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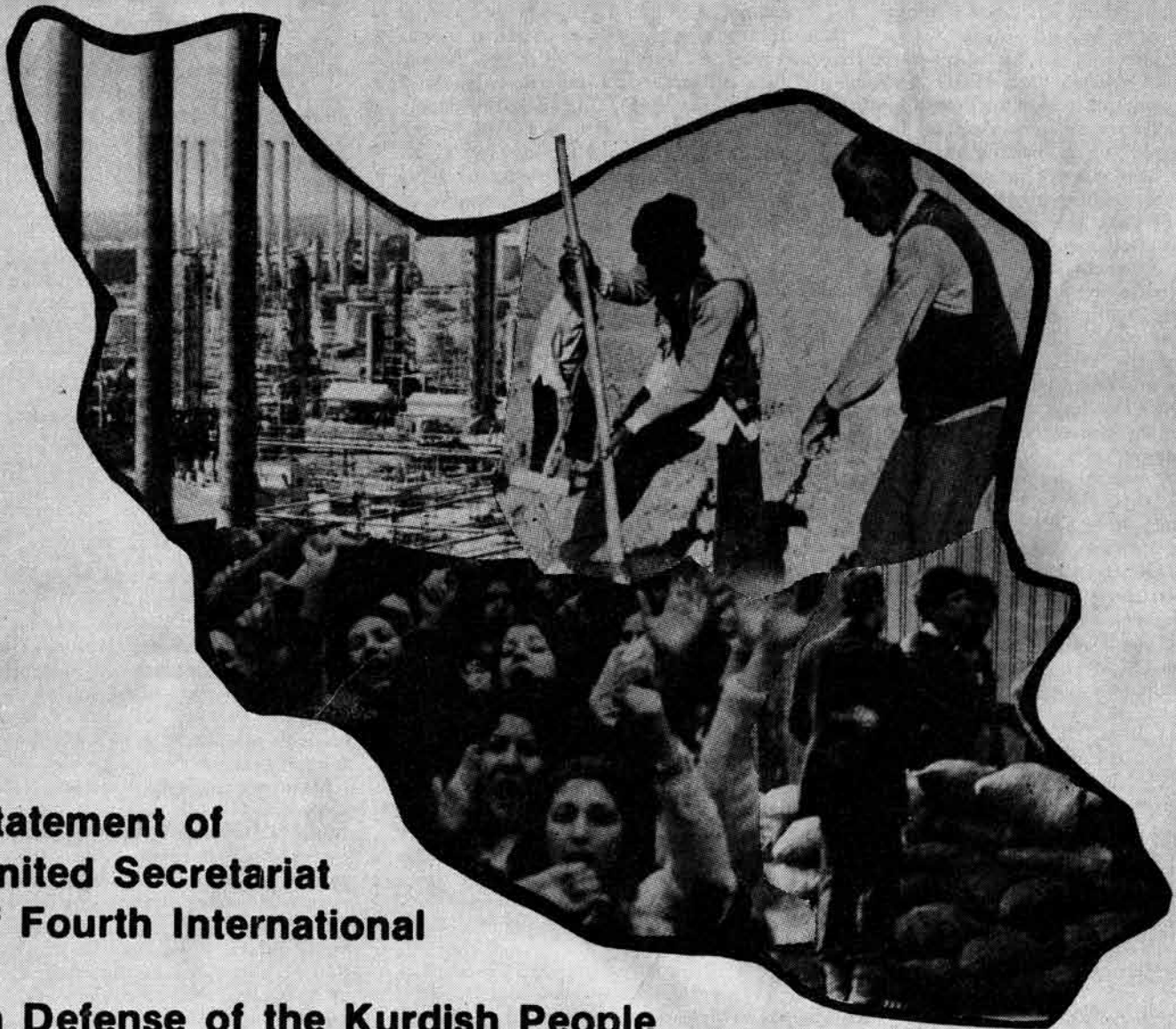
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## The Third Iranian Revolution



**Statement of  
United Secretariat  
of Fourth International**

**In Defense of the Kurdish People**

**'Islamic Republic'—New Mask for Capitalist Rule**

**The Regime Versus the Revolutionary Committees**

**How the Revolution Came to Turkmenistan**

**Israeli Trotskyists Hail Iranian Revolution**

# NEWS ANALYSIS

## Peru—Trotskyist Leaders on Hunger Strike

By Fred Murphy

Peruvian Constituent Assembly deputies Hugo Blanco and Enrique Fernández began a hunger strike at the Legislative Palace in Lima on April 25, demanding the release of twenty-one Trotskyists being held incommunicado at the military regime's State Security prison.

