

Intercontinental Press

combined with **INPRECOR**

Vol. 17, No. 8

© 1979 by Intercontinental Press

March 5, 1979

USA 75c

UK 30p



Behind Peking's Invasion What Washington Is After



Iran: Workers, Peasants Press Their Demands

France: Million Rally Against Steel Layoffs

India: Development of the Women's Movement

NEWS ANALYSIS

France—1 Million Demand 'No Steel Layoffs'

By Michael Baumann

One million demonstrators, led by striking steelworkers and supported by auto, rail, mine, power, postal, maritime, and municipal workers, virtually shut down the heavily industrialized north and east of France February 16 in a one-day general strike.

The day of action conducted by the strikers included demonstrations, marches, factory occupations, rallies, and in some cities a complete blockade of auto and rail traffic.

It was called jointly by all the trade-union federations to demand a halt to the government's plan to boost profits in the steel industry through speedup and huge layoffs. Under the pretext of meeting "competition" from the German and other European steel industries, the French government plans to eliminate more than 21,000 steel jobs over the next two years. At stake is the livelihood of nearly a quarter of all French steelworkers.

The steel layoffs are part of an overall offensive against the working class that includes record unemployment of 1.4 million, an increase in social security taxes of \$3 billion, more restrictions on unemployment compensation, and a steady whittling away at workers' living standards through a rate of inflation now at 10 percent.

The militant response this austerity drive is beginning to provoke can be seen from the report in the French daily *Le Monde* on the general strike:

"Highways and rail lines were blocked, factories were paralyzed, demonstrations occurred everywhere. In short, there was a massive turnout in the north and in Lorraine [bordering Germany] for the steelworkers' day of action. . . .

"In Lorraine, the cities of Longwy, Hayange, and Rombas were completely blockaded Friday morning, as was Briey for a few hours."

In the north, the turnout included big demonstrations in twenty-one cities, and the shutdown of major plants in Normandy.

At the other end of the country, at Fos-sur-Mer on the Mediterranean, work at the Solmer steel mill was halted and the strikers blocked the national highway.

The coordinated day of protest was the culmination of weeks of local actions. In the steel town of Longwy, workers recently occupied the offices of the subprefect, the local official who represents the central government in the region.

On February 9, 2,500 Lorraine miners travelled to Paris in chartered buses and

demonstrated against unemployment on the outskirts of the city. They closed off sections of the expressway circling Paris and of the main highway leading north. Violent clashes ensued when the riot police tried to disrupt the demonstration.

In the northwest of France, the seacoast towns of La Rochelle and Rochefort have been the scene of day-long general strikes to protest unemployment.

Other large demonstrations demanding jobs have been held in such seacoast cities in Brittany as St. Nazaire and Nantes.

There is a strong sentiment in these industrial centers that a massive march on Paris is necessary to present their demands more forcefully.

A proposal for such a march has already been made by the local CGT union federation in Longwy and has the support of the union federation central council in Lorraine. The unions in Lorraine have now put this proposal before their national leaderships.

However, even the French government's announced layoffs are only one part of a Europe-wide "steel plan" aimed at drastically reducing the work force in steel throughout the Common Market countries.

In face of this coordinated offensive, where the broadest possible unity among steel workers of all countries against their own government and bosses is absolutely essential, the role played by the French Communist Party has been to foster support for the French ruling class in its competition with the German steel barons in particular.

Rhodesian Jets Bomb Angola

By Ernest Harsch

Beginning early on the morning of February 26, Rhodesian warplanes flew 1,000 miles to bomb Zimbabwean guerrilla camps located in Angola.

It marked the first time the racist Rhodesian regime has extended its terrorist raids to Angola, further widening the conflict in southern Africa.

This brazen new attack on a Black African country was obviously encouraged by the American and British imperialists' complete silence on Ian Smith's bombing raids a few days earlier against Zambia and Mozambique, leaving hundreds dead and wounded. The silence in Washington

The French CP has taken part in demonstrations in the Lorraine region with banners dripping with chauvinism. "Germany, the banker of Europe," "The Lorraine won't be sold off to the big German corporations," and, to top it off, "1870, 1914, 1940, that's enough!" are three examples cited by the French Trotskyist weekly *Rouge*.

This criminal attempt to turn the anger of French workers away from their own employers and toward their comrades in the West German steel mills plays directly into the hands of the bosses' propaganda. The CP is simply echoing the steel trusts' tune that "foreign competition," and not their drive for higher profits, is behind the layoffs.

The leadership of the CFDT, the union federation associated with the SP, has attempted to score some points against the Stalinists by denouncing the use of such chauvinist slogans. Their own house could use some cleaning, however.

On February 8, near Longwy, steelworkers belonging to the CFDT derailed a train carrying 1,500 tons of iron ore from Germany. In explaining their action, the CFDT explicitly stated that they had dumped the cargo to protest the "importation of increasing amounts of iron ore at a time when the mines in Lorraine are being shut down."

Such chauvinist sentiment does not originate in the working class, which not only has no social or economic interest in undermining the struggles of workers in other countries but on the contrary everything to gain from them.

It is fostered by the capitalist class, being one of the most destructive variants of their timeworn strategy of divide and conquer. The appearance of this poison in France, under the encouragement of the Stalinist and Social Democratic misleaders of the working class offers virulent confirmation of their political subordination to the needs of French capitalism. □

and London was equivalent to a green light to go further.

The imperialists had likewise made clear their virulent opposition to the Zimbabwean freedom struggle when they seized on the recent downing of an Air Rhodesia airliner to issue a series of shameless and cynical tirades against the liberation movement.

The Carter administration in Washington said: "We cannot state too strongly how deeply we deplore and condemn this latest unwarranted act of violence against innocent civilians in Rhodesia." The

Christian Science Monitor, in a February 15 editorial, called the shooting down of the plane "an act of barbarism."

The London Foreign Office declared that the government of Prime Minister James Callaghan was "horrified by this senseless act."

The hypocrisy of these protectors of "Western civilization," a shining outpost of which is the racist garrison state of Rhodesia, knows no bounds.

When did they condemn Smith's imposition of martial law over 85 percent of the country?

Where was their sense of "horror" when Smith forcibly evicted more than one million Africans from their homes?

How loudly did they deplore "violence against innocent civilians" while the Rhodesian forces murdered some 10,000 Blacks over the past six to seven years?

At a news conference in Lusaka, Zambia, February 14, Joshua Nkomo, the leader of the Zimbabwean African People's Union (ZAPU), correctly pointed to the racist core of Carter's and Callaghan's responses. Smith's victims "are dark," Nkomo said. That is why "there is no question of human rights" involved when the white supremacists carry out a massacre.

The latest Rhodesian bombing raids began February 17 when jet fighters struck at ZAPU camps near the Zambian town of Livingstone. By February 23, the bombers had moved northward, to within just twenty-two miles of Lusaka itself. Witnesses reported that the attacks against the Nampundwe camp, which houses up to 14,000 Zimbabwean refugees, left hundreds of casualties.

In addition, the Smith regime announced February 19 that its planes had also bombed the town of Chimoio, in Mozambique. It claimed that a "guerrilla complex" of the Zimbabwean African National Union (ZANU), led by Robert Mugabe, was located in the town.

Over the past two-and-a-half years, the Smith regime has acknowledged about twenty major assaults against Zimbabwean camps in Zambia and Mozambique. In just one of them in October 1978, some 1,500 Zimbabwean refugees and freedom fighters were reported to have been massacred near Lusaka.

The recent attacks are partially in preparation for Smith's April 20 "elections" to a new parliament, which he says will lead to "majority rule."

The elections are a product of the "internal settlement" Smith reached last year with three prominent Black figures. Under that agreement, whites are to retain 28 percent of the parliament seats and cabinet posts, and are to have constitutionally guaranteed protection from expropriation of their property. The white-dominated army, police, and civil service are to be maintained for years.

The Patriotic Front, composed of ZAPU

and ZANU, has rejected the settlement as an effort to perpetuate white supremacy and has called on Zimbabweans to continue struggling against the Smith regime.

How democratic the elections will be has been indicated by Smith's preparations for them. All military leaves and deferments have been cancelled for the election period. The balloting itself will be staggered over

as many as ten days, to allow large concentrations of troops to move from one polling area to another to force as many Africans to vote as possible.

Even with such large-scale intimidation, Smith is not too optimistic on the voter response. He said in early February that he would be satisfied with a Black turnout of 20 percent. □

In This Issue

Closing News Date: February 26, 1979

FEATURES	211	Meetings in U.S., Canada, India Pay Tribute to Joseph Hansen—by Susan Wald
SOUTHEAST ASIA	196	Behind Peking's Invasion of Vietnam—What Washington Is After —by Gus Horowitz
CHINA	198	Social Protest Rising on Eve of War —by Leslie Evans
IRAN	200	The Political Earthquake —by George Novack
	201	Workers, Peasants Press Demands
	205	How the Insurrection Began —by Cindy Jaquith
	206	Soldiers Ask, "Where Are Our Rights?"
	207	How Tehran Auto Workers Are Organizing
MIDEAST	208	Iranian Revolution Blows Apart Mideast Settlement—by David Frankel
INDIA	212	Women's Movement After Century of Struggle —by Vibhuti Patel and Gayatri Singh
MEXICO	214	Behind Carter's Problems —by David Frankel
	215	Thousands Protest Carter's Visit
SPAIN	216	One Year After Moncloa Pact —by Jesús Albarracín and Pedro Montes
DOCUMENTS	219	Fourth International Platform for Common Market Elections
	222	Fidel Castro on Twentieth Anniversary of Cuban Revolution
NEWS ANALYSIS	194	France—1 Million Demand "No Steel Layoffs" —by Michael Baumann
	194	Rhodesian Jets Bomb Angola —by Ernest Harsch

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

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

Editor: Mary-Alice Waters.

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

Managing Editor: Michael Baumann.

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

Business Manager: Harvey McArthur.

Copy Editor: David Martin.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Copyright © 1979 by Intercontinental Press.

What Washington Is After

By Gus Horowitz

The roots of the conflict in Indochina lie in Washington's aggressive campaign against the Vietnamese revolution; imperialism seeks to eliminate the threat of anticapitalist advances in Kampuchea, and to prevent the spread of revolution elsewhere in Southeast Asia. The key initial objective in this campaign is to get Vietnam out of Kampuchea.

For this a major military effort is required. Pouring arms into Thailand, the conduit for the Pol Pot forces, is not sufficient. Given the difficulties standing in the way of direct U.S. military intervention, Washington has enlisted the help of the Stalinist regime in Peking, which, in return for diplomatic recognition and the promise of major economic aid, has invaded Vietnam and launched a large-scale border war.

Peking's aim is not to conquer Vietnam, but to force Vietnam to withdraw from Kampuchea—that is, to do Washington's bidding. The well-prepared and pious call by Washington for reciprocal withdrawal—Vietnam from Kampuchea and China from Vietnam—is but the diplomatic formula that expresses this objective.

If anything was needed to make it perfectly clear where Washington stood, it was the decision to proceed with U.S. Treasury Secretary Blumenthal's visit to China right in the midst of the Chinese army's invasion of Vietnam. Not only did this signal to the world that Washington was fully behind the invasion, but it also showed how much importance the U.S. attaches to establishing banking and trade relations with China.

A further sign of the importance and potentially far-reaching impact of the *de facto* alliance between Washington and Peking was reported in the February 25 *New York Times*. "Authoritative sources" told the *Times* that "some Administrative officials believe that if the Soviet Union tries to expand its naval and air capabilities with a base in Cam Ranh Bay [in southern Vietnam], the United States should consider a move to set up some kind of security relationship with China."

What is behind this turn of events? Washington's basic policy guidelines were spelled out in a speech that President Carter delivered on February 20 at the Georgia Institute of Technology.

American imperialism, he said, faces "a challenge to our determination and our leadership" in the world. This has been underscored by "disturbances in Iran, the

Western Indian Ocean [the Horn of Africa], and in Southeast Asia." The big problem is "the darker side of change" that tends to develop "when countries in turbulence provide opportunities for exploitation by outsiders." The "darker side of change" is, of course, the threat of revolution by the working people. For Carter this applies to the "disturbances" in Southeast Asia as well as Iran and the Western Indian Ocean.

The key instrument that the U.S. rulers must rely on ultimately to meet this threat is U.S. military might.

Of all the imperialist states, the U.S. remains the only first-rate strategic nuclear power. So, one aspect of Carter's speech was the reaffirmation of the nuclear proliferation provisions of the proposed new Strategic Arms Limitation Treaty—SALT II. "The agreement will also permit us and our allies to pursue all the defense programs we believe we may eventually need—the M-X missile; the Trident submarine and missiles; air, ground and sea-launched cruise missiles; cruise missile carrier aircraft; and a new penetrating bomber. Thus SALT II will allow our own prudent programs to move ahead. . . ." Prudent indeed!

In addition, Carter called attention to the need to be able to deal with "disturbances" like those of the recent period. "This year I have proposed a substantial real increase in the defense budget. The events of recent weeks underscore the responsibility of the Congress to appropriate these funds in full. There must be no doubt that the people of the United States are fully prepared to meet its commitments, and to back up those commitments with military strength."

Carter acknowledged that "the United States cannot control events within other countries." It cannot stop the class struggle; all it can do is try to contain it and roll it back.

But for the moment, at least, Washington faces a problem. It finds it difficult to intervene directly with its military forces, owing to the deep distrust of its policies by the masses of American working people. In face of this problem, Washington has sought to obtain as much military help as possible from other regimes—for example, the South African invasion of Angola and the Somalian regime's attacks on Ethiopia. But these attempts failed, and as recent events in Iran have shown, the U.S. rulers cannot even be sure of the stability of their own allies. So, their goal is to

prepare the American people to once again accept the use of "stabilizing" and "peacemaking" U.S. troops against the "darker side of change."

This is the background for the five "principles that govern [Washington's] conduct" in relation to the conflict in Indochina. As outlined by Carter, they are as follows:

1. An attempt to refrain from direct U.S. military involvement, along with a public stance of disinterestedness. "We will not get involved in conflict between Asian Communist states."

2. The U.S. goal is "restoration of stability"; that is, to contain revolutionary upheavals. The means are through deals with Peking and Moscow: "we remain the one great power in the world which can have direct and frank discussions with all the parties concerned." (Vietnam, which Washington does not even recognize diplomatically, is not counted as a "concerned" party.)

3. The official objective, the "withdrawal of Vietnamese and Chinese forces," includes, as the goal, "to gain the restoration of the independence and integrity of all nations involved." That is, to turn back the threat of revolutionary change in Kampuchea.

4. Washington is concerned about the possibility of "unforeseen and grave consequences for nations in the region and beyond"—that is, with the threat of the spread of revolution to Thailand especially—and is "fully prepared to protect our vital interests [capitalist property relations] wherever they may be challenged."

5. With regard to the capitalist states in Southeast Asia in particular, "their continued stability and prosperity are of great importance to us." In fact, Washington has already been taking steps to beef up its military support for the Thai regime. And, in discussing Carter's speech with reporters afterwards, Presidential press secretary Jody Powell made clear that "additional assistance will be needed."

This is the real line of U.S. imperialism—to do all it can, under increasingly unfavorable conditions, to prevent the further advance of socialist revolution in Southeast Asia or elsewhere.

In view of Washington's discreditment during the Vietnam War, a necessary precondition to implementing Carter's line is an ideological offensive designed to regain popular support for Washington's foreign policies. Three of the key themes of this ideological offensive are:

1. Placing the center of attention on the conflict between China and Vietnam, with regard to which the United States can take an official stance of peaceful nonpartisanship. Attention is thereby diverted from Kampuchea, where it all began as a result of Washington's stepped-up offensive against the Vietnamese revolution. When the Pol Pot regime was knocked over,

eliminating Washington's opening wedge in this offensive, Vietnam had to be "punished" and forced to retreat. Support for this counterrevolutionary objective can thus be drummed up under the guise of evenhanded peacemaking: the reciprocal withdrawal of Vietnam from Kampuchea and China from Vietnam.

This is nothing but the age-old ploy of concealing aggressive intent with the language of peace.

2. Discrediting socialism. This theme was announced in a gloating *New York Times* editorial on February 19, entitled "The Red Brotherhood at War": "They are singing 'The Internationale' on all sides of the Asian battles this week as they bury the hopes of the Communist fathers with the bodies of their sons." The editorial goes on to assert that the idea that the source of war is capitalism has been shattered.

In addition to the larger purpose of antisocialist demagoguery, this theme has an immediate objective of absolving U.S. imperialism from responsibility for the current conflict.

3. Ascribing a stabilizing role to U.S. imperialism. This theme, badly discredited during the Vietnam War, is being revived. And it must be, if Washington is ever to be able to use its army effectively in foreign intervention. So, the U.S. rulers probe every possibility on every occasion to press this idea forward.

For the *Times* editors, "hot-headed governments with no apparent economic interest at stake risk even major war" in Southeast Asia. The "hot-headedness" arose because "ugly nationalism has triumphed once again in the human family."

The logical conclusion—not yet stated openly by the *Times* editors—is the need for disinterested parties (like Washington) to play a moderating role in face of the irrational human passions let loose. And indeed, this is the trend "among liberals and moderates as well as conservatives" that *Times* analyst Hedrick Smith reported a few days earlier—"a shift away from the spirit of retrenchment in the aftermath of the Vietnam War." (*New York Times*, February 17.)

The *Wall Street Journal*, which speaks more directly to its capitalist audience, stated plainly what the *Times* left for inference. In an editorial on February 21, the paper said that "continuing warfare in Indochina is another sign of spreading instability in the world. The 1970s are taking on an eerie resemblance to the 1930s." But there is a problem: "A generation of world stability was built on the bedrock of American purpose and American power. As this foundation becomes increasingly shaky, the world is threatened with the unpalatable alternatives of Soviet domination or sheer anarchy."

The solution? "The spiral into disorder can be averted only if the U.S. starts to assert itself once again. This does not

mean sending the Marines to settle every quarrel in the world. It does mean building the kind of military force we are likely to need in the evolving world, refusing to make unnecessary diplomatic concessions, asserting our rights unapologetically and keeping our promises to allies."

The precondition for all this? "But first, we need to digest the lesson of the current fighting in Indochina: That American power is not the root of evil in the world; that it is more likely to be a force for good."

One thing is clear—the U.S. ruling class knows where its class interests lie, and it is acting forcefully to promote them.

It's not terribly complicated to see. And, for those concerned with advancing the interests of the working masses in Southeast Asia and throughout the world, the response called for is clear. Our spotlight is on the real source of the war—Washington and its imperialist allies.

But this type of class-struggle response has not been the norm on the American left. War, which puts all political forces to the greatest of all tests, has produced an utter collapse on the part of the various petty-bourgeois radicals in the United States, in particular those associated with the anti-Vietnam War movement of the 1960s and early 1970s.

Dave Dellinger, the anarchopacifist, announces that his cothinkers are "both dismayed and confused by the contradictions in the situation." (*Seven Days*, February 23.)

Sidney Lens, the Social Democratic pacifist, says "we are stuck with our dilemma—how to explain the failure of socialist reality to measure up to socialist promise." (*The Progressive*, March 1979.)

I.F. Stone, the left-liberal, sees "the ancient follies of mankind repeated in new ideological disguises. The new Communist states are acting in Asia as imperialistically as did the capitalist states before them." (*New York Times*, February 22, 1979.)

The Social Democratic weekly *In These Times* editorializes that "socialists can no longer assume that socialism automatically brings enduring peace." In fact, "the most salient conflicts in world politics involve those among communists and socialists." So, socialists "need to exert fresh thinking on some fundamental questions." (January 17-23.)

The *Guardian*, once strictly Maoist, now in evolution, moans that "these are sorry days for socialism." Addressing Marx, Engels, Lenin, Stalin, Mao, and Ho, the *Guardian* says, "we pity your unquiet sleep. More, we pity those for whom your dream of socialist internationalism and friendship between nations has become a nightmare in a small corner of Asia. . . ." It calls upon the "sons and daughters of the founders of scientific socialism" to "cease their fire and return to their homes."

Halfway through the two-page editorial we learn that this group of profound thinkers "has not fully analyzed the nature of the Pol Pot government's brand of socialism. . . ." And, "although our views on the situation are still developing, we think Vietnam made a great mistake in invading Kampuchea." (February 28.)

