right and to carry out the socialist revolution.

Before January, we waged a patriotic battle; after January, our battle was also internationalist. (APPLAUSE)

Before January, we were part of a national revolution; since that January, we have been part of the world revolution. (APPLAUSE) Before January, a vanguard was the main protagonist in events; since that January, the main protagonist has been the people. (APPLAUSE)

This stage has required not less but more heroism than the stage that preceded it, because, in the former stage, heroism was mainly individual, whereas heroism has now become massive. Before, it was only heroism of combat; now, it is heroism of combat and of work.

[Continued next week]