The prisoners are all members of the Socialist Workers Party (PST), a sympathizing organization of the Fourth International. They were seized April 22 during a police raid on a meeting at the PST's public headquarters in downtown Lima. The party's offices were then taken over by State Security agents; this occupation was still in effect as of April 26. Office equipment, documents, and personal property were confiscated by the cops.

State Security agents have conducted raids as well on the homes of all twenty-one of the PST members being held. Blanco and Fernández are also demanding an immediate halt to such raids and an end to the police occupation of the PST headquarters.

Three central leaders of the PST are among those being held—party General Secretary Juan Villa and Executive Committee members Carlos Delgado and Fernando Gutiérrez. Delgado is also the organization secretary of the Lima branch of the Workers, Peasants, Students, and People's Front (FOCEP), a bloc of Trotskyist parties and independent socialists formed before last June's Constituent Assembly elections.

Hugo Blanco and Enrique Fernández were both elected to the assembly on the FOCEP's slate. The PST and Blanco's Revolutionary Workers Party (PRT)<sup>1</sup> are both part of the FOCEP, which is a legally recognized political organization in Peru. The PST's offices have served as one of the FOCEP's Lima headquarters, so the police raid also represents an attack on the FOCEP.

The attack on the Trotskyists comes as part of a fresh wave of repression against the workers movement by Peru's military rulers. At least eight leaders of the national teachers union SUTEP are being held at the State Security prison following an April 23 raid on the SUTEP headquarters. The union had just announced plans

to strike on June 17 if their demands are not met. The homes of various SUTEP activists have been raided, and a number of union leaders have gone into hiding.

Thirty copper miners from southern Peru remain in jail in Lima for their role in leading a strike in late March that was crushed by heavily armed troops. Among them is Humberto Chaparro, a leader of the Trotskyist POMR.<sup>2</sup> FOCEP deputy Hernán Cuentas, also a POMR leader, faces possible prosecution and loss of his parliamentary immunity because of his active support of the miners' struggle.

Since the strike ended at the beginning of April, many miners and their families have been fired from their jobs, evicted

2. Revolutionary Marxist Workers Party, the Peruvian affiliate of the Organizing Committee for the Reconstruction of the Fourth International.

## Zimbabwe—South Africans Move In

By Ernest Harsch

Threatening a major escalation of imperialist intervention against the Zimbabwean revolution, the white supremacist regime in South Africa has offered "all-out support" to the incoming Rhodesian government headed by Bishop Abel Muzorewa.

Pretoria's move came just days after the undemocratic Rhodesian elections, in which Muzorewa's party claimed to have won a majority of seats. Muzorewa is to be installed in several weeks as the new prime minister of a regime in which Blacks hold a majority of posts but in which whites—including Ian Smith himself—will continue to wield considerable direct power.

The revelation of increased South African involvement was made by one of Smith's closest advisers April 27. According to a report by John F. Burns in the following day's *New York Times*, the unnamed official stated that Pretoria's offer included "massive" arms and financial assistance—and possibly the use of South African troops—to combat the Zimbabwean guerrilla forces of the Patriotic Front.

A week earlier, South African Prime Minister P.W. Botha publicly proposed that Pretoria establish a new military and economic bloc with a "constellation of

from their homes, and forcibly relocated up to 600 kilometers from the mining districts.

The regime has also withdrawn legal recognition from the elected leadership of the national miners federation, the FNTMMP, and is threatening to outlaw the union itself.

Eight of the ten independent newsmagazines and periodicals banned by the government in January remain shut down. The editors and publishers of these publications have conducted several hunger strikes to protest the near-total lack of freedom of the press in Peru. (All the daily newspapers are owned and rigidly controlled by the government.)

The Communist Party weekly *Unidad* and the right-wing weekly *El Tiempo* were allowed to resume publication on April 23, however, and the chief of the regime's National Information System announced that the ban on other periodicals would be lifted "gradually."

International protest is urgently needed to secure the release of the twenty-one PST members and the growing number of other political and trade-union prisoners in Peru. Telegrams and letters should be sent to Peruvian embassies or to Gen. Francisco Morales Bermúdez, Presidente de la República, Palacio Presidencial, Lima, Peru. □

states" in southern Africa, including Zimbabwe and Namibia.

Smith hailed Botha's proposal as "manna from heaven." Muzorewa stated that he favored continued economic ties with South Africa—meaning South African domination of the Zimbabwe economy—and added, "We will take help from anyone. . . ."

Muzorewa may have already received some direct South African backing. The April 27 *Christian Science Monitor* reported from Salisbury that "there are persistent rumors here that Bishop Muzorewa's expensive election campaign was financed in part with secret funds from South Africa." And even before the elections, Smith was benefiting from stepped-up South African arms shipments.