The striking aspect of all of these responses is not the confusion—that was to be expected—but the rapidity with which they have fallen victim to the ideological offensive of the imperialists. They have uniformly let Washington off the hook, seeing the source of the conflict in Vietnam, China, or both—anywhere but in Washington, which, at the most, is alleged to condone China's action. The idea that in an imperialist land the main enemy is at home has been lost in a chorus of weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth.

The U.S. Communist Party's position is just as reactionary though somewhat different. For the CP this is an occasion to whip up an almost hysterical tirade against China. The purpose of the Chinese invasion, says an official CP statement published in the *Daily World* on February 21, was "to force Vietnam to its knees and convert Vietnam into a vassal in its scheme to take command of Southeast Asia." And while the CP criticizes Washington's support for the invasion, it was to the Chinese mission to the United Nations that the CP-led U.S. Peace Council marched on February 24. There, national CP leader James Steele denounced "China's inevitable war against the world."

By centering its fire on China, the CP plays into the hands of Washington's attempt to portray the conflict as simply a fight among Asian Communists. Meanwhile, the ongoing offensive against the world working class by American imperialism is conveniently played down.

The challenge before the American left is to tell the truth to the American working class. The latest version of Washington's anticommunist crusade must be exposed and condemned for what it is. Those who are genuinely concerned about aiding the Vietnamese revolution, which is once again fighting for its life, should be marching on the White House.

Our slogans are Hands off Vietnam! Stop the imperialist campaign against the Vietnamese revolution! Within that framework we say, Chinese troops out of Vietnam now! And we demand that the Soviet Union give the Vietnamese whatever military supplies they need, with no strings attached. □

Intercontinental Press/Inprecor will give you a week by week analysis of the most important world events.

Subscribe now!

Social Protests Rising on Eve of War With Vietnam

By Leslie Evans

On February 20 the Peking government banned all public gatherings, demonstrations, or wall posters discussing China's invasion of Vietnam. This was a crude announcement that the regime's effusive demagogic promises of democratic reform do not include the right to question basic government policies and actions. It was also an admission that the Teng Hsiao-p'ing leadership does not expect the war to be popular and does not want to be placed in the position of having to publicly argue with oppositionists on this issue.

The Chinese bureaucracy's decision to invade Vietnam could have far-ranging repercussions on domestic politics at this time. It highlights the real content of the regime's promised drive toward the industrialization of China: it is to be paid for by extending the Chinese government's previous services to American imperialism.

To demonstrate their reliability as an agent of counterrevolution throughout Southeast Asia, Peking is willing to do what Washington today cannot attempt—to militarily "punish" the workers and peasants of Vietnam for overturning capitalist property relations in the southern part of the country last year, and for resisting imperialism's drive to contain and eventually roll back the socialist revolution in Indochina.

In the six months prior to the war's outbreak, there has been a steady rise in dissent and protest actions among more and more diverse sectors of the population. Thus the invasion of Vietnam comes at a time when it will be difficult if not impossible to suppress widespread discussion on its consequences within China.

China's dissident movement dates back to the suppression of the Red Guard student and worker groups in 1968 and 1969 at the end of Mao's Cultural Revolution. At that time more than ten million urban youth were forcibly deported to the rural villages, in part because Mao's economic mismanagement had led to the stagnation in industrial growth, and there were no jobs for them in the cities; and for a minority, as sheer political persecution.

Others, in the cities, were permanently branded as "bad elements" because they had fought to win some of the democratic rights Mao had promised. Mao responded by tightening further the repression of the totalitarian Stalinist regime during the last years of his rule. The result was widespread discontent and alienation from

the ruling party, which Mao's successors have sought to counter by promises both of democratic reform and of substantial economic concessions to the masses.

The post-Mao government's tactical retreat before the mood of the masses has had a dual effect. On one hand, it has won Teng and Company a certain amount of popularity. But on the other hand, this popularity is based on promises that the ruling bureaucratic caste cannot ultimately fulfill without jeopardizing its very existence, and some sectors of the population are already becoming impatient with the pace of the changes they are expecting.

Sporadic street demonstrations for democratic rights have occurred periodically in China beginning with the massive Tien An Men Square protests of April 1976. But the public formation of the present dissident groups dates only to the appearance of Peking's "Democracy Wall" in November 1978. Beginning with anonymous wall posters in November, by the end of January there were at least seven different human rights groups in Peking, most of which publish mimeographed newspapers or magazines.

These groups have all made contact with foreigners, particularly foreign reporters, in an effort to spread their ideas, to put pressure on their government, and, in part, to use world public opinion to protect themselves from repression.

According to the January 30, 1979, Toronto *Globe and Mail*, these groups include the April Fifth Tribune, the Human Rights Alliance, Explorations, the Enlightenment Society (Peking Branch), the People's Tribune, Today, and Reference News for the Masses. These seven groups cosponsored a demonstration of some 500 at Democracy Wall on January 29 protesting threats by the Peking municipal government to take reprisals against them.

An eighth group, the publishers of another unofficial magazine called *Peking Spring*, were not invited to participate, on the grounds that one of their leaders is a member of the government's Communist Youth League. (The CYL and its journal *China Youth* have been the most outspoken voice pushing for reforms from within the bureaucracy, and may contain youth whom the government hopes to co-opt as well as government representatives.)

Of these groups, the Human Rights Alliance is at present the best known. It is

the only group thus far to take the bold step of signing the full names of its leaders to its journal and to hold public meetings in its own name, thus exposing its members to possible arrest. It has published a nineteen-point program that contains many deepgoing antibureaucratic demands, including a call for the immediate release of all political prisoners, for free elections with the right to form opposition parties, for the abolition of the secret police, for an end to censorship, for freedom of travel, for a minimum grain ration for the peasantry, and for a reconciliation with the Soviet Union. "The Sino-Soviet split in ideology has already lost its objective base," the program states. "The Soviet Union is a socialist country. . . ."

Thus far, judging from what they have said in their wall posters and periodicals, the perspective of these groups is one of radical reform, not the overthrow of the regime. Moreover, they have begun to make a false distinction between the *bureaucracy*, which they oppose, and those leaders such as Teng Hsiao-p'ing who were persecuted or jailed under the previous government, in whom they still have hopes and illusions. But their concrete demands cannot be granted by the Stalinist regime. An oppressive caste cannot exist in a workers state with democratic rights.

The organized dissidents in Peking are the most politically conscious oppositional formations yet to appear, but other sectors have also been in motion, and in some cases on a larger scale. The most important are members of the poorest rural peasantry, and the so-called educated youth who were deported to the countryside over the years since 1968 (the total claimed to date for this "rustication" effort is seventeen million, of whom a majority have since returned to the cities but some millions still remain in the villages). Most of the youth who have gone in recent years were the children of urban workers who were sent to the countryside at the time of their graduation from high school or junior high school. Many thousands have returned to the cities illegally, where they are denied jobs and housing and are forced to live off their friends or relatives or to turn to petty theft or prostitution.

Beginning in late November, when news spread through China of the Democracy Wall, a number of poor peasants, often from distant provinces, walked away from their fields and set out for Peking to present their grievances to the govern-

ment. By the time of the semiofficial mourning ceremonies for China's late Premier Chou En-lai in the first week of January, many hundreds or even a few thousand of these people had made their way to Peking, and 500 took part in marches in Tien An Men Square for three days, requesting food and clothes. On January 14 and 21, some 200 gathered outside of the Chungnanhai leadership compound where Communist Party Chairman Hua Kuo-feng and Vice-premier Teng Hsiao-p'ing live, asking for a meeting with the party leaders to present their complaints (this was refused).

The peasants, whose numbers had by this time grown to some thousands, were living in the streets or camped in the city's railroad station. The local dissident groups immediately sought common cause with the peasant protesters and sought to join their demonstrations and to help them find food and shelter. This effort was met with alarm from the government, which retaliated on January 17 by arresting Fu Yue-hua, a thirty-two-year-old woman worker and human-rights activist. According to recent wall posters, Fu participated in the original Democracy Wall discussion in November, and she assisted the poor peasants who came to Peking. (*Globe and Mail*, January 27.)

By late January, according to the rights activists, between six and eight of the peasants protesters had died in the streets of Peking from hunger and the extreme cold of the bitter northern winter. John Fraser, Peking correspondent of the Toronto *Globe and Mail*, described their conditions:

As for the people Mrs. Fu and others were trying to help, Peking holds no bleaker sight at this moment. Poor peasants with grievances have been pouring into the capital over the past month—there are many more than journalists first realized. An exact figure is impossible but it is obviously in the thousands.

At first their lodgings were in the street during weather that ranged from -10 to -20 degrees Centigrade. Some have died. Later the municipal authorities let them establish a sort of shantytown not far from the Great Hall of the people. [*Globe and Mail*, January 27.]

In another unusual departure from past practice, the official government press has begun to acknowledge the existence of protests of this kind, and to try both to argue with the dissenters and to line up public opinion against them. The January 27 Peking *People's Daily* quoted Hua Kuo-feng as saying that "The majority of those who have come to Beijing [Peking] to lodge complaints with the central authorities, are good people." But it went on to declare:

Nevertheless, there is a thorny problem in that the number of people pouring into Beijing is increasing daily. It is now the dead of winter, and there are grave difficulties in providing them with food and accommodation. Therefore, the problem has to be solved immediately. . . . We don't want people to travel thousands of

miles to Beijing to seek protection and help from the central authorities. [Hsinhua, January 28-29.]

The government referred to the peasants as "class brothers," and warned police and functionaries not to clash with them even if they used "extreme language." But an event that very night brought to the surface the deep tensions inherent in the situation.

January 27 was the eve of the Chinese New Year. That night Hua Kuo-feng held a New Year's party that was the most lavish extravaganza staged in Peking since before the Cultural Revolution. Some 30,000 bureaucrats took over the Great Hall of the People for a night of feasting, drinking, ballroom dancing, and card playing. Outside in the subfreezing weather, 150 peasants stood with banners reading, "In the name of Chairman Hua and Chairman Mao, we want equality," "We want to eat," and "We want clothes."

This proved to be more than the smug bureaucrats could tolerate. As the guests began to leave, troops moved on the peasants, dispersing them and arresting several of their leaders. On January 31, wall posters signed by friends of those arrested said that two of the peasant organizers of the demonstration had been sentenced to five years in prison.

The most dramatic protests have been those of the "rusticated" youth, who have staged strikes and demonstrations in Yunnan province, and in the cities of Peking, Shanghai, Hanchow, and Sian.

In Shanghai, former city residents who are now assigned to state farms in the countryside began demonstrations of up to 3,000 in December demanding urban jobs and housing. This was kept out of the Chinese press until February 5, when more than 1,000 of these youths went on a rampage, stopping car and train traffic, breaking store windows, and besieging government officials with their demands. The protesters staged a sit-in at the Shanghai Municipal Employment Bureau and refused to let the staff leave. They occupied an electrical store demanding bullhorns for use in holding street meetings. And, according to the official press, they cut the power lines for the Shanghai trolley system and occupied the railroad yards, stopping the trains for twelve hours and stranding 80,000 passengers. (Hsinhua, February 10 and 14.)

This action produced a howl from the government, with a barrage of articles, usually attributed to individual workers, denouncing the protesters as "selfish," and comparing them to the Maoist Red Guards at the beginning of the Cultural Revolution. Nevertheless, the campaign had a highly defensive note in it. A front-page editorial in the February 12 *People's Daily* on the events in Shanghai declared: "We have to tell some comrades that on no account must they take a hostile attitude and violate the law in lodging their com-

plaints, no matter how greatly they have been wronged." (Hsinhua, February 13.)

All but two of those arrested in Shanghai were released.

The Shanghai youth protests provoked the government into lifting the lid on news of a still larger protest action that had occurred in the early winter in Yunnan province and been kept secret by the official press.

On December 27, some twenty-eight Chinese farm workers arrived in Peking's Tien An Men Square and handed out leaflets saying that they represented 50,000 farm workers who had been on strike since December 9. They vowed to remain in the square until they had met with top government officials. At the time it was not possible to verify the claims of these demonstrators, but in the aftermath of the Shanghai demonstrations, the government itself admitted that the Yunnan farm workers' strike did indeed take place, and tried to present the settlement arrived at there as an example of the kind of moderation it wanted the Shanghai youth to exercise.

The Yunnan strikers were also deported urban residents, many of whom had been in the countryside for more than ten years. Their main demand was for the right to return to their former homes. Peking has now revealed that it sent one of its top officials, Vice-premier Wang Chen, to meet personally with the strikers. Wang invoked his own persecution by the government during the Cultural Revolution in order to try to win the confidence of the workers. He refused to grant their central demand, but he did come up with an offer of a special fund of US\$4.25 million to build new housing for them.

Publicizing this event as a model suggests in itself that the government feels weak and on the defensive before the expectations of the Chinese people. After all, while it is true that compared to the intransigence of the Shanghai rioters the Yunnan strikers seemed prepared for moderation and compromise, it was still an example of workers taking direct strike action against the government and winning an improvement in their conditions by doing so.

Teng Hsiao-p'ing expects to be paid for his performance in Vietnam by a large and rapid infusion of American loans and grants, which will permit him to hold up in front of the Chinese people tangible evidence that his regime can bring them prosperity. But if Yunnan is any indication, sectors of the Chinese workers and peasants are already too impatient to simply wait until the government decides to improve their conditions; they are beginning to try to assert their own interests. And an offensive border war by this regime, against a people few Chinese workers and peasants feel are a threat, could add dangerously to the regime's unpopularity. □

The Political Earthquake in Iran

By George Novack

Iran, a land often buffeted by natural earthquakes, is today the scene of a colossal political earthquake. The countrywide upheaval of the masses has shattered the shah's bloody tyranny. That triumph is only the first installment in the reconstruction of Iranian society promised by the country's third national revolution in this century, one that is already by far the most sweeping, popular, and deepgoing.

The revolutionary changes in Iran are history-making. If the epicenter of the earthquake lies in the dispossessed domain of the Pahlavi monarchy, its shock waves are rumbling far and wide, throughout the Middle East and beyond.

It is therefore useful, even at this early stage, to make a provisional assessment of the long-term strategic implications on an international scale of the demolition of the shah's regime by the insurgent armed masses. How do these events affect the prospects of the world socialist revolution? What impact will they have upon the imperialist camp headed by the United States?

Mass Action Brought Down Monarchy

The shah's despotism has been annihilated by revolutionary means. The manner in which the deed was done has the highest importance for the future. The triumph was brought about through the semispontaneous mobilization of the masses, their direct actions in repeated street demonstrations and prolonged strikes, culminating in confrontations and armed combat with the elite military units and police watchdogs of the old regime.

The self-imposed discipline observed by the array of oppositional forces during the past months has been remarkable. How impressive the combat of the workers and their broad range of allies—the soldiers, peasants, students, women, youth, members of the oppressed nationalities, shopkeepers, professionals—in the face of provocations and repression! Their initiatives demonstrate the latent capacities for heroism and ingenuity slumbering in the depths of the masses, which so rarely find expression under normal circumstances. It takes the powerful ferment of a popular revolution to bring such qualities to the surface.

Some time after the "energy crisis" of 1973 that was falsely attributed by the U.S. ruling class to the shah and his fellow members of OPEC, the exiled Iranian poet and literary critic Reza Baraheni—who

had himself been kidnapped, tortured, and held for 102 days by the SAVAK—predicted in his influential exposure of oppression in Iran, *The Crowned Cannibals*, that the Shah of Shahs would one day become the victim of "a different kind of energy crisis, this time generated by the masses of human beings he has wronged."

The poet's intuition was prophetic. What prodigious energies the insurgent Iranians have summoned up since the encounters in Qum and Tabriz in January and February of 1978!

The Iranian masses have taught the oppressed and exploited throughout the world that the cruelest and most apparently secure tyranny is not so omnipotent as it seems. It can be undermined, isolated, and destroyed under the revolutionary onslaught of the aroused masses—and without any help from outside.

It was the determination of the demonstrators in life-and-death struggle that won over the lower ranks of the armed forces to the side of the people and cemented their alliance in action at the climactic moment. The rebels sealed the fate of the autocracy by winning the contest for the hearts and minds of the soldiery.

The success of their popular uprising destabilizes the regimes of kings and despots, and lends encouragement to the oppressed and their more radical leaders throughout the Islamic world and beyond.

Guerrilla Strategy a Total Failure

Much prominence is being given in news reports abroad to the activities of "armed guerrilla bands" as the spearhead of the insurrectionary forces. This is a misleading designation obscuring the character and role of the spontaneously organized armies of the people that cleaned out police stations, took the hated SAVAK agents into custody, and broke open the shah's prisons and torture chambers.

To be sure, many young guerrilla fighters of both sexes, who had struggled bravely for years against insuperable odds and paid a terrible price at the hand of the Pahlavi dictatorship, did participate actively in the final decisive actions. But however much they helped to keep alive the spirit of resistance, the *strategy* of guerrilla warfare was a total failure in Iran. It did not bring about the government's downfall.

Not small guerrilla bands, but the millions of workers and their allies made up the ranks of the revolution. Their massive rebellion carried the movement to a victor-

ious consummation as the united masses grew into an irresistible political force. None of the previous revolutions of our century have involved so tenacious, persistent, and sustained a mobilization of the masses, culminating in a general nationwide strike lasting several months and paralyzing the entire economy.

Process of Permanent Revolution

The Iranian revolution has displayed many special features of its own, determined by the peculiarities of the nation's complex structure, traditions, and culture, and by the given relation of social and political forces under the dictatorship. The important role of the mullahs of Shi'a Islam, and of Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini in particular, has been the most conspicuous. These distinctions have engraved their marks upon the development of the movement to date.

But from the broader standpoint of the international class struggle in this Age of Permanent Revolution, the events that have unfolded over the past year confirm the tendency of the revolutionary process to approximate more and more the pattern initiated with the Russian Revolution.

During the prolonged historical detour that began with the revolutionary upheaval in China in the late 1930s and 1940s, it seemed to many radicals that the peasantry was the prime force and base of anticolonialist and anticapitalist movements. But the example of Iran, itself a semicolonial country under the sway of the imperialists, is a fresh and vivid illustration of how the revolutionary road to power passes through the city populations, with the decisive role being played by striking industrial workers—in Iran, by the oil workers first and foremost.

The guerrilla strategy broke against a stone wall. It was found wanting as soon as the main social forces in the cities, the workplaces, the center of the oppressed nationalities—as well as in the countryside—came to the fore and launched themselves into action. These provided the big battalions that finished off the autocracy and its defenders.

Many of the proposals in the Transitional Program for Socialist Revolution, the programmatic guide of the Fourth International, quickly acquired flesh and blood in their application to the explosive Iranian situation. Immediate demands for higher pay and decent housing were raised by striking workers. Democratic demands

directed against the dictatorship were taken up by the people: destruction of the monarchy and its fake "Great Civilization"; an end to imperialist interference and the assertion of national independence; restoration and expansion of democratic liberties; freedom of publication and expression and the abolition of censorship; arming of the people; and so on. Of immediate importance is the proposal of free elections for a constituent assembly to decide upon the new form of government.

Such demands for political democracy, which are indispensable for the education and organization of the working masses, have gone hand in hand with the proclamation and partial realization of transitional slogans—that is, demands of a more strictly anticapitalist and working-class character. Absolutism was brought to its knees by the mass political strike, the principal weapon of the working class,

also employed by its allies. Calls arose for the formation of a national trade-union federation, legalization of the de facto workers control that arose in the refineries and oil fields, and the opening of corporation accounts to public inspection.

Democratically elected committees of workers have appeared in the factories and throughout the oil industry. In the neighborhoods, popular committees have arisen. These have been matched by the beginnings of organization among soldiers and poor peasants. Such bodies could become soviets, or—as they were called in Iran's Constitutional Revolution of 1906-09—*anjomans*, responsive to the needs of their constituents and responsible to them, thus promoting the political development of the masses and facilitating the conquest of power by the working class.

Like China, Vietnam, and Cuba, Iran is experiencing the initial steps in the up-

surge of class struggle, in which the purely democratic, antimonarchical and anti-imperialist tasks have been uppermost. As heralded by the theory of Marxism and the program of Trotskyism, they must inexorably pass over, as the revolution extends and deepens, to the sharper posing of its fundamentally proletarian nature and essentially socialist aims and orientation.

Bourgeois Forces Try to Apply Brakes

At this point, the representatives of the possessing classes at home and abroad grasp the inherent dynamics of the situation more clearly than do the people themselves. The National Fronters, the traditional careerist bourgeois-democratic politicians, are as fearful of further independent activity by the masses, through the fraternal union of the workers and the rank-and-file soldiers, as they once were of the shah's terror. They realize that the question of which class shall rule is at the top of the agenda.

Will the workers really rule and the needs of the oppressed and exploited be given priority—or will this third Iranian revolution be blocked from fulfillment in the same way as its predecessors in 1906-09 and 1946-53?

Mehdi Bazargan's provisional government, named by Khomeini, has called upon the people to quietly resume their usual occupations, give up their arms, and maintain order. Instead of completing the dismantlement of the regular army, the new government has urged Iran's 450,000 soldiers to return to their barracks and submit to the discipline of new commanders chosen from above out of the shah's old officer corps. The Islamic hierarchy and the bourgeois liberals hold that the independent action of the masses in pursuit of their vital interests is over. But in reality, the struggle for the main objectives of the revolutionary reconstruction of Iran lies ahead.

The coming months will see a deepgoing differentiation of the divergent components of the heterogeneous coalition recently arrayed against the shah and a clarification of their conflicting aims and interests. This has already begun. The *New York Times* reported February 24 that "nearly every ministry, bank, office or factory has a workers' committee that must pass on almost every order if it is to have a chance of being carried out." According to the *Times*, Bazargan's deputy Abbas Amir Entezam complained: "Despite the Ayatollah's commands, none of the major industries in the country are functioning because the workers spend all their time holding political meetings."

Air force technicians, or *homafars*, have issued an appeal to their fellow soldiers to assert "the right to participate in politics . . . the right to elect commanders we trust, not appointments of individuals over us." (See page 206.)

The bourgeois figures of the National

Workers' and Peasants' Demands Raised at Rally

More than 100,000 persons defied warnings by Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini and gathered for a February 23 rally in driving rain at Tehran University. The rally was called by a united front of left organizations.

Speakers representing workers from the oil fields and other industries, farmers, and various left groups addressed the crowd. According to the February 24 Newark *Star-Ledger*, the demands raised included:

- People's councils to seize and run factories, businesses and local affairs.

- Establishment of a people's army, including revolutionary militants, with elected officers.

- Respect for the culture and rights of minorities.

- Equality for women in public life."

Among the groups that sponsored and helped to organize the rally were the Iranian Trotskyists of the Hezbe Kargarane Sosialist (Socialist Workers Party).

The organization singled out for most attention in the Western press has been the Charikha-ye Fedayi-e Khalq (People's Guerrilla Fighters). This group had originally called on everyone "concerned that the blood of the martyrs will have been spilled in vain and the achievements of the revolution wasted" to march to Khomeini's headquarters on February 22. But the march was canceled and the rally substituted after Khomeini denounced its organizers as "non-Moslems" whose ideas were "at war with the philosophical belief of Islam."

Khomeini repeatedly warned Iran-

ians to stay away from the February 23 rally. Posters went up throughout Tehran calling on people "of all social strata" not to participate. Tens of thousands turned out nonetheless.

The rally reflected the divisions now arising between the forces that want to carry the revolution forward to achieve the demands of the workers and peasants and those who want to halt the radicalization and impose a stable capitalist regime. Khomeini is lending his considerable prestige and authority to the latter, but the sizable turnout on February 23 makes it clear that growing numbers of Iranians are beginning to question his leadership.

The *Washington Post* account gave some details about two of the speeches heard by the crowd:

"A speaker who said he represented Iranian oil workers issued a series of demands including representation on Khomeini's revolutionary council, formation of 'true unions,' and establishment of workers' committees to supervise oil production, exports, and distribution.

"He also called for 'elimination' of the Western oil consortium that normally produces and exports the bulk of Iran's crude, and 'all other capitalist monopolies.'

"A speaker reportedly representing Iranian farmers called for 'farmers' councils,' cancelation of debts to Iranian state banks and a variety of rural development programs including 'increased facilities for silkworm farmers.'"

A message of support from Kurdish nationalists was also read.

Front and Bazargan's Iran Liberation Movement want to be acknowledged as the authentic leaders of the revolution. Yet they fear and oppose its irresistible impulses to encroach upon the foundations of the bourgeois order and head toward socialist solutions of the gigantic problems facing the nation.

They balk at the revolutionary necessity to completely replace all the civil, military, and judicial officials of the old regime with trustworthy representatives of the masses, submitted to their vigilant control. The officialdom that served the deposed rulers can become points of support for reaction, and, unless swept out with an iron broom, can retake into their hands the power that the people have wrested from them. A purge of the state apparatus is not in itself a socialist task, but it is indispensable if the revolution is to be carried forward.

Whatever reforms the bourgeois officeholders may have to make under pressure, owing to their very class nature they must stop short of uprooting landlordism, giving land to the peasants and equality to women, or meeting the aspirations of the oppressed nationalities which comprise nearly 60 percent of Iran's population. Already the Bazargan-Khomeini regime is trying to suppress the struggle of the Kurdish people in western Iran.

The government's unwillingness to institute policies in the interests of the working masses is bound to engender sharp frictions between the newly installed ministers and those on whose backs they have climbed to power. Sixty-two years after the outbreak of the Russian Revolution in February 1917, there looms up a comparable post-February period of successive tests of strength between the contending class forces: the workers and their allies among the peasants, the city poor, and the students on one side, and on the other the propertied groupings who are threatened by thoroughgoing democracy and the thrust from below toward anticapitalist action.

Much will depend upon the lessons absorbed and the actions taken by the oil workers and technicians who hold in their hands the destiny of the national economy. The industrial proletariat has objectively the greatest social weight and is ultimately the only consistently revolutionary class in the country. It is thereby the social and political key to moving the revolution beyond any sort of Islamic or radical bourgeois regime toward a workers and peasants republic.

Whatever the interim developments and their tempo, the basic alternatives in Iran are these: either the social and political changes under way will finally culminate in the conquest of sovereignty by the toiling masses under a workers and peasants regime—or else that way forward will again be barricaded by the politicians of the dwarfish and retarded native bour-

geoisie, who remain willing to compromise with the imperialists at the expense of the masses.

Washington is banking on the "reasonableness" and "realism" of Bazargan and his ministers. What the imperialists expect of them was put openly by a diplomat quoted in a biographical sketch of the new foreign minister, Karim Sanjabi, that appeared in the February 16 *New York Times*:

"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."

However difficult Sanjabi will find it to play this role, he is certainly willing to try. One of Sanjabi's aides explained to the *Wall Street Journal* that "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." (It should be noted in passing how this lays to rest the notion that an independent Iranian finance capital had emerged in recent years. Clearly Iran remains a semicolonial country, its native capitalists dependent on the imperialist banks.)

In the light of the new government's stance, the workers and peasants in Iran should be prepared to counter the maneuvers of the bourgeoisie in order not to be cheated of the fruits of their victory in the first flush of liberation. They will have to learn in the harsh school of further encounters with the new government how to create the political and organizational prerequisites for their own class rule.

Big Opportunity for Trotskyist Forces

The Iranians are fortunate in that they are not crippled by the presence of influential mass Social Democratic or Stalinist parties or entrenched trade-union bureaucracies that would strive to subordinate them to the bourgeois government and demagogically lure them into class-collaborationist dead ends, as such organizations have succeeded in doing in one country after another from Chile to Portugal.

Moscow in particular has a sorry record to account for. The weakened Tudeh Party, the Iranian CP, still suffers from the discreditment of its behavior in the past—its betrayal of the first nationwide oil strike in 1946, its sectarian abstention from the most important revolutionary struggles of the early 1950s. As for Peking, it backed the shah to the day of his departure and has since shamefully scolded Washington for not supporting the tyrant firmly enough.

These circumstances create a propitious political atmosphere for the growth of a genuinely revolutionary party, composed in the main of workers and involved in all the struggles of the exploited and op-

pressed, that can win the confidence and respect of militants. A Leninist party of this type is essential for leading the insurgent masses toward the conquest of power and eliminating the root cause of their oppression—capitalism.

The Iranian Trotskyist forces, now united in the Hezb-e Kargar-e Socialist (Socialist Workers Party), have set themselves the tremendous task of constructing such a party. Their partisans can point to what the Cubans did after a successful insurrection against their dictator Batista twenty years ago. Bypassing the Stalinists and sweeping aside the reformists, the Cubans under the leadership of the July 26 Movement created a workers and peasants government that expropriated the capitalist and landlord holdings, put a monopoly on foreign trade, planned the national economy, and attained genuine national sovereignty.

Try as they might, the American imperialists have proven unable to strangle or crush that revolution ninety miles from their shores. Iran has almost four times as many inhabitants as Cuba, is some 8,000 miles from the United States, and is richer in natural resources. Given the proper policies and leadership, Iran too can succeed in ridding itself of imperialist exploitation and making still greater contributions to the world revolution.

Washington Forced to Retreat

The Iranian people demonstrated that the American colossus had feet of clay when it came up against the anti-imperialist mobilizations of an aroused people. This is the legacy of the consciousness gained by the American working class through the years of the anti-Vietnam War struggle. But while Washington has been beaten back for the time being, its strategists are busily scheming how to retrieve their lost positions. This will not be easily done, but the American ruling class will pursue its goals with tenacity.

How striking is the contrast between the present situation and that of August 1953, when the CIA overthrew Mohammed Mosaddegh's legally elected government and put the shah back upon the throne! Washington's current weakness is evidenced in the sequence of shifts in its diplomatic stance toward Tehran as the opposition gained momentum over the past year.

As 1978 opened, Carter was at the imperial butcher's banquet table, fulsomely toasting his "great leadership" and hailing Iran as "an island of stability." Long after the Peacock Throne had begun to totter, the White House backed the "crowned cannibal" to the hilt. Finally, though, he had to be advised to leave for a "vacation."

Then the State Department endorsed Bakhtiar, the shah's stand-in civilian appointee as prime minister, hoping this could lead to a compromise with at least



"The triumph was brought about through semispontaneous mobilizations of the masses, direct action in repeated demonstrations and prolonged strikes, culminating in armed combat with old regime's elite military units."

part of the leadership of the mass movement. But the workers and peasants stayed in the streets, Khomeini remained intransigent, and the revolutionary flood soon swept the hapless Bakhtiar into hiding. So the Carter administration had to hurriedly recognize Bazargan's bourgeois government, in hope of using it as a bulwark against further advances by the revolutionary forces.

This policy of last-minute retreats illustrates well the imperialists' standard practice of getting behind and propping up the most reactionary forces available that appear to have a chance for survival. But in Iran this past year they were left holding onto lost causes until it was too late.

Iran and Vietnam

"The disaster Washington has just suffered will have incalculable consequences," the editors of the influential Paris daily *Le Monde* said. "They have not ceased to affect the entire region and the world balance of forces."

The Iranian revolution is dealing the third big body-blow to the imperialist system in the 1970s. The first was the exit from Indochina after years of costly military intervention, and the subsequent overturn of capitalist property relations in South Vietnam. That was a signal political defeat: The tenacious resistance of the

freedom fighters and the concomitant rise of mass antiwar sentiment and activity within the American population and the imperialist army itself set a limit on Washington's use of its military might that it has yet to overcome.

As the final ignominious pullout from Indochina was under way, the U.S.-Portuguese empire in southern Africa was collapsing. The American imperialists proved unable to halt this second historic reversal. They organized an invasion of Angola by South African troops, but it was turned back by the Black freedom fighters with the crucial help of military forces sent from revolutionary Cuba.

Now, in Iran, comes the destruction of a strategic base that the Pentagon has relied on in the Middle East, the probable loss of lucrative loot by the multinational corporations, and the expulsion of the legions of imperialist agents and advisers.

Iran has greater economic and military weight in world affairs than Vietnam. Under the shah it was an El Dorado for American business, both as an oil producer and as a market for military hardware and capital goods. And it played a pivotal role in stabilizing the Persian Gulf area and the entire Middle East for the benefit of American finance capital. Thus this new blow threatens to be even more damaging to imperialist interests than the others.

But this will be true only if the Iranian revolution goes forward—as in Vietnam—to the overturn of capitalist property relations and the creation of a new workers state.

Washington will do everything in its power to prevent that from occurring. But to gain a free hand it must overcome the "gnawing fear that the country will not back it if it gets into a posture involving risks," as Republican Jacob Javits of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee put it in a February 20 speech. The U.S. rulers have by no means resigned themselves to the setbacks they have suffered, and they are taking advantage of the Chinese bureaucracy's military attack on Vietnam to try and wrap themselves in the mantle of peacemakers. This is part of their orchestrated campaign to prepare public opinion to once again support the use of American military might abroad.

Rising Anti-imperialist Tide

For the present, Washington is compelled to improvise new dikes to hold back the tide of anti-imperialist sentiment generated by the Iranian uprising. The State Department, it is said, is worried about "the possible spillover of turmoil into Iran's pro-West neighbors." Arms sales are to be stepped up to the reactionary regimes

in Saudi Arabia, North Yemen, and Jordan, but these will be feeble substitutes for the shah's once mighty forces.

According to the February 14 *New York Times*, "American companies are compelled, in the wake of this disaster, to ask themselves, 'Which country will be the next Iran?'" There is no lack of candidates for this honor.

On the other side of the ledger, the manifest misfortunes of the monopolists work to the advantage of their antagonists. The victory of the Iranian rebellion has tilted further the balance of class forces on the world arena in favor of the anti-imperialist and anticapitalist cause. The most spectacular case involves the conflict between the imperialist state of Israel, Washington's sole dependable Middle East ally, and the Palestinian national liberation movement. The shah backed Israel and supplied over half its oil. That tie has now been severed.

The Iranian masses and Khomeini's government have given many signs of their hostility toward the Zionists and their solidarity with the Palestinians. Significantly, PLO leader Yassir Arafat was the first political figure to visit Iran after the victorious insurrection. "Today Iran, tomorrow Palestine," Arafat told cheering crowds in Tehran, proclaiming the Iranian revolution "a glorious torch that will enlighten the whole region." The new government has broken diplomatic relations with Israel and has turned over to the PLO the sacked Israeli headquarters in Tehran. These actions reflect the powerful pressure of the anti-Zionist sentiment among the Iranian masses—one of the most solid sources of inspiration the Palestine freedom fighters have received in the course of their long and often lonely struggle.

The Black proletariat in South Africa and throughout that continent will be greatly inspired by the Iranian oil workers' closing of the tap on 90 percent of South African oil supplies. The new government has vowed that such exports will not be resumed.

The shah's downfall, the executions of

some of his top executioners, and the continuing upsurge in Iran have sent shivers of apprehension through the ruling classes of other countries in the region. The big-business newspapers have taken to reassuring themselves—not very convincingly—that "Saudi Arabia is not Iran." The Turkish regime faces a deep economic crisis and desperately needs a \$1 billion loan from imperialist governments and banks, which are demanding in return stepped-up attacks on the living standards of Turkish workers. Alarm is also being voiced about threats to the North Yemeni regime from the radical-nationalist forces that govern its neighbor, South Yemen.

The pressure that is bearing down on all the Arab regimes from the upheaval in Iran is evident in the shah's own precarious position in Morocco. King Hassan's regime has extended recognition to the new government in Tehran, which is now demanding the shah be extradited to stand trial. The Iranian Foreign Ministry has declared that it intends to "force the shah into a situation in which he can go only to Johannesburg or Tel Aviv."

Washington views the entire Middle East not as the homeland of independent, sovereign peoples but as its own special sphere of influence. It strives to convince the American people that the countries of the region must be shielded against encroachment and indirect takeovers by cat's-paws of the menacing Soviet Union. Hence its hollow-sounding protests to Moscow about alleged fomenting of anti-American feelings in Iran and failure to prevent the killing of the U.S. envoy in Afghanistan.

Of course, Iranians needed no prodding from abroad to learn about and act against America's complicity in bleeding their country's wealth on wasteful armaments and in torturing their citizens. And far from fanning the flames, the Stalinist bureaucratic caste in the Kremlin turned their backs upon the revolutionary movement. Only at the last hour did Moscow shift its public stance to one of opposing the shah, with whom it had long been on cordial terms. (In contrast, the revolution-

ary government of Cuba hailed at the outset the "popular rebellion" against the shah's "reign of terror . . . which has lasted 25 years.")

The Soviet Stalinists' belated and lukewarm recognition of the revolution in Iran reflects their need to maintain some credibility for their anti-imperialist pose. But what they seek above all is stability on their southern borders and preservation of their détente arrangement with Washington. Here Carter and Brezhnev have a coincidence of interests, and the American imperialists are well aware that this is the case. Writing from Moscow in the February 22 *New York Times*, Craig Whitney explained that "the best informed diplomats here believe that the overthrow of the Shah's regime and the establishment of an Islamic Government under Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini were not predicted, caused or controlled by either the Americans or the Russians.

"They're probably as concerned as we are about the situation in Iran," a diplomat said. "Things are confused and Iran is a Soviet border state."

The current strain on détente "seems needless," Whitney concluded, "brought on by frustration, short tempers and posturing on both sides, rather than by any basic collision of Soviet and American interests."

Nonetheless, Moscow cannot allow itself to be left without leverage in Iran, nor can it allow the United States a free hand to regain its foothold there. So despite the desires of both sides to preserve détente, the interests of the Kremlin and Washington will continue to be at cross purposes in Iran. This can be seen, for example, in the February 13 warning by the editors of the *New York Times* that "for the United States to lose a strong ally in the Persian Gulf is one thing; it would be quite another for Iran to turn sharply hostile or pro-Soviet."

Imperialists Fear 'New Cuba'

The *Times* editors obviously fear a "new Cuba" in Iran. They returned to their theme on February 18, this time voicing "a growing and legitimate concern about whether America knows how to use its indisputable strengths to promote its global interests."

It is getting harder to keep the world safe for big business, not only because of what is happening in Iran and the Middle East, in Africa and Indochina, but also in view of the growing problems arising from the 1974-75 economic downturn, the first worldwide recession since 1937-38, and the concomitant rise in working-class militancy within the advanced industrial countries.

The predatory imperialists are far from vanquished. But Iranian revolutionists are totally correct to feel that the winds of change are blowing in their favor.

February 24, 1979



Informations Ouvrières

How the Insurrection Began

By Cindy Jaquith

[The following article appeared in the March 2 issue of the *Militant*, a revolutionary socialist newsweekly published in New York.]

* * *

TEHRAN—When a group of airmen at the Doshan Tappeh air base here decided February 9 to stand up to the shah's tanks and bullets, their cries for help were heeded immediately by the surrounding population.

But few of the thousands of people who marched to the base in solidarity that night realized that they were witnessing the beginning of the Tehran insurrection.

Nor did the courageous young airmen themselves know that the Battle of Doshan Tappeh would culminate in the overthrow of the hated Pahlavi monarchy.

Three days after the insurrection, one of those airmen told the story of that battle to the *Militant* and the French Trotskyist newspaper *Rouge*.

Asking that we not use his name, he explained, "I want the facts of what happened here to get to the United States. We want the American people to understand we are not against them. We are against the American government."

He began by telling us about the radicalization in the air force over the past year. The deepening hatred of the shah and his U.S. military advisers began to find open expression among the homafars of the air force. These are young technicians and engineers. Their rank is roughly equivalent to sergeant in the United States.

Created by the shah thirteen years ago, the homafar branch of the air force has always borne the brunt of the officers' scorn and brutal discipline.

The radicalization of the homafars thus developed in part as a struggle for democratic rights.

About one year ago, the homafars began carrying out strikes to protest military discipline and the shah. An example is what happened at the air base in Boushehr in the southern part of Iran:

"It was from this base that planes flew over surrounding countries to display the shah's support for other regimes," the homafar told us. "One day a general slapped one of the homafars. The rest of the men went on strike for a week in response. They refused to repair the planes, grounding all flights for a week."

Then the protest moved to hunger strikes:

"Homafars, like everyone else, could no

longer live under the shah's repression. We had to take action. So we would go on hunger strikes. The word would be spread through leaflets, and everyone would refuse to eat."

The generals tried to hide these strikes from the public. Sometimes they scheduled the work day to exclude meals so there could be no strike. They were deathly afraid other soldiers and the population as a whole would be inspired further by the homafars' protests.

As the marches against the shah grew to millions last fall, the homafars felt they too must publicly show their opposition to the shah. So they began to organize their own demonstrations against the monarchy.

"Homafars held marches off the base, all over the country. We condemned the shah—and later Bakhtiar—and supported Ayatollah Khomeini. Then everyone got to know that homafars were on the side of the people."

These marches had to be built in an underground fashion on the bases. The homafars also needed support from the civilian population:

"A leaflet would appear on the base giving the time and place of the march. The homafars would gather in uniform in one spot, and civilian backers would meet at another. Then we would join forces for the demonstration."

The presence of civilians protected many of the airmen from victimization. Nevertheless, some of the homafars lost their lives.

"Military intelligence caught some people giving out leaflets. Others who had marched were identified by the generals. There were arrests.

"Shortly before the shah was forced to leave the country, he had 157 homafars executed at Tehran's Jamshidieh Air Base. Another 40 were shot later."

The Jamshidieh massacre was only reported in the bourgeois press after the shah was gone. Bakhtiar denied the shootings had ever taken place.

The event that led up to the Battle of Doshan Tappeh was the February 8 demonstration of more than 1 million in Tehran.

A contingent of 1,000 airmen and other military personnel in uniform joined the march called by Khomeini to support his newly appointed prime minister, Mehdi Bazargan. The homafars went to the demonstration as a group:

"In the morning, we put our uniforms in

paper bags and went to the *majlis* [parliament building]. Behind the *majlis* was a house near Khomeini's headquarters. There we changed into our uniforms and went out on the march. Afterwards we returned to this house, changed into civilian clothes again, and went home.

"We knew there must be agents in our midst who would try to disrupt our contingent or report people's names. So after the march, Khomeini supporters provided us with a defense squad."

The next day, February 9, the atmosphere on the air bases was extremely tense. The homafars' demonstration was intolerable to the military brass—it threatened to crack the armed forces wide open.

The airmen, however, had been inspired by the march to speak out with even greater confidence.

On the evening of February 9, at the Doshan Tappeh air base, homafar trainees, called honarjous, were watching a televised account of Khomeini's victorious arrival in Iran the week before. The homafars themselves do not live on the base, so they were not there.

A spontaneous pro-Khomeini demonstration broke out in the TV room. Members of the elite Royal Guards, who had been policing the air bases for several weeks, rushed into the room.

They clubbed the honarjous with their rifle butts and shot several. When that didn't work, they drove a tank right through the door.

The honarjous moved outside. They began demonstrating, shouting: "Down with the Bakhtiar government—guards go home!"

They also yelled: "*Allahu akbar*"—"God is great"—the signal for help.

People began gathering at the gates of the base, especially the relatives of the honarjous. As the crowd grew outside the Royal Guard commanders decided to withdraw their forces from the base for the night.

Early the next morning the homafars reported for work:

"We had heard about what happened the night before. When we arrived at the gates, there were still thousands of people outside. They gave us food.

"We went inside and saw the wreckage the guards had left. We went to the hospitals and saw all the heads they had busted open. We were furious.

"So we refused to work, and instead started demonstrating in the yard. After a while, a few officers and noncommissioned officers joined us.

"It was then that the Royal Guard attacked the base.

"Tanks poured toward both the north and south gates of the base.

"At the north gate they were stopped. The civilians outside blocked them, and the guards at the gate shot at them.

"But the Royal Guards got in at the

south gate. They began machine-gunning indiscriminately.

"Homafars rushed to the armory to get guns. A captain was there, and he tried to keep them out. He was shot.

"We armed ourselves, and we gave guns to the civilians outside.

"At this point, everyone on the base realized that the Royal Guards were going to massacre everyone inside. Low-ranking officers and even the Green Berets [same type as in the United States] joined the homafars in repelling the attack. Women and children living on the base went after the tanks, setting one on fire.

"Between those of us inside the base and civilians shooting from rooftops outside, we drove the Royal Guards off the base. We kept pushing them further away, block by block. At every corner, as they retreated, we built a new barricade."

Once the base was secured, the homafars elected new officers. The top officers had disappeared during the battle—except for General Rabii, the national commander of the air force. Rabii was there the whole time, observing the killing of his men from a helicopter.

But it was the Royal Guards who took the worst losses—more than half the sixty-three killed in the fighting.

The insurrection spread from Doshan Tappeh. Homafars took over a police station to get more arms for the people. They

joined in the battles around the city, although not in an organized way.

It was the collapse of the army in the face of the insurrection that sealed the people's victory. An equally important factor was the unprecedented solidarity of the civilian population with the homafars when the fighting began.

Some press reports have given the mistaken impression that the main forces fighting with the airmen were the two guerrilla groups—the Islamic Mujahadeen and the Marxist-oriented Fedayeen. These guerrillas were active participants, but their numbers are relatively small.

As the homafar we interviewed put it, "Everyone in Tehran was a mujahadeen during the insurrection."

Since the overthrow of the monarchy, the airmen have continued their struggle.

When Prime Minister Bazargan appointed General Mehdioun as the new air force commander, protests broke out on air bases around the country. Mehdioun, who served under the shah for forty years, is regarded as a traitor to the revolution. Bazargan was finally forced to appoint a different commander to the post.

In the demonstration against Mehdioun, airmen raised the demand that they be allowed to elect their own officers. Other democratic demands are also coming to the fore on the air bases.

The homafar explained:

Iranian Soldiers Ask—'Where Are Our Rights?'

[The following resolution is being distributed in Iran at meetings and demonstrations of homafars (air force technicians) and other soldiers. Signed by "A Group of Homafars in Support of Democracy in the Army," it was passed by acclamation at a meeting of homafars at the Technical University in Tehran, February 16. We have taken the text from the March 2 issue of the *Militant*.]

Fellow homafars,

The struggle to achieve democracy and social justice which began in our society one year ago has found reflection in the army as well. Soldiers, homafars, and others who were insulted daily by their commanders; individuals who were denied the slightest human rights such as freedom of speech, press, assembly, and the right to vote; joined with the great mass of the Iranian people to overthrow this corrupt order.

Homafars saw our interests lay in extending our hands to unite with the people to overthrow the corrupt regime and replace it with an order in the interests of all the oppressed, an order that would overcome the misery and excesses of the past.

We and other military personnel joined the huge demonstration of Ara'in [the February 8 march to support Bazargan against Bakhtiari]. Then we took part in the days of insurrection, uniting with the ranks of the people to fight the shah's guards and generals.

But unfortunately the events of the past few days have gone in a direction exactly opposite to these aims. This gives us reason to continue our struggle.

The same pawns of the old regime—those who not only pledged allegiance to the shah but also never joined us behind the barricades during the struggle—have now been appointed as our commanders, and this without the slightest consultation with us.

We must ask ourselves, why have there been so many martyrs among the homafars and soldiers? Our fellow soldiers didn't risk their lives to see the same faces back in charge.

No, we voluntarily stood side by side with the people—in the face of enemies' bullets—to struggle for social justice and democracy. But now we're returning to the same old conditions.

Where is the democracy in the army that we fought for?

"We deserve the same rights as any other citizen in Iran. That means the right to speak and write what we please, to read whatever books we like.

"We ought to be able to join political parties and to vote.

"Under the present laws, established by the shah, homafars need permission to get married. We can't attend the universities, although officers can. These laws should be abolished.

"Another restriction bars us from talking to foreigners. The idea is that we would give away military secrets. This is really ridiculous. What secrets could a homafar reveal to the CIA? The CIA set up the Iranian armed forces in the first place!"

We ended our interview on the question of rank-and-file soldiers in the U.S. Army. What attitude do homafars have toward them?

"As I said before, we're not against the American people. American soldiers should look at what the U.S. government did in Vietnam. It went in there to get its hands on the Vietnamese people's affairs.

"If the United States were to send troops to Iran, it would be to get its hands on our oil.

"If American soldiers are fighting for their democratic rights, as we are, we support them. We're behind anyone whose rights are being denied." □

Where is our right to free speech and free press?

Where is our right to assemble, to belong to a political party?

Where is our right to vote and participate in elections?

Where is our right to elect our commanders?

And finally, where is our right to organize in the army, to establish our own committees, where we can discuss and make our own decisions?

The shah's generals always told us not to interfere in politics. But this was a trick. It was used to prevent us from protesting their crimes against the people and their plundering of the nation's riches.

We must have the right to participate in politics, so we and the soldiers are not used to massacre and repress the freedom fighters. We must have the right to elect commanders we trust, not appointments of individuals over us.

It is now clear these rights won't be granted to us unless we stubbornly fight for them and organize ourselves. This is why a group of us have organized around the following demands:

1. Full democratic rights in the armed forces: freedom of speech, press, and as-

sembly; the right to organize, to belong to political parties, to vote in elections; an end to the ban on homafars attending the universities.

2. Homafars themselves must elect their own commanders. The elections should be decided by majority vote with everyone having the right to run for office.

3. The right to form committees of homafars in every garrison to struggle for these demands.

4. Extension of all the above rights to all branches of the armed forces.

Soldiers of the army constitute the immense armed mass of the revolutionary movement. Achieving freedom for them

will achieve freedom for all the armed forces.

We invite all homafars and other military personnel to join us to realize these demands. We also invite civilian militants and freedom fighters to join us. This will be another step in strengthening the bonds between us. □

How Tehran Auto Workers Are Organizing in the Plants

[The following interview with a strike activist at the General Motors plant outside Tehran was obtained by the *Militant* February 13. Four days later the GM strikers returned to work, along with most other workers in the city.

[The GM plant is located on Old Kary Road, the highway leading west from Tehran. This highway is a mile-long belt of factories—auto, steel, pharmaceutical, petrochemical, and other industries.

[There are 2,600 production workers at the GM plant, and 600 office workers and technicians. The interview is with an office worker.]

* * *

Question. How did the strike at GM begin?

Answer. First let me describe what has been happening at the plant for the last year. Long before—in fact ever since GM opened the plant—there has been deep resentment among the workers toward the management, which is American-dominated. Opposition to this domination has been at the heart of our struggle.

Management has imposed production norms—such as speedups—on the workers. The day-to-day atmosphere in the plant is extremely repressive. They hired an ex-colonel in the Iranian army to supervise discipline. He is a SAVAK agent. Time and again, strikers have been handed over to SAVAK—the secret police.

So in late January 1978, we went on strike to demand that this SAVAK be dismissed.

The strike was defeated and many workers imprisoned. The army occupied the factory.

Early in the summer we staged a sit-down strike. Again we demanded the firing of the SAVAK agent, as well as changes in management. We continued our strike until the oil workers walked off the job.

Q. Why did the GM strike end at this point?

A. The company put a lot of pressure on the workers to return. They threatened to fire us otherwise. They did however promise to pay some back wages.

But the workers continued to organize on the job. Some people put out a leaflet

urging that we continue the strike to get rid of the SAVAK.

Q. Did you have a strike committee at this point?

A. No. All we had was a phony union—a government-controlled union.

The officials of this “union” tried to cool down the workers. But events had reached the point where the “union” had lost all authority with the workers. It was basically dissolved.

Instead, workers began talking about the need for a union of our own. One that acts in our own interest, not the company’s. Such unions were illegal under the shah, of course, so we decided to start by setting up a temporary committee.

Q. How was the committee set up and what were its first activities?

A. It was elected at a meeting of both office and production workers in December.

This was at a point when the oil workers’ strike reached a peak. Because there was no petrol, the bosses at our plant decided to shut down. The workers viewed this as simply an attempt to deny us wages.

We were locked out for twelve days. Since we couldn’t meet in the plant, the first meeting of the committee took place at a nearby university. We invited students to attend.

The demands at the committee focused on the fact that management was stealing our money. And not only management. We knew that 10 percent of the profits went to the Pahlavi Foundation owned by the shah.

So the committee demanded that the company’s financial records be opened. The workers pointed out that we weren’t being paid, but meanwhile one of the bosses had fled the country with a lot of company money in his suitcase!

The committee also called for control of policy in the plant—no firings. It demanded the right of committee representatives to participate in management’s meetings and it raised the idea of workers controlling production.

Q. What were meetings of the strike committee like?

A. We held them regularly. As many as 1,000 workers would participate in the discussion. But gradually the production workers lost confidence in the committee.

This was because representation on the committee was heavily weighted toward the office workers. When we elected the committee, production workers were given far fewer representatives than the office workers. This began to pose a political problem.

Q. Can you explain further?

A. The production workers felt they were denied a full voice in decision making. They felt the committee leadership was too conservative and wasn’t fighting effectively for their demands.

The committee was dominated by people who worked closely with the forces around Ayatollah Khomeini. They tried to suppress discussion when production workers demanded more democracy in meetings.

For example, if someone got up and said workers were playing a special role in this revolution, the committee leaders would try to isolate him by calling him “communist.”

This angered workers. They argued back that it was the workers, especially the oil workers, that had brought the shah down.

Q. How did GM workers participate in the insurrection? What role did the strike committee play?

A. People participated as individuals. One worker was killed and another was injured. The strike committee didn’t communicate with us during the insurrection.

Q. What do GM workers think is the next step, now that the monarchy has been overthrown?

A. The biggest question on workers’ minds is forming a union. First, many production workers want to see a new election of the strike committee—this time they want a majority of the delegates.

There was also discussion of forming a national auto workers union.

In my opinion, there are some other important steps as well. The defense guard established by the strike committee should be maintained. We should also continue solidarity activities with workers in other factories. □

How Iranian Revolution Blew Up Carter's Mideast Pact

By David Frankel

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

* * *

Five months have passed since President Carter triumphantly announced that "prayers have been answered" for peace in the Middle East.

Negotiators came to Washington and declared that an Egyptian-Israeli treaty would be signed before the end of 1978.

Egyptian President Anwar el-Sadat and Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin were awarded the Nobel Peace Prize.

But the December 17 deadline set at the Camp David summit for the signing of a treaty is long gone. It is clear that the deal cooked up by Carter has fallen apart.

Although Carter tried to sell the Camp David accords as a peace agreement, they were never anything of the kind. They were intended to win formal Egyptian recognition of the Zionist state and to lay the basis for a U.S.-dominated diplomatic and military alliance in the Middle East.

Along with cementing U.S. economic and political control of the region, the Camp David accords were intended to establish a framework for liquidating the Palestinian national liberation struggle and wiping out the Palestinian Liberation Organization.

White House adviser Zbigniew Brzezinski bragged openly about this with his arrogant "bye-bye PLO" remark.

Washington's real intentions were indicated by Sen. Henry Jackson shortly after the Camp David summit. "Looking ahead," he declared, "we should encourage the evolution of a mutual defense arrangement within the Middle East. Israel and Egypt, as well as Saudi Arabia, Jordan and Iran all face a common Soviet threat."

"Soviet threat" is the code phrase used by the imperialists to describe their fear of popular revolutions. And it is precisely the revolution in Iran that has blown up Carter's plans for a broader counterrevolutionary alliance in the Mideast.

Sadat's Trip—Palestinians Were Victims

At one stroke, the Iranian revolution has altered the relationship of class forces in the Middle East and cut across the process that was symbolized by Sadat's trip to Jerusalem in November 1977.

As the *Militant* explained at the time,

the main factor behind Sadat's trip was the economic and military pressure exerted on his regime by imperialism.

On the economic level, Egypt was staggering under a foreign debt of about \$14 billion—an amount equal to the country's gross national product.

Sadat was desperate for loans and investment capital. But the International Monetary Fund insisted he implement

Sadat's capitulation won him virtually no concessions . . .

austerity measures directed against the Egyptian workers and peasants as a condition for approving further loans. When Sadat tried to carry out such policies in January 1977 the result was massive protests in Egypt's major cities.

Militarily, the Israeli occupation of the Sinai Peninsula and the constant threat of new Israeli attacks continued to undermine Sadat's regime.

Caught between the pressure of imperialism and the increasingly explosive demands of the Egyptian people, Sadat tried to resolve his dilemma by turning to Washington for help in regaining the Sinai and solving Egypt's economic problems.

Sadat's capitulation gained him neither the Sinai nor any substantial economic advantages. But the main victims of his move were the Palestinian people.

By giving the Israeli state de facto recognition, Sadat served notice that he was willing to go along with its continued dispossession and oppression of the Palestinians. He struck a blow against all those trying to stand up to the Zionist regime.

Begin's Hard Line

If Sadat expected gratitude, however, he was mistaken. The Israeli regime—recognizing that Sadat was operating from a position of weakness—simply demanded further concessions.

In fact, Begin pushed for such a flagrant capitulation that any deal at all began to be called into question. Thus, on January 8, 1978, Begin insisted that even in the Sinai Zionist settlements would "remain in place, defended by an Israeli defense force."

In March, Begin ordered the Israeli army into Lebanon, killing and wounding

thousands and creating a quarter of a million refugees.

Begin's hardline stance resulted in friction between Washington and Tel Aviv.

Carter was and is fully committed to the maintenance of Israel as an anchor for the imperialist system in the Mideast. This includes the continuing expansion of Israeli military power and the continuation of Israeli military control over territories seized in 1967—the West Bank, Golan Heights, and Gaza Strip.

But U.S. policymakers also face the problem of retaining close diplomatic, economic, and military ties with the pro-imperialist Arab regimes at the same time that they build up Israeli power. Begin's belligerent diplomatic stance made it more difficult for Washington to draw Jordan and Saudi Arabia into the process initiated by Sadat.

Carter tried to overcome this difficulty at the Camp David summit in September 1978. He wanted some kind of Egyptian-Israeli agreement, both from the standpoint of U.S. policy in the Mideast and also as a means of bolstering his sagging popularity at home.

Camp David Pact

Just how narrow the differences between Washington and Tel Aviv really were, despite the sensationalized reports in the mass media, was shown by the Camp David pact. The accords reached at Camp David under heavy pressure from Carter represented a total victory for the Zionist regime.

According to an article by Sidney Zion and Uri Dan ("The Untold Story of the Mideast Talks") in the January 28 *New York Times Magazine*, Begin went to Camp David with the following objectives, which were outlined in a working paper drawn up by Gen. Avraham Tamir.

"The target for Israel was a separate peace. To achieve it Israel had to be prepared to give back the entire Sinai—air bases, settlements, and all. As to the West Bank and Gaza, the key was verbal flexibility. . . . Whatever the final arrangements, they would have to include three fundamental provisions. Israel would maintain its military forces and settlements in the West Bank. Israel would not be required to cede its claim of sovereignty over the area. There would be no independent Palestinian state."

When Israeli Foreign Minister Moshe Dayan read Tamir's working paper, Zion

and Dan say, he dismissed it as "pure nonsense" because he was sure "that the Egyptians would never accept an accord that left the Palestinians with a lick and a promise."

But that is precisely what Sadat did. The Camp David accords met the objectives outlined by Tamir point for point.

Begin may have wanted to push Sadat even further. But he was hardly in a position to ask for more concessions right away.

His reluctance to yield even the smallest scraps to Sadat had already provoked massive demonstrations among war-weary Israelis, who feared that Begin would provoke a blow-up in the talks with Egypt.

Iranian Masses Intervene

Negotiations to conclude a treaty based on the Camp David accords began in Washington, D.C., on October 12, 1978. The following day, both sides approved a draft plan submitted by Washington.

Meanwhile, however, the Iranian revolution was gathering steam. A countrywide general strike and massive street demonstrations were beginning to call into question the ability of the shah's dictatorship to survive.

All the regimes involved in the Mideast conflict were forced to reassess their plans in light of the events in Iran.

- Talks in Washington were suddenly halted October 20 by the announcement that Dayan and Israeli Defense Minister Ezer Weizman were returning to Israel for "consultations."

- On October 22, Syrian President Hafez al-Assad opened his border with Iraq, and two days later he went to Baghdad. The Syrian and Iraqi regimes announced an end to their long and bitter feud, and declared that they were preparing a "full military union."

- The Israeli cabinet approved a draft of an Egyptian-Israeli treaty "in principle" October 25. But on the same day, in a

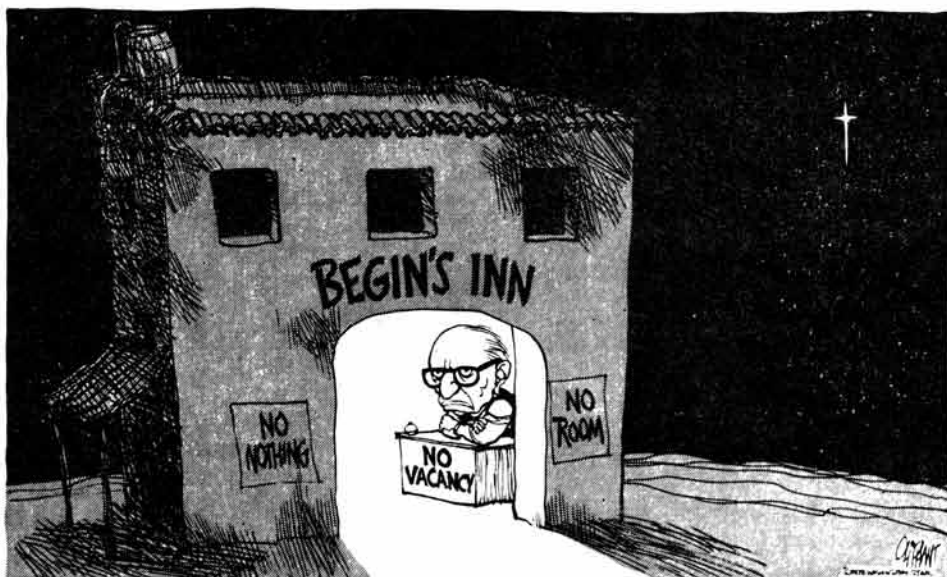
The Iranian people struck a blow for the Palestinians . . .

transparent provocation, Begin announced that Zionist settlements on the West Bank would be expanded.

- Weizman was again recalled from the Washington talks on November 2. Meanwhile, in Baghdad, twenty of the twenty-one members of the Arab League met in a summit conference and denounced the Camp David accords. Sadat's isolation in the Arab world was total.

By this time it was clear that there was a prerevolutionary situation in Iran.

Not only have the Iranian people struck a blow for their own freedom. They have also struck a blow for the Palestinian people and for peace.



Oliphant/Washington Star

As the *Militant* explained shortly after Sadat's trip to Israel, and again after the Camp David deal was announced:

"If Sadat were to go through with his thinly veiled threat of a separate agreement, the result would hardly lead to peace. On the contrary, a deal with Sadat would greatly strengthen Israel's already dominant military position, and encourage the Zionist rulers to engage in adventures in Lebanon and against Syria. In the long run, it would make war more likely."

With the downfall of the shah and the ongoing upsurge in Iran, the relationship of class forces in the Middle East has shifted dramatically to the advantage of the working class and its allies. Once again the masses are center stage, and fear of the masses has become the driving force determining the diplomatic strategy of both Israel and the Arab regimes.

Washington's response has been to deny that anything basic has changed in regard to Camp David. Secretary of State Cyrus Vance told the House Foreign Affairs Committee February 5, according to the *New York Times*, "that both Egypt and Israel viewed the turmoil in Iran as a strong reason to resume negotiations rather than as a factor that would delay the talks."

Of course, the talks *have* been "delayed," and the reason is clear. The Iranian revolution has struck fear into the heart of the Arab ruling classes. The explosion of anti-imperialist sentiment in Iran, and the identification of the Iranian masses with the Palestinian cause, has forced the Arab regimes to look again at their own home bases.

Sadat has denied more strongly than ever any intention of making a separate deal, and he has begun to insist on stronger language regarding the West Bank to give him cover in the Arab world.

The Saudi monarchy felt it necessary to move demonstratively into a bloc with

Iraq and Syria in opposition to the Camp David deal.

And the Palestinian people have found a new ally—the 34 million people of the country that until now had supplied more than half of Israel's oil.

As David Hirst put it in the January 21 issue of the *Manchester Guardian Weekly*, the Iranian revolution "serves dire warning on all those Arab governments which, in open and furtive ways, seek to undermine the popular support which the Palestinian cause can still command."

Israeli Leverage

Both Tel Aviv and Washington have suffered a heavy defeat in Iran. But within the context of this overall defeat, the Israeli regime has gained some leverage in its relations with Carter.

Begin has replied to Carter's pressure for a treaty by stressing the lesson of Iran: no semicolonial country—including Egypt and Saudi Arabia—can play the role of a stable outpost for imperialism. *In the Middle East, Washington must rely more on imperialist Israel than ever before.*

Although Begin may be willing to go through the motions of negotiations with Sadat, there is no indication that he is interested in any agreements with him at this point. With the cutoff of Iranian oil, the Israelis have speeded up the development of offshore fields in the Egyptian Gulf of Suez and are even demanding assurance of future supplies from those fields.

A paper recently put out by the Israeli Foreign Ministry outlines the basic answer Begin has to any complaints about his hardline stance.

"Arguing that Israel is the only internally stable country in this region," the *Christian Science Monitor* reported January 30, "it raises the point that the Israeli Defense Forces are called the only effective military substitute for a considerable US

military presence in the eastern flank of the Mediterranean."

Nor have the Israelis merely talked about their military capabilities. The Begin regime has been throwing its weight around more and more over the past few months. As usual, the Palestinians have been its main victims.

Lashing Out at the Palestinians

Among the actions Begin has taken to try to suppress the Palestinian movement are the following:

- On November 17, 1978, the ban on all demonstrations on the West Bank was reimposed. Israeli occupation authorities had temporarily relaxed the ban in order to make Begin's phony "autonomy" plan more palatable and in hopes of gaining some support for the Camp David deal among the West Bank Palestinians.

- During the next ten days, Israeli authorities arrested at least fifteen Palestinian leaders for the "crime" of speaking out against the Camp David accords.

- On December 4, Israeli occupation forces resumed the practice of blowing up the houses of families of Palestinians suspected of guerrilla activity. This method of collective punishment—perfected by the Nazis and outlawed by the Geneva accords—had been halted after Sadat's visit to Jerusalem.

- On January 16 and again on January 19, Israeli forces invaded southern Lebanon, attacking villages and refugee camps. In the January 19 attack, Israeli ground forces penetrated more deeply into Lebanon than ever before.

- Three days later, Israeli agents exploded a remote-controlled bomb in Beirut. Palestine Liberation Organization leader Ali Hassan Salameh (Abu Hassan), four bodyguards, and five passers-by were killed in the blast.

- On January 23, Israeli artillery carried out the heaviest shelling of southern

Lebanon since the massive invasion last March.

It is not surprising that Begin is lashing out at the Palestinians. The Iranian revolution has sharpened the struggle between imperialism and the peoples it exploits in the Middle East. And the confrontation between the Zionist state and the Palestinian people remains at the heart of this overall conflict.

Both Carter and Begin hoped that the Camp David accords would enable them to not only divide the Arab governments but also to divide the Palestinians. This aim was frustrated from the very beginning, and the eruption of the Iranian revolution has brought new hope to the Palestinian people and inspired them in their struggle.

"Palestinian officials, riveted to developments in Iran with barely disguised glee," *Christian Science Monitor* correspondent Ned Temko reported January 24, "feel that the departure of the Shah and the possibility that he may not return means not only a blow to United States interests in Iran but a potential shift in the balance of power throughout the region."

Temko summed up the impact of the Iranian events on the Palestinian liberation movement by describing how "in the rugged hill country of south Lebanon, a Palestinian guerrilla commander broke into his briefing on a Jan. 19 Israeli ground incursion to ask reporters, 'What's happening in Iran today?'"

Inside Israel itself, the heads of more than half of the councils of Arab towns and villages expressed their support for the PLO's struggle for a Palestinian state. And Arab students at Jerusalem's Hebrew University defied the Zionist regime by circulating a leaflet denouncing Zionism and the Israeli state.

These indications of the mood among the nearly 600,000 Palestinians within Israel's pre-1967 borders prompted Begin

to renew the use of administrative detention inside Israel. Six Hebrew University students were placed under restriction January 26 without any trial.

In a January 23 speech, Moshe Dayan reminded the Palestinians living under Israeli rule of "what happened with the Arab people" in 1948, when 700,000 Palestinians were expelled from their homes by Zionist forces.

Dayan warned that if the Palestinians allow themselves to be "carried away by the mood of fanatical Islam" and "try to replace Israel . . . they will have to pay for it very dearly."

Writing on the Wall

But despite Dayan's bluster and the military strength of the Zionist regime, there is an element of desperation in the renewed Israeli attacks on the Palestinian people.

The Iranian revolution, which ripped away the mask of imperialist stability in the Middle East, represents the handwriting on the wall for Israel. All the military power in the world cannot overcome the hatred that the Zionist state has generated among the Arab masses, nor hide its deepening international isolation and its increasing reliance on a handful of imperialist allies.

Moreover, Israel's most dependable allies—the shah of Iran was considered to be in this category until a few months ago—have their own problems.

For example, in trying to reduce Israel's dependence on oil, the Begin regime signed a contract with South Africa January 15 for 1 million metric tons of coal a year through 1985.

There is no future in the Middle East for a colonial settler-state based on the dispossession and oppression of an entire people.

The Israeli state can promise its Jewish population only endless warfare, increasing economic sacrifices, and continuing attacks on democratic rights—all in the interests of maintaining a fundamental injustice.

Begin can no more crush the aspirations of the Palestinian people through repression than the shah could hold down the Iranian masses. And many Jewish workers in Israel—who are exploited by their own ruling class—must be sensing the power of that revolution and beginning to realize that their destiny is linked to that of the Iranian and Arab masses.

Those who urge the Jewish people to tie their future to imperialism are leading them into a deathtrap. Security and peace can never be found by relying on the Pentagon and its allies in Iran and South Africa.

The Iranian revolution has shown once again why the demand of the Palestinian people for a single state in which both Arabs and Jews can live together—a democratic, secular Palestine—is the only solution for the Arab-Israeli conflict. □



Begin joins ceremony opening West Bank settlement of Kaddum.

Meetings in U.S., Canada, India Pay Tribute to Joseph Hansen

By Susan Wald

The Joseph Hansen Publishing Fund is more than three-quarters of the way to meeting its goal of raising \$20,000 by March 31. As of February 23, contributions and pledges totaling \$15,747 had been received.

Hansen, who died January 18, was editor of *Intercontinental Press/Inprecor* since its inception in 1963. The aim of the fund is to begin publication of some of Hansen's writings on a wide range of topics.

These include his writings on the overturn of capitalism in Eastern Europe following World War II, the Cuban revolution, revolutionary strategy for the world Trotskyist movement, and on such varied topics as the Malthus theory of population explosion, the American forms of fascism, whether a new world war is inevitable, and the place of freedom for scientific investigation in the Soviet Union.

More than forty sponsors, both inside and outside the Trotskyist movement, in fifteen countries have given their support to the project (see box).

Reba Hansen, Joseph Hansen's companion and collaborator for forty-eight years, is treasurer of the fund. George Novack, who worked closely with Hansen in literary projects for four decades, is chairman.

The fund was launched at a New York meeting on January 28, where 550 persons gathered to pay tribute to Hansen. That

meeting raised an initial \$8,000.

Since then, meetings held in other U.S. cities have brought in sizable contributions.

A meeting in Los Angeles on February 4



JOSEPH HANSEN

was attended by more than 150 persons. Speakers included Art Sharon, a member of the Trotskyist movement since 1933 and

former collaborator of Hansen's, who also spoke at the New York meeting; and Steve Warshell, an aircraft worker and member of the International Association of Machinists (IAM) in San Diego. Warshell a former business manager for *Intercontinental Press/Inprecor*, worked with Hansen for six years, beginning in 1970. The meeting added \$1,700 to the fund.

Bay Area members and supporters of the Socialist Workers Party met in San Francisco February 11. The meeting of 150 heard a number of speakers who had been associated with Hansen over the years.

These included Farrell Dobbs, former SWP national secretary; Tom Kerry, a veteran party leader; Tim Wohlforth, a member of the SWP National Committee; and Ruth Schein, who collaborated with Hansen during the founding years of *Intercontinental Press/Inprecor*.

In response to an appeal for contributions to the publishing fund made by Catarino Garza, West Coast SWP field organizer, \$2,942 was raised.

Tributes to Hansen's lifelong internationalism have come in the form of donations from Trotskyists in other countries as well.

In Toronto, about 70 persons attended a meeting on February 16 sponsored by the Revolutionary Workers League/Ligue Ouvrière Révolutionnaire. The meeting raised \$600.

In Bombay, A.R. Desai writes, "We organized a memorial meeting . . . on 8th February. More than seventy comrades gathered to pay homage to Comrade Hansen. Comrade Kolpe has also written an article in *Clarity*, a weekly run by progressive journalists."

Desai adds that he would like to be a sponsor of the fund and that he is sending a personal contribution of \$50.

Organizations outside the Fourth International have also responded to the fund appeal. The Spark Group in Israel recently sent in \$25, with the following comment:

"Along with all Trotskyist organizations, we acknowledge with deep respect Comrade Hansen's great political and theoretical contribution to our movement. . . ."

"The personal example of a leader and lifelong political activist will be an everlasting source of education and inspiration for every revolutionary."

Contributions may be sent to Joseph Hansen Publishing Fund, 14 Charles Lane, New York, New York 10014. □

Worldwide Support for Hansen Fund

An indication of the scope of the backing for the fund to publish Hansen's works is the list of international sponsors who have given their support to the project. These are:

Robert Alexander, U.S.; Tariq Ali, Britain; Robin Blackburn, Britain; Hugo Blanco, Peru; Marguerite Bonnet, France; Pierre Broué, France; Ken Coates, Britain; Bohdan Crawchenko, Canada; Dr. Akshayakumar R. Desai, India; Tamara Deutscher, Britain;

Maceo Dixon, U.S.; Ross Dowson, Canada; Pierre Frank, France; Catarino Garza, U.S.; Tom Gustafsson, Sweden; Fred Halstead, U.S.; Al Hansen, U.S.; Timothy Harding, U.S.;

Quintin Hoare, Britain; Dave Holmes, Australia;

Alain Krivine, France; Pierre Lambert, France; Anna Libera, France; Livio Maitan, Italy; Ernest Mandel, Belgium; Bernadette Devlin McAliskey, Ireland; Joyce Meissenheimer, Canada; Charles Michaloux, France; Manuel Aguilar Mora, Mexico; François Moreau, Canada; Allen Myers, Australia;

Nahuel Moreno, Argentina; Jim Percy, Australia; Evelyn Reed, U.S.; Cristina Rivas, Mexico; Javad Sadeeg, Iran; Cathy Sedwick, U.S.; Art Sharon, U.S.; Louis Sinclair, Scotland; Ernest Tate, Canada; Vsevolod Volkof, Mexico; Mary-Alice Waters, U.S.; Babak Zahraie, Iran. □

The Women's Movement in India

By Vibhuti Patel and Gayatri Singh

To understand the women's movement in India we will have to begin with the so-called Renaissance movement which started in the last quarter of the nineteenth century. It was then, for the first time, that a humanitarian outburst developed among the educated elite against the atrocious custom of *sati* (in which the woman was supposed to immolate herself on the funeral pyre of her husband).

In the same period the Brahmo Samaj in the state of Bengal, the Arya Samaj in Punjab, Uttar Pradesh, and elsewhere,¹ and other social-reform movements started actively propagandizing for the right of widows to remarry. Later, in the early twentieth century, many schools for girls were opened.

Because of forceful opposition from the orthodox section of society the social reformers—who came mainly from the urban, educated middle classes—suffered many hardships in their personal lives.

In the early 1930s, as the anti-imperialist liberation movement gained momentum, thousands of women gave up the *pardah* (veil). They joined the noncooperation movement against British colonial rule (and in some areas the anti-alcohol movement) and started joining demonstrations under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi.

This was a great breakthrough in the status of women in India. Women started looking beyond the four walls of the home and began taking an interest in social problems.

In Bengal and Uttar Pradesh some women also joined in armed struggle led by isolated groups of dedicated patriots.

Educated women formed the All-India Women's Congress, composed of upper-class women. This organization launched a fight against social taboos that kept women backward, and campaigned for women's right to vote.

Under the leadership of the Communist Party of India, women participated in the Tribhanga movement (a peasant sharecroppers uprising in rural Bengal) between 1942 and 1946. But the issues were limited mainly to their economic problems.

1. The Society of Brahmins and the Society of Aryans. Brahmins are the upper-most caste in India's caste hierarchy. The Brahmo Samaj was formed in the late nineteenth century by the intelligentsia of Bengal, who were influenced by Western culture and educated in Europe. These elites were against the orthodox attitude that women were not to be educated but rather treated as domestic slaves. The situation of widows was the worst.

Large numbers of women organized themselves heroically and faced police repression, but none of them challenged their superexploitation and social suppression, the dual responsibility of women in the home and the field, and male supremacy in the family. That is why housewives could not be leaders of the movement. The leadership was mainly in the hands of widows, who were relatively freer than their married sisters.

After 1942, when the nationalist movement reached its peak, thousands of women flooded the jails or were hurt in the brutal *lathi* (a large club) charges of the British police. That is why even Gandhi had to say, "The part the women of India played will be written in letters of gold."

As soon as national independence from British imperialism was achieved, however, women withdrew from participation in wider social struggles. In the nationalist movement the specific issues of women's oppression were not given much importance. Participation by women in the movement had not been a result of a generalized sensitivity on the part of women to the major problems of their position in society. The male leaders of the movement had a paternalistic approach towards women.

Thus prior to independence women were the object of "humanitarianism" by the reform movement and by the national independence movement; they had no say in determining their own destiny. Instead, the "uplifting" of women was to be accomplished by their generous, paternal male counterparts.

At the same time, however, the capitalist market economy had an impact on the status of women. The process of urbanization and industrialization began to break up the joint family system—though at a very slow rate—giving some women relatively more freedom.

In the urban areas, middle-class women joined the work force, particularly in the banks, the public sector, among service strata, in teaching, and in the nursing profession.

However, the percentage of women workers in the industrial and agricultural proletariat has been declining, as a result of an overall increase in the reserve army of labor. In this area, the percentage of women declined from 33.7% in the census of 1911 to 28% in 1971.

In the textile industry the percentage of women workers has been greatly reduced, so as to avoid granting maternity leaves,

crèches, and other facilities. As older women retire, men are recruited to fill their places. It is not retrenchment in the formal sense, but in essence amounts to the same thing.

Because of the protective legislation regarding women, for example the rule that women cannot be put on the third shift, many employers do not recruit women at all.

In small-scale industry, where labor laws are not enforced, large numbers of women are employed at wages of 3 rupees to 8 rupees per day [1 rupee=\$.12]. Even after working for up to seven years they remain classified as casual laborers and can be easily dismissed if they raise their voices against their superexploitation.

Prostitution as a condition for retaining one's job is also a well-known phenomenon. Reports of the situation of women recall Upton Sinclair's description of women workers in the Chicago slaughterhouses in his book, *The Jungle*.

Even though dissatisfaction among women workers may have increased, the employers are aware that women have not yet begun to fight against their exploitation on any significant scale.

In the rural areas the increasing penetration of the capitalist mode of production has led to a rise in the rural proletariat; between 1961 and 1971 the percentage of agricultural laborers out of the total agricultural work force rose from 24.4% to 38.04%. But the percentage of women among the agricultural laborers declined from 45.04% to 38.40% during the same period.

Among women agricultural laborers, Dalit ("untouchable") and Adivasi (tribal) women are the overwhelming majority.

Though men and women laborers work for an equal number of hours, they are not paid the same rates. Usually women workers in agriculture get 1.5 to 3 rupees for a twelve-hour work day. Sexual oppression and humiliation are an extra burden.

The rate of unemployment is higher for women. Even the 1978 Planning Commission highlighted the issue and felt compelled to suggest some kind of remedy in the draft plan for 1978-83. The underemployment of females is on the order of 8.14 million persons a year. In most cases, because of social and cultural backwardness, women do not seek employment unless they are forced to do so for economic reasons. Nevertheless, about 9 million women workers are likely to enter the

labor force in the next few years.

The literacy rate for females stands at 8.72% compared to the 39.45% literacy rate for males. The mortality rate among women is also very high compared to that for men.

The number of females to males has declined from 972 females per 1,000 males in 1901, to 930 per 1,000 in 1971.

Unlike male babies, female babies are generally not well looked-after. Opportunities for girls to receive education are meager, especially in the rural areas.

On paper, many rights and facilities for women exist. But in reality they are never exercised because of the high level of illiteracy, the prevalence of feudal ideology, and the lack of social consciousness. Contraceptives and facilities for abortion are freely available, for example, but remain unutilized by the majority of the population. The same applies to the divorce and property laws for women.

Women never fought for these rights; the government granted certain laws in a paternalistic manner to perpetuate a backward consciousness among women.

In rural areas the joint family and caste system is still predominant, functioning as an agency for maintaining the status quo, including the oppression of women. In most of the caste riots, for example, sexual harassment, humiliation, and sexually abusive terms toward women are used as a means of terrorizing the poor masses. It still happens that a woman who fails to produce a child within two to three years of marriage is tortured by her relatives and socially ostracized. The dual standard of sexual behavior for men and women is also very obvious.

Women in India face the most extreme forms of oppression. Their subservient and degrading position is reinforced by the traditional norms and taboos prevailing in a society like India, including customs like the dowry, the *purdah*, child marriage, etc. As a result, some women activists have raised the idea that it is necessary to first fight against the so-called "feudal" forms of exploitation, and only later take up



March 5, 1979

demands for equal pay for equal work, for better working conditions, and other demands for equality.

To regard these two struggles as separate and apart is to create an artificial dichotomy between social and economic demands. We must fight not only against traditional antiwoman attitudes, but also simultaneously for the removal of all forms of economic and social discrimination.

In the cities, significant changes can be seen in cultural patterns and attitudes, mainly in dress and fashion, but also a generally more liberal outlook towards women.

There are many women's organizations composed of middle- and upper-class women. They are occupied largely with beauty contests, fashions, and cooking competitions. Sometimes they do discuss the problems of middle-class housewives and working women. There is a plethora of women's magazines, but they hardly discuss the main problems of the poorer strata—working-class women, agricultural laborers, etc. None really question the present social order.

So far, the major left parties in India have treated women in a very superficial manner. They view women as an auxiliary force to be mobilized for their votes, and they have tried to prevent working women from being used as strikebreakers. But they want to postpone questions like the dual exploitation of women, male chauvinism, and the position of women in the family and state. They claim these questions will be solved automatically after the establishment of socialism.

The trade unions in general make little effort to politicize the workers, and show even more reluctance toward women workers. The union leaders are interested only in union dues.

Militant struggles of women receive little attention from the major left parties. The only demands of interest to women that the left parties have taken up are strictly class demands, such as the fight against economic exploitation. They have never concentrated on the specific problems facing women, such as the sexual division of labor within the factory, field, and home; the question of good crèches and decent and inexpensive eating facilities; wife-beating; and the prostitution of women workers as a condition for retaining their jobs. As a result, women workers tend to look at these as personal problems.

But during the late 1960s, increasingly militant unrest forced the CPI, the CPM, and the Naxalites² to organize women.

2. Communist Party of India, which is pro-Moscow; the Communist Party of India (Marxist), now the largest Stalinist party in India; members or supporters of the Communist Party of India (Marxist-Leninist), named Naxalites after a peasant uprising in Naxalbari, West Bengal, in 1967.—IP/I

This new unrest was most intense in the states of Andhra Pradesh, Kerala, Maharashtra, and West Bengal, as well as in many tribal areas.

In 1974 the Progressive Organization of Women (POW) was established. It was led by women students who had been influenced by the radical student movement. The group propagated the idea of autonomous organization of women to abolish exploitation and social oppression. Its most popular campaigns were against the dowry and against the humiliating practice of teasing. In rural Maharashtra women showed unprecedented militancy. They demanded the right of women to work and equal pay for equal work.

In 1974, in cities like Bombay and Baroda, as well as in some cities in the state of Madhya Pradesh, women's organizations were formed to fight against the rise in prices. Thousands of women participated in protests, banging metal plates and rolling pins. This movement was based mainly among lower middle-class and working-class women. It mainly took up consumer issues.

Militancy has also been shown by women who are threatened with eviction from their slums.

In some rural areas of Maharashtra the anti-alcohol movement became very popular. Women agricultural laborers broke clay wine pots and forced drunkards to give up alcohol. Alcoholism was seen as a factor behind wife-beating.

By 1975, International Women's Year, women's issues received much attention in many urban centers, from both bourgeois and leftist women's groups. Many seminars and discussion groups were held. Efforts were also made to form organizations of working-class women. Four thousand Muslim women held a conference that came out in opposition to the personal laws.³

A procession, organized by revolutionary youth groups, was held against the selling of temple prostitutes (who are considered to be the property of all men and who can never marry because they are supposed to be "maids of God").

In the same year, the CPM organized an All-India Women's Workshop in Kerala, to which many women academicians and activists were invited. Joan Robinson, a noted economist, and others from abroad also attended. Most of the participants were disaffected with the dogmatism, sectarianism, and male chauvinism of the organizers, however. The CPM leadership tried to dominate the stage. They concentrated mainly on issues concerning the economic exploitation of women, whereas

3. Personal laws are those relating to specific religious affiliations. According to Muslim personal laws, for instance, men can marry four times and have up to four wives at a time. Divorce is possible only at the request of the husband; a Muslim woman has no say at all.

the women activists also wanted to emphasize social problems such as wife-beating, the sexual division of labor, the feudal values oppressing women, and the dowry.

It is apparent that the basis for a women's movement in India was laid during this period. Afterwards, left groups, and especially women in the left, began to concentrate on this issue.

In Uttar Pradesh, one group attempted to organize unemployed women in fifty villages. In Maharashtra some leftist women started a bimonthly publication in the Marathi language. The campaign against forced sterilization was another issue that many women's groups took up.

During the emergency,⁴ however, all activities of women were banned, and public activities lost momentum.

During the last year-and-a-half, in almost all the urban centers of India, leftist women outside the traditional left parties have been vigorously discussing the perspective of the women's liberation movement in India. Much literature is coming out, and women's journals with an independent working-class perspective are becoming increasingly popular. Issues like rape and sexual harassment are also being taken up, and mechanisms to fight such evils are being given greater consideration.

Recently, a demonstration organized by POW against the selling of women to wealthy Arabs was met with police repression. During the emergency, all the leaders of this organization were put behind bars and brutally tortured by the police.

Women are also considering a campaign against rape. The frequency of rape is increasing at a shocking rate. The connivance of the police constables with the rapists is common. Recently, a Muslim woman was raped by police constables and police officers in Andhra Pradesh. This provoked a great public outcry. Thousands of students, women, and men threw stones at the police station, *gheraoed*⁵ the police commissioner, and held huge demonstrations.

Most of the issues and events regarding women go unreported. As a result, it is difficult to get an overall picture of the women's movement in India. But now newsletters and documentation centers have been initiated in Bombay, so the process of disseminating information on the women's struggle will be easier.

* * *

Women are generally oppressed as a sex. However, working-class women face more intense oppression than bourgeois women.

4. Former Prime Minister Indira Gandhi imposed a "state of emergency" on India in June 1975. It lasted until her defeat in the general elections of early 1977.—IP/I

5. A *gherao* is a form of protest in which large numbers of demonstrators surround an individual, confining him to a particular place.

Mass poverty and the basic problem of survival are so acute here that major emphasis will have to be given to the problems of the poorer strata, that is, working-class women.

The class outlook of bourgeois women prevents them from moving beyond their particular interests toward a general struggle against class society. Only working-class women will be able to go on from the specific oppression that they face to a generalized struggle. We cannot expect to be able to mobilize all women. While taking up specific women's questions we can expect bourgeois women to participate in the movement as individuals, but not as a class.

Although most of the women's groups that have recently sprung up are dominated by petty-bourgeois women, this reflects the current phase of the movement itself. When there are general struggles women play the most militant and leading role, and it is through these struggles that women have begun raising their specific demands.

It is absolutely essential that autonomous women's groups be formed. This is

important if women are to be able to gain strength and consciousness.

So far, the major left parties have looked upon women's issues only as a part of the general struggle. The specifics of women's oppression have been relegated to the background. This, in turn, is reflected in the attitude of various party comrades toward women. Like the struggle for the seizure of state power by the proletariat, the struggle of women is not a vague, abstract one. Women's demands have to be fought for on a day-to-day basis. It is only through such struggles that the foundation of a more humane, socialist society can be laid.

Thus the role of women's groups is to fight against all forms of oppression and inequality that they face as women, to struggle against all unequal relations between men and women in society.

However, it is also essential that women be able to go beyond their specific oppression and struggle against all forms of oppression in society. This will mean that they will have to join hands with the working class as a whole.

October 1978

Behind Carter's Problems in Mexico

A History of 'Abuse and Deceit'

By David Frankel

[The following article appeared in the March 2 issue of the *Militant*, a revolutionary-socialist newsweekly published in New York.]

* * *

Not a single agreement of any importance was announced during President Carter's February 14-16 trip to Mexico.

In itself, that is not surprising. Negotiations on such things as oil deals—one of Washington's main concerns in Mexico—are carried out by teams of experts who know what they are talking about.

Carter's job was to try to establish the right atmosphere for such negotiations by reminding Mexican President José López Portillo who was boss.

Neither Carter nor his advisers expected any back talk. They were thunderstruck when López Portillo complained about "deceit and abuse" in U.S. relations with Mexico.

The verbal thrust from López Portillo was only a pale reflection of how the Mexican people feel. Masses of people, prevented by the Mexican government from expressing their outrage, simply ignored Carter.

A report in the February 15 *New York Times* noted that "the visit appeared to

generate little enthusiasm on the streets of Mexico City. . . . No crowds lined the routes of the motorcade, although the lampposts had portraits of the two leaders and their wives."

Similarly, the *Christian Science Monitor* reported that "the crowds were sparse everywhere for the president."

Mexico has been bullied and exploited by the United States for the past 150 years. In 1846, Washington provoked a war with Mexico and stole more than half of its territory.

U.S. troops again invaded Mexico in 1917 to oppose the revolutionary forces who challenged the big landowners.

Today, Mexico's economy is dominated by U.S. corporations. Private U.S. banks hold \$11.5 billion in Mexican loans and credits. U.S. investors account for 72 percent of all direct foreign investment in Mexico. And 70 percent of all Mexican exports go to the United States, while more than 60 percent of all Mexican imports come from here.

Nor is imperialist blackmail against Mexico a thing of the past. Washington has warned Mexico that if it joins the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries, it will be subjected to reprisals in the form of cancellation of duty-free

exports from the United States.

Another example is the dispute between Mexico and Washington over natural gas prices. In December 1977, the Mexican government had almost completed a 900-mile, \$1.5 billion gas pipeline to the Texas border. It was about to close a deal with six U.S. companies when the White House abruptly vetoed the agreement.

Both U.S. oil companies and the Carter administration have been complaining that the price of U.S. gas and oil is too low and must be raised to world market levels. But when Mexico tries to charge the world market price for its own petroleum products, the imperialists say it is being "unreasonable"!

"Deceit and abuse" are also evident in the racist treatment accorded Mexican immigrant workers in the United States. American capitalists want and need these workers in order to harvest much of the country's agricultural products. They are also a vital source of cheap industrial labor.

At the same time, the ruling class tries to blame the ills of its own economic system on these workers. Just as in the 1850s Irish immigrants were accused of taking jobs from "Americans," and just as in the early 1900s Italian and East European immigrants were accused of being a burden on public services, Mexican workers and their families are being scapegoated today.

Not surprisingly, the Mexican people resent this treatment.

Carter never intended to seriously deal with such questions on his trip. Most of his visit consisted of social affairs and public-relations tours.

New York Times correspondent Alan Riding noted in a February 15 dispatch that "apart from social occasions, the two leaders have not talked to each other in total privacy. Further, today's meeting ended 55 minutes early because, according



Carters and Lopez Portillo had little to talk about.

to a Mexican spokesman, "There were no more subjects to be dealt with."

The fact that López Portillo felt it necessary to make a public protest is an indication of the mood of the Mexican people. It

is also another sign of the power of the Iranian revolution, which has made the oppressed everywhere bolder and more ready to stand up to the imperialist bullies in Washington. □

Thousands Protest Carter Visit

[Ten thousand persons demonstrated in Mexico City February 7 to protest President Carter's scheduled February 14-16 visit. The protest was followed by one of 3,000 February 15.

[The following interview with a leader of the Partido Revolucionario de los Trabajadores (PRT—Revolutionary Workers Party), one of the groups that called the February 15 demonstration, was obtained by the *Militant* February 17. The PRT is the Mexican section of the Fourth International.]

* * *

Question. Why did people demonstrate against Carter?

Answer. The two main questions were oil and the rights of undocumented workers.

There was a variety of demands. First was to make the negotiations between Carter and [Mexican President] López Portillo public. That—and that the government should publish its plans involving oil—was the main focus of the PRT.

We are not in principle against any export of oil. That would be foolish. But the people have to know what is being proposed and they have to decide.

The government has not announced any rational plan for the export of oil, and nobody here wants to see Mexico become what Iran was—a strategic base for the United States.

The other demand was around the question of the undocumented workers—for their right to work in the United States.

Of course, many other issues were also raised. We also stressed the demand for political asylum to Héctor Marroquín.*

Q. Was the demonstration called by the PRT alone?

A. Mainly by the PRT, although there were also some student groups involved.

Three thousand people took part. There would have been many more, but the government threatened that it would not allow the demonstration, so people were afraid of violence.

They mobilized more than 10,000 cops, with riot tanks and horses, and occupied the downtown section of the city with army trucks. So we had to march uptown on the Paseo de la Reforma [one of Mexico City's main streets].

Q. Was there any trade-union support?

A. No. The other parties and other possible supporters pulled out when they knew the government was against the demonstration. These included the Communist Party and the Mexican Workers Party. They said it was not the right time to demonstrate. [These groups, along with the PRT, had supported the February 7 protest.]

However, the relatives of "disappeared" political prisoners did take part. They were at the head of the demonstration. □

*The U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) is seeking to deport socialist and union activist Héctor Marroquín to Mexico, where he faces frame-up charges of murder. As deportation would amount to a death sentence, defenders of civil liberties on both sides of the border are conducting an emergency campaign for Marroquín's right to political asylum in the United States.—*IP/I*

Still Available

Complete Back Files (Unbound) Intercontinental Press

1968	44 issues (1,176 pages)	\$25
1969	43 issues (1,152 pages)	\$25
1970	43 issues (1,120 pages)	\$25
1971	45 issues (1,128 pages)	\$25
1972	47 issues (1,448 pages)	\$25
1973	46 issues (1,520 pages)	\$25
1974	47 issues (1,888 pages)	\$25
1975	47 issues (1,888 pages)	\$35
1976	49 issues (1,888 pages)	\$35
1977	48 issues (1,456 pages)	\$35
1978	49 issues (1,448 pages)	\$35

P.O. Box 116
Village Station
New York, N.Y. 10014

Spain—One Year After the Moncloa Austerity Pact

By Jesús Albarracín and Pedro Montes

The October 1977 agreements reached between the government and the major workers parties (the PSOE and PCE¹), known as the Moncloa Pact, represent a new stage in the collaborationist attitude of the workers parties and in the capitalists' plans for dealing with the economic crisis.

Spanish big business had made many previous attempts to resolve the crisis or soften some of its most serious aspects. But the delicate political situation, the unavoidable change of regime that had to be carried out, and the growing mobilization of the masses torpedoed one attempt after another. As a result, the economic situation deteriorated rapidly, resulting in mounting unemployment, galloping inflation, an intolerable foreign-trade deficit, and a crisis in many sectors of the economy.

The government that was set up after the June 15, 1977, elections put forward the most complete and comprehensive plan to deal with the economic situation that had yet been seen. But it soon became clear that it would be virtually impossible to carry out the program without the collaboration of the reformist workers parties.

Up until the elections the PSOE and the CP had maintained an eclectic posture—combining opposition (partly to strengthen their hand in trying to get legal status) with collaboration. This was expressed through a series of concessions, within the framework of calls for political change. The concessions included the establishment of multiclass opposition bodies, and the near-total abandonment of struggle against the bourgeoisie based on mass mobilizations.

The attitude of the CP and PSOE changed with their entry into the parliamentary arena. They began to collaborate openly with the bourgeoisie, citing a pressing need to resolve the economic crisis, "consolidate democracy," and "prevent political regression." In reality, it meant renouncing the very programs on which they had based their electoral campaigns.

In return, the bourgeoisie made marginal revisions in its economic program (such as making the wage ceiling less rigorous), and added a series of "concessions" to the basic core of the plan to facilitate workers' acceptance of it. Many

of these "concessions" were simply vague declarations; others involved reforms that were indispensable to the system itself. Only a tiny handful gave the working class any real economic and political gains.

Since there was nothing to be hoped for from the pact except demoralization and the deepening of the PSOE and CP's collaborationist policy (the clearest expression being the "constitutional consensus"), most of the promised concessions were never carried out, as even these parties today acknowledge.

Thus the Moncloa Pact has been reduced to what it was designed to be: an economic program, based on austerity, that allows the capitalists to begin to deal with the crisis in accord with their own interests, and that has the political aim of dampening the class struggles that have been developing.

The Moncloa Pact: a Typical Austerity Plan

The June 15, 1977, general elections took place in a context of unquestionably serious economic problems. The rate of inflation was over 25%. It was estimated that the 1977 deficit in the balance of payments would surpass \$4.5 billion. Foreign currency reserves stood at less than \$4 billion. Unemployment was well over 1 million, out of an economically active population of 13.3 million. Business bankruptcies were spreading and whole sectors of the economy were in open crisis. And the projections regarding production and investment were quite pessimistic.

The first economic measure taken by the newly formed government was a sharp devaluation of the peseta. The exchange rate went from 70 to the dollar to 87 to the dollar. This put a quick halt to speculation against the peseta, and the extent of the devaluation led to an immediate return of capital. Combined with the foreign currency from tourism that comes in mostly in the summer months and the advantages of the devaluation for exports, this led to a sharp turn in the balance of payments and a rapid rise in foreign currency reserves.

But all the other problems remained. The economic accords of the Moncloa Pact, signed four months later, outlined a program with the following goals:

1. To moderate the foreign-trade deficit and inflation.
2. To carry out a redistribution of in-

come that would favor the growth of profits.

3. To create conditions that would help rid the economic system of companies that are unproductive and ill-equipped to meet competition.

4. In line with the above, to begin restructuring sectors of the economy and carrying out institutional reforms in order to strengthen the weakest links in Spanish capitalism.

Briefly, then, the economic plan was aimed at raising overall productivity, improving competitiveness, and increasing profit rates. This was to be accomplished by setting wage ceilings, adopting a restrictive monetary policy, and holding down public spending (along with the devaluation mentioned above).

1. Wage ceilings:

The basic provision of the pact was the establishment of a 20% ceiling on 1978 wage increases. This was an open attack on the workers, as the inflation forecast for 1977, when the pact was signed, was on the order of 28% to 30% (actual inflation turned out to be 26.4%).

The argument put forward to justify this 20% ceiling was that if the rate of inflation declined to 16% for 1978 as a whole, the average rise in prices between 1977 and 1978 would be equivalent to the average rise in wages for the two-year period. Thus the workers would not lose any purchasing power. The way in which this wage ceiling was aimed at workers struggles can be seen from the fact that in contract negotiations throughout the entire economic crisis the workers have demanded wage increases several percentage points higher than the previous year's rise in the cost of living.

2. Monetary policy:

In July 1977 the government adopted the goal of lowering the annual growth of the money supply from 21% to 17% by the end of the year. This rate was set in the Moncloa accords as the goal for 1978 as well.

Taking the rate of inflation into account, the planned slowdown in the increase in money supply meant deepening the restrictive policies already adopted in mid-1977. This slowdown was considered necessary to bring inflation under control. But it also aimed to force, through capitalist means, a restructuring of failing sectors of the economy, eliminating marginal companies so

1. Partido Socialista Obrero Español (Spanish Socialist Workers Party); Partido Comunista de España (Spanish Communist Party).

as to accelerate capital depreciation throughout the entire system.

3. Public expenditures:

The possibilities in this area were quite limited since the public sector is considerably smaller than in other advanced industrial countries. Public expenditures are therefore susceptible to strong, sometimes irresistible, pressures to grow, because of the many needs that remain unsatisfied.

The Moncloa Pact projected an extension of unemployment compensation (which covers less than half of those unemployed); an improvement in pensions, particularly the lowest ones; and an investment of 40 billion pesetas to expand the school system (a figure far below what is needed).

Despite these increases, the government's aim was to strictly limit public expenditures and to moderate their rate of growth. It held the 1978 increase in employer contributions to Social Security to 18%, while the average increase in the previous four years had been 30%. (This is another measure designed to increase profits for the corporations.) This has already begun to have repercussions on expenditures for medical assistance, a freeze in the number of people eligible for unemployment benefits, and so forth.

Inflation and Wage Ceilings

Inflation has been perceptibly reduced throughout 1978, in comparison to the rate at the time the pact was signed. As a result, the present rate of price increases is close to what was projected in the pact. While the cost of living rose 26.4% from January to December 1977, in 1978 it has declined to 16%-17% (the increase through the first ten months has been 14%).

However, this has to be looked at more closely. Approximately 4% of the increase in the cost of living in 1977 was the result of the 20% devaluation of the peseta in June of that year, while in 1978 the moderate revaluation that has taken place is responsible for a reduction in inflation of about 1%. Taking into account changes in the exchange rate of the peseta, the reduction in inflation has thus not been 10% as would appear from the figures, but approximately half that.

Moreover, this reduction results in part from monetary restrictions and a persistent recession in economic activity. It also reflects controls on the prices of some items that cannot be maintained much longer because of the serious problems thus created for certain companies and sectors.

Nonetheless, the bourgeoisie and the reformists are presenting the reduction in inflation as one of the positive consequences of the Moncloa Pact—even though the rate of price increases is still twice what it is in the rest of Europe.

The wage policy set forth in the Moncloa Pact has accomplished its broad aims:

Wage ceilings have been generally accepted, and where conditions have been unfavorable for the workers wage increases have not even reached the ceiling. The earlier tendency for wage increases to surpass the rise in the cost of living has been broken, as has the practice of semi-annual wage reviews. Finally, the wage policy has affected the workers very unequally. Those in the large plants, with stronger traditions of struggle, have received higher raises than those in the small plants, and raises in percentage terms have discriminated against various classes of workers.

This generally unfavorable evolution for the workers has taken place despite their active opposition. The workers have not been able to break through the constraints of the legislation that came out of the Moncloa Pact, and they have not been successful in going against the attitude of the reformist leaders. They have increasingly faced a poor economic climate, which has made it difficult to win their demands.

The participation of workers in labor disputes has still been very intense since the early months of 1978. In the first six months of the year more than 3 million workers took part in strikes, mostly in regard to contract negotiations. This contrasts with 1.6 million in the same period of 1977.

But the strikes have been shorter: three days per worker on the average, as compared to almost seven days in the first half of 1977. This seems to indicate that with the exception of some very hard struggles, the strikes have been primarily a means of pressure by the workers in order to defend their wages, and that by and large they have remained under the control of the reformist leaderships.

As a result there has been a shift of approximately 1% in the distribution of national income from wages to "management surpluses." Even assuming that wages had risen to the maximum allowed by the ceiling (which is approximately equal to the average rise in the cost of living between 1977 and 1978), the sum total of wages would not have risen since we have to take into account the workers who have lost their jobs (1.5% of the active population in the first six months of 1978) and who thereby would not have benefited from the 3% growth registered in the Gross National Product.

But we should point out that this does not mean that profits have recovered appreciably, since the increase in production, along with the growth of non-wage income, stems in particular from agriculture, which had an extremely favorable year in 1978 (the value of its output having risen about 8%).

The Balance of Payments Deficit

The results in this arena are very favorable for the bourgeoisie. In 1976 the balance

of payments deficit was \$4.3 billion; this was reduced to \$2.5 billion in 1977, and a slight positive balance is expected for 1978.

Hard currency reserves, which stood at \$3.7 billion at the time of devaluation in June 1977, had risen to over \$10 billion at the end of 1978, although currency speculation was an important factor in this jump. (Capital was leaving until the devaluation and was returning after.)

On the whole, these results are due to a sharp increase in exports and tourism and a stagnation of imports. However, they were achieved under very specific conditions that will not recur in 1979.

During 1978 exports benefitted from the June 1977 devaluation of the peseta. These advantages will have disappeared in 1979, while the differences in the rates of inflation and the relative upward valuation of the peseta in 1978, which did not decline with the dollar, will affect the competitiveness of Spanish exports.

Moreover, the decline in domestic demand as a result of the austerity policy has pushed whole sectors of the economy into a search for foreign markets, even at prices that are not profitable. This is because certain sectors of the economy have maintained an artificially high level of production owing to the difficulties in reducing their labor force and to the fact that the austerity has not been accompanied by significant progress in pruning the productive apparatus.

The situation of many sectors and companies is thus worse than it was before the Moncloa Pact. This represents an obstacle not only for the continued growth of exports, even on the basis mentioned above, but also for an eventual increase in investment.

Imports have also been affected by the recession and by favorable weather conditions (fuller utilization of hydroelectric energy, reduced oil purchases).

In total, of the 3% growth in the GNP in 1978, 2% can be attributed to exports. It is unlikely that these results will be repeated in the future, at least to the same extent. In addition to the factors mentioned above, the rate of growth of the world market is expected to decline in 1979.

But we should not underestimate the short-term possibilities that the largely favorable balance of payments gives the bourgeoisie, permitting them to talk about a recovery in 1979. For a significant period, such a recovery would not be limited by problems of foreign financing.

The wage ceilings, the monetary restrictions, and the devaluation of the peseta had to result in an expansion of foreign demand and a contraction of domestic demand. The slow recovery in industrial activity since the devaluation (though it remains at a depressed level) was caused by strong expansion in industrial exports. This resulted not only from increased competitiveness but also from the contrac-

tion of the domestic market. Investment, on the other hand, continued to decline because of credit restrictions.

In the final months of 1977 these credit restrictions went far beyond the objectives that had been set and brought many companies to the brink of insolvency. The multiplying failures and suspensions of payments sowed a general sense of uncertainty and insecurity throughout the economy, even affecting the banking system. In the first months of 1978 the banks continued the tight credit policy for lack of secure borrowers.

The relative improvement in the availability of credit today has not led the capitalists to change their attitude. They continue to take other factors into account when projecting capital accumulation, and these have hardly changed.

Among them are the continued high level of unutilized capital and the low profit rate, together with the problems of restructuring some basic sectors of the economy.

In short, investment in 1978 will show a decline on the order of 4%. When combined with very small growth in consumption (1.5%), this means that the rise in exports (12%) made the main contribution to maintaining economic activity in 1978.

The Rise of Unemployment

The economic crisis had affected employment in several ways until the Moncloa Pact. First, young people entering the labor force were unable to find jobs, and only a small percentage of them were included in the official figures on unemployment.

Second, the systematic increase in productivity in Spanish agriculture meant an annual drop on the order of 5% in the active work force in that sector. But in contrast to the years before the crisis, the excess agricultural laborers no longer found an escape valve in industry, service occupations, and emigration.

As is the case among youth, only a portion of the excess agricultural laborers are added to the official unemployment

figures since, according to the official definition, day laborers who are without work are considered part of the inactive population.

Finally, the return of the emigrants, which the ECD estimates at 184,000 from the beginning of the crisis through 1976, has also been an important factor in the growth of the number of unemployed.

At the end of 1977 the official figures showed slightly more than 1 million workers unemployed (7.8% of the active population). But the ratio of the active population to the total working-age population has been slowly reduced from 51.4% in the final months of 1973 to 49% in 1977 as a result of the youth, women, day laborers, and so on who are not counted as unemployed.

Since the Moncloa Pact the situation has worsened considerably. For the first time since the crisis began, employment in industry and services has been declining. In the first half of 1978, 213,000 workers lost their jobs, of whom 69,000 were in agriculture and the rest, 144,000, were in industry and the services.

Spanish capitalism, as befits a relatively underdeveloped capitalism, has a lower organic composition of capital than more advanced countries. This is the reason for its lower productivity and competitiveness. In order to increase both, the inefficient producers must be eliminated.

Even though this restructuring has not progressed very far in 1978, it is clear that the level of employment is less resistant to reductions than it was under the dictatorship. Entire sectors of the economy that are in crisis have resorted to the expedient of "regulation of jobs." This has meant the loss of many jobs at the same time that whole companies have disappeared. The loss of 144,000 jobs in industry and the services, while not yet sufficient to speak of a deepgoing restructuring of the productive apparatus, does mark the beginning of this process. And if the process continues to deepen, it will result in still greater unemployment.

The rate of joblessness is already one of

the highest in Europe and shows a strong upward tendency.

The Bourgeoisie's Reconversion Plans

Unless the wage ceilings and the austerity policy are accompanied by a restructuring of basic industry, the bourgeoisie will not succeed in improving its position vis-à-vis its sharpening international competition. The success of this effort is still up in the air. Significant progress has yet to be made in carrying it out, while the workers are putting up strong resistance to the loss of their jobs.

The length and complexity of the crisis have weakened whole sectors of the economy. Orders for new ships have fallen drastically, and the shipbuilding industry is in a major crisis. The demand for steel products has dropped while competition has sharpened. This sector—obsolete in many respects—has only barely managed to sustain itself through dumping.

The automobile industry has tremendous excess capacity (especially SEAT) and is undergoing a big shake-up. The textile industry is in permanent crisis, confronted with ever-increasing difficulties in international markets.

Among the most important factors preventing a rapid solution in some sectors have been the workers' opposition to plans that involve heavy layoffs, and the difficulties, in the context of austerity and a shakedown of the financial system, of carrying through the necessary conversions. This lack of a concrete short-term solution will affect the long-term position of Spanish capitalism internationally.

Perspectives for 1979

With the approach of negotiations on the most important labor contracts, a new agreement to supplant the expired Moncloa Pact has not yet been signed.

The major workers parties have differing positions on who should negotiate and on the duration of the pact. The PSOE and the UGT² want a one-year pact between

2. Unión General de Trabajadores (General Workers Union).



CP's Carrillo, SP's Gonzalez, and Prime Minister Suarez.

Photos by Actualidad Economica

the government, the unions, and the employers. The CP and the Workers Commissions favor a three-year agreement with participation by the political parties.

Despite these differences, they all remain willing to collaborate with the capitalists to find a way out of the crisis. The concrete difficulties in signing a new pact stem above all from the importance of the problem of unemployment (it is very hard to tell the workers that it will get worse) and from workers resistance to a new wage-ceiling policy.

To avoid an increase in unemployment more than 200,000 new jobs would have to be created in 1979, which in turn would require a growth of 4%-5% in the GNP. But the bourgeois economists who have provided these figures forget that the initial stage of a recovery is marked by a rise in productivity and does not therefore immediately mean a growth in demand for labor.

The government has adopted this perspective of moderate expansion, while asserting that it can only be achieved through maintaining the wage ceilings.

According to official economists, two things are required for such an upswing: maintenance of the present development of exports and a strong resurgence of investment (on the order of 8%-9% for 1979).

In summary, the government and the reformist workers parties cannot present a plan that involves a worsening of unemployment; that is why they have opted for moderate expansion. It is a choice that has very specific limits and implies numerous contradictions.

The favorable export results in 1978 will not be repeated, both because of the projected decline in activity of the world economy and because of the exhaustion of the advantages flowing from the devaluation. A new devaluation such as the one recently demanded by the Basque industrialists, which reflects the problems of the export sector, would mean reserves increasing even faster than at present. This would pose serious problems in carrying out the monetary policy and would increase the risk of inflation.

The possibility of a significant upturn in investment is even smaller. Nineteen seventy-nine will not be a calm year in the political arena, and this does not enhance capital accumulation. Moreover, as we have seen, the profit rate has not risen sufficiently, unutilized productive capacity has not been absorbed, and there has been no significant restructuring of the sectors in crisis. Under these conditions, what sector would the capitalists be motivated to invest in?

Carrying out a social-pact policy is not, moreover, immune to its own contradictions or difficulties. It is more difficult to impose wage ceilings now than it was at the time of the Moncloa Pact. The new ceiling on wages would be lower since the projected inflation is smaller. This means

that the actual peseta amount of a wage increase would be lower than that projected by the pact.

Moreover, the workers have already gone through the experience of such a policy and have understood that while inflation was reduced through their sacrifices, all they received in return was an increase in unemployment.

Finally, it is not very likely that inflation will be reduced to the annual rate of 9% that the government predicts. Going beyond that percentage would, sooner or later, generate pressure to go beyond the limits set by the policy of wage ceilings. In fact, the government seems to have given up on limiting wage increases to the order of 10%, and is beginning to agree that they can reach 14%. (It appears that 1978 will end with a price rise on the order of 16%.)

Carrying out the monetary policy also involves contradictions. It cannot long

continue to be as restrictive as it is now, because of its effects on unemployment and on the crisis of many companies.

But if the pressure is reduced, if the rate of growth of the money supply reaches 20% to 22%, there will be a great risk of a resurgence of inflation, without an accompanying upswing in investment.

Only a thoroughgoing austerity policy could solve the problems of Spanish capitalism. But the rise in unemployment that would follow, makes it exceedingly difficult to apply. For that reason, as the capitalists obtain the first positive results of the austerity plan, they will tend to reduce their pressures to continue the austerity. This explains the moderately expansionist policy the government seems to have opted for.

But far from solving the problems of Spanish capitalism, it risks aggravating them. November 20, 1978

Fourth International Platform for Common Market Elections

For Socialist United States of Europe!

[The following is the text of the platform of the Fourth International for the European Parliament elections, scheduled for June 1979. It is signed by the sections of the Fourth International in eight countries that are members of the European Economic Community, all of which will be running slates, and is supported by the sections in three countries whose governments have asked to join the EEC.]

* * *

The elections for the European parliament, scheduled for June 1979, will take place in the midst of a sharpening anti-working-class offensive in the countries of the European Community. The capitalist class is trying to make the workers pay the costs of the economic crisis. To achieve this they have carried out more and more factory closings, layoffs, attacks on wages, attempts to take away gains won by the workers in terms of social security, and challenges to trade-union rights.

The bosses everywhere are pressing for austerity policies. Far from defending the interests of the working class in a united way against the employers' offensive, the leaderships of the Communist and Socialist parties are either participating directly in the implementation of such policies, going along with them, or weakening and demobilizing the fightback through fragmentation of struggles and through their lack of any overall anticapitalist alternative.

The multinational corporations are more and more coordinating their actions. Far

from responding to this with internationally coordinated action by the workers, the CP and SP leaderships carry out class-collaborationist policies on a national and international level and put themselves in the front lines of defense of the "national" interests of the ruling classes of their respective states. In this way the CP and SP leaderships reinforce the division of the working class.

The Fourth International is participating in the electoral campaign for the European parliament to ensure that an *internationalist and anticapitalist voice* will be heard, a voice speaking out for the workers, for women, for the oppressed nationalities, for the youth, for the immigrants. It will seek to show that in face of the coordinated international actions by the European bourgeoisies it is necessary and possible to develop a united response by the European working class to fight for the same objectives in all the countries.

A Parliament at the Service of Capital

The European parliament will serve above all as a body to rubber-stamp the decisions already taken by the states and governments that defend the interests of capital in the nine countries of the European Community, a community founded totally on the principles of the capitalist market economy. This means forcing the workers to bear the burden of unemployment and of attacks on living standards and democratic freedoms.

The European elections are not, however, simply an attempt to divert the

attention of the workers from the grave problems that confront them day to day. It is not merely a propaganda operation to try to refurbish European institutions. The elections are also aimed at reinforcing institutions that are designed to help the European bourgeoisies arrive at and formulate measures and goals for protecting their interests against all their enemies and competitors.

Working people have nothing to hope for and nothing to defend in this capitalist Common Market or its parliament. The workers have nothing in common with this Europe of the trusts and banks, with this neocolonialist Europe that continues to exploit its old colonies, with this imperialist Europe allied militarily with American imperialism. We are irreconcilable opponents of the institutions of this Europe.

We oppose the argument that Europe can represent a useful "third force" between the two "superpowers." The European imperialisms are in no way better than American imperialism. The multinationals of European origin and orientation are no better than American or Japanese multinationals.

We do not oppose the Europe of the trusts in the name of a phantom "national

Calls for protectionism set the workers against each other . . .

independence," which is more and more utopian and reactionary in the epoch of multinationals and of increasing internationalization of the struggle of the workers. To call for protectionist measures, which will inevitably bring forth countermeasures by other countries, amounts in reality to setting the workers against each other. This objectively contributes to generalizing the decline in the living standards under the pretext of defending the "national industry." *We oppose this Europe in the name of the Europe of the workers, in the name of the Socialist United States of Europe.* To the parallel myths of "European solidarity" and "national sovereignty," we counterpose the slogan of internationalist solidarity: "Workers of all countries, unite!"

Undemocratic Elections

The supposed champions of a united Europe have enclosed these elections in a web of national election laws. They prevent the running of a single slate— independent of the nationality of the candidates—in all nine states. In the different countries they have placed countless obstacles to the running of candidates. These supposed "defenders of human rights" deny millions of immigrant workers the most elementary civil and political rights, such as the right to vote or to run for office. *We affirm that our goal in*

such elections would be to run a single slate of candidates composed of worker militants, feminists, and youth not only from the nine member countries of the EEC but from all the affected countries, including representation of immigrant workers from non-European countries. The undemocratic laws in various countries prevent us from doing this. We will defend this perspective even though we are forced to present slates on the national level.

Appeal to Militants of the SPs and CPs

Socialist and Communist party militants ought to consider what a scandal it is that each of their parties in the nine member countries of the EEC is going its own way in these elections. The Italian and Spanish CPs support the Common Market—on the pretext that it is possible to democratize it—while the British, German, and Danish CPs oppose it. At a time when the multinationals are maneuvering as they please on a world scale, moving factories, installations, and orders from one country to another according to their own profit calculations and political aims, it is noteworthy that these parties are incapable of counterposing to this a single international program to defend the interests of working people. If their nationalism and sectarianism are not radically overcome, there will be no struggle against the multinationals and the Europe of the trusts.

We appeal to workers who look to the Socialist and Communist parties to fight for their leaderships to break with policy of class collaboration and conciliation with the bourgeoisie, to break with the policy of division of the working class, and to declare themselves for workers governments without bourgeois ministers, workers governments that could satisfy the basic demands of the working masses.

For an International Fightback Against Austerity!

We call on the unionists and on all workers in the nine member countries of the EEC to demand that their unions organize mass mobilizations and a campaign of effective strike action for the thirty-five-hour work week. Many European trade unions have come out in favor of this demand. At a time when unemployment has reached such disturbing proportions, this slogan can no longer be treated as merely a subject of propaganda.

There are nearly forty million trade unionists. If mobilized, this force could impose the *thirty-five-hour work week with no reduction in weekly or monthly wages, with obligatory proportional hiring to fill the jobs that would be created, and with workers control to prevent speed-up.*

We propose that the unions immediately call a *European Congress of Labor*, which would bring together all the unions without exclusion and assure broad, democratic representation of factory delegates and the rank and file. Such a congress could work



out a concrete plan of struggle and immediate mobilizations for the thirty-five-hour week. This could be followed up by efforts to develop a common workers alternative to the capitalist austerity plans. All organizations of the working class of capitalist Europe should unite in action against the austerity policies of the different governments, on the basis of a working-class and socialist plan to overcome the crisis.

For a Europe of the Working People

In counterposing a Europe of the workers—a Socialist United States of Europe that would destroy the division of Europe—to the Europe of the trusts and banks we are calling on all wage earners and poor peasants, whatever their nationality, to unite in the struggle for socialism, for a society without unemployment or economic crisis and without social inequality or oppression. To achieve this it is necessary to expropriate the capitalists, disarm the bourgeoisie, and establish workers power through democratically elected and centralized workers councils. For the workers this will mean not only an enormous extension of their economic and cultural rights and power, but also a qualitative extension of their political freedom, rights, and power in comparison with bourgeois parliamentary regimes.

Such a socialist revolution would sweep away the discredit that has been heaped on socialism by the Stalinist bureaucracy in the USSR and Eastern Europe and the crimes it has committed. It would reveal the true face of socialism, which would decisively hasten the process of antibureaucratic political revolution in the "people's democracies" as well as the winning of American workers to socialism, just as the political revolution in Eastern Europe will hasten the rise of socialist revolution in capitalist Europe.

A Program for Mobilization and Struggle

Our campaign for the elections to the

European parliament in the nine countries is based on a single, international program. We submit this program for discussion by all organizations of the workers movement. We ask them to consider a common campaign based on the key points of this program, which defends the interests of the workers and of the socialist revolution in these elections.

1. Against the austerity policy imposed by the bourgeoisie to make the workers bear the burden of the crisis.

For coordinated trade-union action on a European scale to win the thirty-five-hour week with no loss of weekly or monthly wages, with obligatory hiring and with workers control over the pace of work.

Against layoffs and factory closures; for veto power by the workers; for confiscation of closed-down factories and their reopening as nationalized enterprises under workers control.

Open the books of the mutinationals! Open the books of the European Commission (including those which concern the common agricultural policy)!

To counter inflation that goes hand in hand with unemployment, we demand a sliding scale of wages and social benefits.

To counter the capitalist economic crisis, we propose that the workers movement develop a program based on the priority of fulfilling the needs of the masses through nationalization without compensation of large-scale industry, of the credit sector, and of foreign trade.

Against discrimination against immigrant workers, women, and youth, who are the main victims of unemployment.

For a policy of cheap credit and cooperative facilities to aid the poor peasants, who are victims of the capitalist crisis and of capitalist middlemen. This would make possible an increase in the peasants' income and at the same time a lowering of the prices paid by consumers for agricultu-

ral goods.

2. For complete equality of civil, political, and trade-union rights for immigrant workers. Against all racist or chauvinist legislation limiting workers. Against all racist or chauvinist legislation limiting the free circulation of workers. To counter the racist and neofascist offensive, unity in action of the whole workers movement to defend persecuted or threatened minorities and victims of discrimination.

3. Against neocolonialism; against the European imperialisms and their aggression in Chad, the Sahara, Djibouti, Zaïre, and elsewhere.

Solidarity with all the liberation struggles of the colonial peoples!

Leave NATO! Dismantle its nuclear arms!

Against the Europe of capitalist armies; international solidarity with the struggle of soldiers for their democratic rights and for better conditions of life.

4. Against the oppression of national minorities in Europe itself, such as the Basques and Catalans. For their unlimited right to self-determination. For an independent united Ireland. Withdrawal of British troops from the North of Ireland.

5. Solidarity with the struggle of the masses of Eastern Europe and the USSR for their democratic, political, trade-union, and national rights. Down with the dictatorship of the bureaucracy; for power to workers councils! Warsaw Pact troops out of the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic! For the socialist unification of Germany. For defense of the nationalized property systems against imperialism.

6. Against the pollution and threats to the environment caused by the system of profit and competition.

Against the construction of nuclear power stations. Close down all such plants in operation. The whole truth about the present dangers from nuclear power plants

must be made known to everyone.

7. For support to the struggle of women for equality of rights in law and in fact. Free abortion and contraception on demand. Equal pay for equal work. Special measures to compensate for the effects of discrimination against women in training and employment. For quality collective facilities to put an end to the double work day.

8. Against the rise in repressive laws such as the law barring "opponents of the Constitution" from holding certain jobs in the Federal Republic of Germany.

Total and uncompromising defense of democratic freedoms and the right to strike.

Against the "European Antiterrorist Convention," which is not aimed at terrorism but at the radical wing of the workers movement as a whole.

For free circulation of workers and of all people and ideas between all the states of Europe and of the world.

For the democratic right to completely free education for all and a salary for students from age sixteen; against selection procedures that limit access to higher education; against bourgeois education that is shaped to fit profit-making, specialized, and alienating work.

9. For unity in action of all parties of the workers movement. Against all pacts with bourgeois parties. Total independence of the trade unions from the state.

To find a way out of the crisis it is necessary to overthrow capitalism, to open the road to socialism, and for the workers to take power.

10. Full support to the campaign of Portuguese, Spanish, and Greek revolutionists against the integration of their countries into the Community of capital. The future workers governments in one or more of the nine member countries should break with the Common Market, with the Europe of the trusts and of big capital, and should launch the process of construction of the Socialist United States of Europe.

Great Britain, International Marxist Group (IMG); France, Ligue Communiste Révolutionnaire (LCR); Federal Republic of Germany, Gruppe Internationale Marxisten (GIM); Belgium, Ligue Révolutionnaire des Travailleurs/Revolutionnaire Arbeiders Liga (LRT/RAL); Netherlands, Internationale Kommunisten Bond (IKB); Italy, Gruppi Comunisti Rivoluzionari (GCR); Luxembourg, Ligue Communiste Révolutionnaire (LCR); Denmark, Revolutionære Socialister Forbund (RSF); United Secretariat of the Fourth International.

This campaign is supported by sections of the Fourth International in the countries whose governments have asked to join the Common Market: *Spain, Liga Comunista Revolucionaria (LCR); Portugal, Partido Socialista Revolucionario (PSR); Greece, Organosis Kommouniston Diethniston tes Ellados (OKDE).* □

Your First Issue?

Why Not Subscribe?

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Country _____

- \$24 enclosed for one-year subscription.
 \$12 enclosed for six-month subscription.
 Send information about first-class and airmail rates.

Intercontinental Press/Inprecor, P.O. Box 116, Village Sta., New York, N.Y. 10014

Fidel Castro Speaks on Twentieth Anniversary of Revolution

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

[*Second of two parts*]

It is much easier to win a revolutionary war than it is to develop a country and build socialism. The former may take years, but the latter takes decades. However, the victories of peace and work are much more beautiful than those of war, which are always obtained at the cost of blood. The glories of war, however just they may be, may be forgotten and have no other meaning for the revolutionary than that of a bitter tool of liberty. The glories of work are eternal. If mankind were just, it would erect more monuments to work than to feats of arms. Work, however, has its own imperishable monument—human creation and progress—and its anonymous heroes—the self-sacrificing masses of the people. Even though to fight, win and die for a just cause is also a way in which the beautiful work of revolutionaries must be expressed at times, writing pages of unparalleled selflessness and nobility, the imperishable monument of progress is also built. (APPLAUSE)

Who can deny the immense joy that we derive from each new school, day-care center, polyclinic, hospital, farm, factory, dam, irrigation system, highway, port, apartment building, sports stadium, movie theater, theater and library that is built in our country? Who can deny feeling proud over our figures on the number of students in our elementary and junior and senior high schools, technological institutes and universities, our levels of culture and education, which are the highest in this hemisphere; our indexes on infant mortality, which are absolutely the lowest; our public health indexes, which are the most efficient; our sports victories; our society without discrimination, without unemployment, without beggars, without gambling, without prostitution and without drugs; our workers completing the sixth grade; our later plans for continuing to raise their cultural level; our artistic development; and our amateurs' movement? Who can deny the joy of each new victory in the economic sphere, the rapid pace of the development of our economy and the conditions that are being created for a more secure future, even though this generation will have to work hard and live in relative austerity?

Now, as the absolute and exclusive owners of our economic wealth and natural resources, we can organize, plan and direct our economic and social development with complete freedom, something that no other state in this hemisphere can claim.

But how hard we have had to struggle and strive to achieve and defend this right to work, create and enjoy the benefits of freedom, socialism, equality, progress and social justice in our country!

Why was the ire of the empire unleashed against us? It was clear that Yankee imperialism considered itself the lord and master of this hemisphere, and no people of Latin America or the Caribbean had the right to choose any economic, political or social system other than the cruel underdeveloped and neocolonialist capitalism doled out to us; the rotten and hypocritical pseudodemocracy; or the feudal oligarchies, satrapies in the style of Somoza, Duvalier and Stroessner or the fascist recipe applied in Chile, Uruguay and other unfortunate countries of this hemisphere.

For nearly 20 years, as a result of the United States' brutal hostility and aggressive policy against the Cuban Revolution, our country hasn't been able to purchase even a simple medicine from the United States to alleviate human suffering or to save a life, nor have we been allowed to export even a single ounce of our sugar to that market. History will consign this criminal attempt to strangle our people through economic genocide to the eternal shame of those who imposed and maintain it.

Has this plan, perchance, obtained its objectives? Neither the economic blockade which included reprisals against third parties that trade with Cuba or send their ships to our ports, nor the

introduction of thousands of arms and explosives, nor subversion, nor the counterrevolutionary bands, nor the pirate attacks, nor the mercenary invasions, nor the threat of direct aggression, nor the plans for the physical elimination of the revolutionary leaders kept Cuba from being today the country with the most advanced and most spectacular social development in all of Latin America. (APPLAUSE) Many peoples of the world and international institutions acknowledged the successes of our Revolution with admiration and respect.

By contrast, what social progress was registered in the rest of this hemisphere in the past 20 years? Illiteracy, unemployment, infant mortality, unhealthful living quarters, shanty towns, prostitution, drugs, beggars, abandoned children, crime, economic domination, the pillaging of natural resources and even the pillaging of many of the most outstanding intellects; all were on the increase in the rest of Latin America.

The U.S. intervention in Guatemala 25 years ago to overthrow Arbenz's progressive government left a toll of 70,000 patriots murdered or otherwise made to disappear by reactionary, repressive governments.

Tens of thousands killed directly by the repression in Nicaragua, El Salvador, Haiti, Chile, Uruguay, Paraguay, Brazil and other nations—this is the macabre fruit of the regimes imposed and sponsored by the United States. Tens of millions have died as a result of malnutrition, curable diseases, poverty, unhealthful conditions and social abandonment; this is the result of imperialist domination of this hemisphere during the 20 years since the triumph of the Cuban Revolution.

How long can this crime continue? How long will the peoples tolerate it?

Isn't it a wonderful thing to be able to state today that we freed ourselves of the hell of that domination two decades ago?

Who, now, can wipe the example and lesson of Cuba from the map and from the history of this hemisphere?

Isn't the day coming soon when other peoples will also shake off that yoke?

Can't we hold out another 20 years, and as many times 20 years as needed, without bowing our heads? (APPLAUSE)

Of course, we won't bow our heads—in this hemisphere, in Africa or anywhere else in the world. (APPLAUSE)

The United States insists on maintaining its criminal blockade as an instrument for exerting pressure on and expressing its demands with regard to Cuba, but Cuba can't be pressured or intimidated or bribed or bought. Cuba isn't China or Egypt. (APPLAUSE AND SHOUTS OF "FOR SURE, FIDEL, HIT THE YANKES HARD!")

We are living in a world of much opportunism and even of serious betrayal, but we are also living in a world that, in spite of failures and betrayal, is seeing new revolutionary bulwarks arising every day: Vietnam, Laos, Angola, Mozambique, Ethiopia and Afghanistan are examples of this. (APPLAUSE) Will Somoza's bloody regime be able to maintain itself on mountains of corpses? Will Pinochet be able to hold out for long in the face of the growing resistance of the Chilean people and of macabre findings of corpses whose hands were tied behind their backs with barbed wire and who were shot in the neck—findings which do not enable his regime to hide or dissimulate its mysterious disappearances and its horrible crimes?

Will the Shah of Iran be able to hold out against the resolute, massive and heroic struggle of all the people? (SHOUTS OF "NO!")

In spite of the present policy of China and its terrible treason, the world, that has been greatly changed in the past few decades, will keep on changing. For every setback, for every reverse and for every desertion, the revolutionary victories are multiplying, and

all for the same goal: progress and socialism. (APPLAUSE) Imperialism cannot now and never will be able to hold back the sure course of the historic stage initiated with the glorious October Revolution.

Cuba is not opposed to trade and even normal diplomatic relations with the United States. We sincerely believe that the need for peace and coexistence between different social regimes, a need that Lenin stated in the early days of the revolution, is more vital now than ever before for human survival. This is an essential principle of socialism, but it does not imply an imperialist "right" to intervene in and repress the revolutionary movement of any country in the world.

The United States should unconditionally lift its economic blockade of Cuba, because the blockade is an uncivilized, arbitrary, discriminatory, hostile and aggressive act.

The United States should renounce its coarse strategy of using the blockade as an instrument for negotiation with Cuba, because we will never accept this.

The very fact that the United States trades with the vast majority of the other socialist countries while trying to maintain this measure against our country constitutes a deep political immorality, resounding proof of the infinite hypocrisy contained in its empty rhetoric on human rights, (APPLAUSE) and unequivocal proof of its scorn for the right to self-determination of the peoples of this hemisphere.

Who has told the United States that the peoples of Latin America can't choose socialism? (APPLAUSE) Who has granted it this role of gendarme and guardian of our destinies? Why do we have to take as a model a capitalist society that exploits the sweat of others; discriminates against blacks; exterminates Indians; despises Chicanos, Puerto Ricans and other Latin Americans; forces women into prostitution; and exploits children for sexual purposes—a society of violence, vice, alienation and crime? Who can force us to live forever in a selfish, pitiless system that is condemned by history?

There are no such things as superior races or peoples. No domination was ever eternal. No empire has withstood its own decadence. Rome in its time was more powerful, less rancorous, less vain and more judicious than is the United States.

Cuba is aware that it has a sacred duty to its sister Latin American peoples. Our victory was really a victory for all the Latin American peoples, and history will consign it as such.

For the first time, a Latin people successfully stood up against the Yankee might, arrogance and pride. (APPLAUSE) For the first time, the empire was contained at some point, at some place in our America. For the first time, expansion, political intrigue, subversion, economic measures and military actions were stopped short. For the first time, a government existed against the sovereign will of the United States in this part of the world. Scorn turned into hate, hate into aggression, aggression into defeat, and defeat into respect. (APPLAUSE) Ever since, our Latin American and Caribbean peoples have not been so inferior in its eyes, because it sees each of them as another potential Cuba.

Thus, even though the freedom and respect won by Cuba have not yet resulted in more social changes, they do mean more freedom and more respect for all the peoples of the Americas.

Even so, however, even the wisest strategists of the empire think that a revolutionary government can also be tamed. The example of China comforts them—China, whose Pioneers were taught until just a few years ago to stick bayonets in straw dummies named Kennedy, Johnson and Nixon.*

The imperialists figure that chauvinism is still a powerful force; that, even in socialism, there is national selfishness that can wipe out internationalist feelings; and that their financial and technological resources are compelling arms against progressive governments in economic difficulties.

*In the transcript as it appeared in *Granma*, the name Nixon is spelled with a swastika in place of the "x", a procedure we are unable to duplicate with our typesetting equipment.—IP/I



With a tank crew at the Bay of Pigs in 1962.

Chauvinism, opportunism and imperialism are joining close ranks against Marxism-Leninism, socialism and internationalism, and not for the first time in the history of the revolutionary movement. Today, for example, the Chinese ruling clique is a rabid supporter of the economic blockade against Cuba and is calling for the continuance of the Yankee naval base at Guantánamo. The Paper Tiger has wound up by devouring the petit-bourgeois ideas of the Great Helmsman. (APPLAUSE) Now, it isn't the United States that is directly attacking Vietnam; it is China. But, even though the Chinese Government sold out the revolution in exchange for Taiwan and the technology and credits of the West, Cuba will never sell out even one of its principles for the Guantánamo Base, or for all the gold of all the imperialist countries combined. (APPLAUSE)

I don't know whether Yankee imperialism will prove to be a Paper Tiger or not, but our ideas are not as flimsy as paper. (APPLAUSE)

China, whose people I admire for their austerity, revolutionary spirit and capacity for work and sacrifice, is a great country. When there were 700 million Chinese, we had a population of barely seven million. However, the immense Pacific Ocean separated them from the Tiger, while we were only separated from it by the minuscule Straits of Florida. We could have disappeared over night during the October Crisis. We don't possess any nuclear arms, and we don't have millions of square kilometers of territory and tens of millions of soldiers; nevertheless, we have resisted; we haven't yielded; we haven't surrendered; we haven't sold out. (APPLAUSE)

For 20 years we have held a trench in the first line, the closest one to the most aggressive and powerful imperialist metropolis. Not only have we defended this trench with honor and dignity. Sons and daughters of our people have fought and died in such distant places as Angola and Ethiopia to help other peoples defeat imperialism, neocolonialism, racism and fascism. (APPLAUSE)

Imperialism was dealt its first Girón in Cuba, but it was dealt another one in Angola and still another in Ethiopia. Three Giróns in 20 years! (APPLAUSE)

Whether or not the Tiger is a paper one, our honor, our dignity and our principles are not. (APPLAUSE)

The West is now trying to repeat, with China, Hitler Germany's sinister adventure against the Soviet Union. Does it know what kind of fire it is playing with this time? We are sure that the peoples, including the Chinese people, will never permit such madness.

We will continue onward not as a revolution that is 20 years old but as a revolution that is beginning all over again today. (APPLAUSE) Our Revolution has always been characterized by

its unbending steadfastness, its loyalty to principles and its deeply humane spirit. It has never devoured any of its sons and daughters, because there has been no cult of the personality, no gods thirsting for blood. The closest unity, respect and camarad-

**We are facing the future
with the experience of 20 years
and with the enthusiasm
of the first day . . .**

erie have always reigned among all revolutionaries. The Leninist norms of organization and leadership are now our greatest treasure. We are facing the future with the experience of 20 years and with the enthusiasm of the first day. (APPLAUSE) Loyalty to the international revolutionary movement is and will always be the cornerstone of our foreign policy.

It is beautiful to speak of our successes and victories. The dignity with which we are celebrating this day fills us with pride, but we would be very ungrateful and victims of the worst form of human vanity—of the hated, despicable chauvinism that we criticize so much—if we were to think that we could have achieved this revolutionary feat with just our own forces alone, forgetting how much we have owed to international solidarity since the January 1 triumph, in 20 years of direct confrontation of Yankee imperialism.

First of all, on a day such as today, we should express our deep gratitude to the great homeland of Lenin, (APPLAUSE) to its Revolution, to its generous and heroic people and to its internationalist policy—never retracted in the 61 years of its glorious history. (APPLAUSE) Twenty years of solidarity and friendship cement our relations with the USSR.

A principled policy is worth more than millions of empty words. The facts are what count in history. We have always said that never, under any circumstances, would we yield our banners. In Mexico one day we said that in 1956 we would be free or martyrs. We kept our word! (APPLAUSE) Later on, we proclaimed our watchword of *Patria o Muerte*, and we also kept that. (APPLAUSE) We have a homeland because we would have accepted death rather than be resigned to living without one. (APPLAUSE) The fact that we have advanced victoriously and that our people now have the Revolution, a homeland and life in spite of confronting so cruel and powerful an enemy for 20 years—this fact is due not only to our heroic and firm struggle but also, in large part, to the courageous people who gave us a friendly hand at crucial moments for the Revolution. (APPLAUSE)

Others may bite the hand that has given them generous aid. Cuba and her sons and daughters of today and tomorrow will acknowledge and be eternally grateful for what the Soviet Union has meant to our people! (APPLAUSE)

There's not need to turn red to be honest, but it is necessary to be honest reds. (APPLAUSE)

Similar feelings of elemental gratitude indebted us to other brothers and sisters in the socialist community; sincere Communists all over the world; the working class; and the progressive forces in Latin America, Asia, Africa and Europe. Dozens of representatives of friendly states and progressive organizations from all over the world are here with us today in this celebration, and we express our deepest acknowledgment to them all. (APPLAUSE)

On this 20th anniversary we especially greet the heroic peoples of Vietnam and Laos; the Palestinians; the Arab peoples who are being attacked; the patriots of Namibia, Zimbabwe, South Africa and Western Sahara; our Latin American brothers and sisters who are struggling in many countries against aggression and fascism; and all other combatants and fighters for peace and progress for mankind. (APPLAUSE)

We will remain staunchly true to our revolutionary duties and



Granma

Militia women at Havana twentieth anniversary parade.

principles, and this will be the most valuable spiritual heritage we can leave to the future generations in our homeland.

We would feel more satisfied on celebrating this 20th anniversary if we had made better use of every year, month, day and minute; if all our actions, without exception, had been the wisest and most intelligent ones possible. The measures and initiatives of each of us weren't always the most correct, but we never lacked the ardent desire to do the most and to do the best we could for our people and our beloved Revolution. (APPLAUSE) The people, the Revolution and the lives of all of us are inseparable!

Man has shown that he is capable of growing and carrying out tremendous feats. The Revolution, with all its humanity, equality, fraternity, morale and beauty, is the greatest of man's feats. It makes us all raise ourselves up to become better than we were. Life is, without a doubt, a fabulous privilege, but existence really becomes worthwhile and takes on its full meaning when it is consecrated to such a noble and just cause. On pausing a moment on the path to look back over the way we have come, we should become aware of the great honor it has meant for our generation to have lived in this period and to have dedicated our energies to this beautiful task. As if beginning all over again, let us look forward now that we have learned so much in order to be better and do more.

The future extends farther than the past. The joy and optimism we feel today will not lead us into the error of underestimating the struggle that lies ahead. Our difficulties will still be enormous, but we will overcome them. A revolutionary is like a marathon runner in the Olympics of history, in which the generations relieve each other. Like Olympic athletes who carry a torch in their hands, let us make the greatest effort we can for the stretch we still have to go in order to hand it over victoriously and with honor and hope to those who are better than we are and who will take over from us: those now being forged in the ranks of our enthusiastic and heroic communist youth, in our intelligent and promising students, in our marvelous Pioneers, the shining hope of our homeland! (APPLAUSE)—our revolutionary homeland, that will never die, because we have created and defended it with our lives and because we have applied and will continue to apply our heroic watchword of

Patria o Muerte!

Venceremos!

(OVATION)