More direct South African intervention could be a prelude to even broader imperialist backing for the Salisbury regime, with the aim of using it as a bulwark against the struggles of the Zimbabwean masses for class emancipation and true Black majority rule.

The imperialist press—especially that in the United States and Britain—has portrayed the Rhodesian elections sympathetically, playing down their undemocratic nature and the widespread use of force to compel Blacks to vote. Claiming that the

1. The PRT is also a sympathizing organization of the Fourth International. The PST and the PRT have been preparing to unify their two organizations in recent weeks; one goal of the regime's attacks on the PST undoubtedly is to disrupt this process.

elections were "free and fair," a growing number of members of the U.S. Congress are pressing for recognition of the new Rhodesian regime and for the lifting of economic sanctions against it.

For the moment, Washington and London are still weighing the political risks of open support for Muzorewa and Smith. But their deep fear of the impact of the Zimbabwean revolution throughout southern Africa impels them to employ whatever forces are available to hold it back.

And in the front line of that effort stands the main bastion of reaction and imperialist rule on the African continent—South Africa. □

## González, Gallego Freed

By Russell Morse

Colombian Trotskyists Libardo González Flores and Gloria Stella Gallego have been released without charges after being held for nineteen and fourteen days respectively by the Military Institutes Brigade (BIM), the Turbay regime's antiguerrilla unit.

González, a member of the Central Committee of the Revolutionary Socialist Party (PSR), was arrested March 30 during an early morning raid on his home by BIM agents. He was held until April 17 at a cavalry barracks. According to the April 30 issue of the PSR's newspaper, *Combate Socialista*, González was subjected to "midnight interrogations, threats, pressure, continuous blindfolding, and psychological torture."

At the time of his arrest, González was accused in the pages of the progovernment daily *El Tiempo* of having been involved in the September 1978 killing of an ex-cabinet minister. His unconditional release gives the lie to such slanderous charges.

Gloria Stella Gallego, a member of the national office staff of the Socialist Workers Party (PST), was released on April 11 along with two brothers and a sister. The four had been seized March 29 when the BIM raided their home and accused Gallego of having arms. No arms were found, but the military held the four members of the Gallego family until a military judge ordered their release.

Hundreds of political activists and trade unionists remain in Colombia's jails and military prisons, as the Turbay regime pursues a witch-hunt under the pretext of combating "subversion and terrorism." The Bogotá *El Espectador* reported April 11 that "even the card files at the Luis Angel Arango Library in Bogotá are being examined by agents of State Security, seeking the readers of Marxist works."

Telegrams and letters demanding a halt to the repression and the release of political prisoners should be sent to Colombian embassies or to Julio César Turbay Ayala, Presidente de Colombia, Palacio de San Carlos, Bogotá, Colombia. □

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# Statement of the Fourth International

## The Third Iranian Revolution Has Begun

The overthrow of the "Shah of Shahs, the Light of the Aryans" and his hated totalitarian regime in one of the most powerful and sustained mass mobilizations in history has deep significance for the workers and toiling masses the world over.

The shah's regime appeared to be impregnable. Washington had built up his army into the fifth strongest in the world. The CIA helped construct SAVAK into a massive secret police network and torture machine whose tentacles reached into every factory, office, university, and neighborhood, and among the oppressed nationalities. Right to the bitter end, every imperialist power supported the Peacock Throne against the Iranian people. Moscow and Beijing, each seeking "peaceful coexistence" with imperialism, added their support, with Moscow recognizing Khomeini only when it became apparent that the shah was finished. Finally, the shah had control of billions of dollars in oil money and was promising rapid economic and social progress.

The Iranian masses overcame all these obstacles by relying on the immense power of the millions when they mobilize in united action. The toiling people throughout the world can identify with the proletarian methods of struggle—mass demonstrations, formation of broad struggle committees, general strike, appeals to the soldiers who joined in the struggle, mass insurrection—that were vividly displayed on international television broadcasts. It was this power of the masses that disintegrated the apparently invulnerable power of the shah. If it can be done in Iran, it can be done anywhere.

Experiences with the dictatorship led wider and wider layers of the masses to come to the conclusion that the regime could not be reformed but had to be eliminated.

In the last analysis, the shah's tyranny rested not on its repressive apparatus but on the belief among the masses that they had to bow to the regime. Once the vast majority of society had shed that illusion through months of determined and self-sacrificing struggle, the armed repression could not stop them. Guns and tanks, no matter how sophisticated, are only as reliable as the hands that fire and run them. And these are the hands of workers and peasants in uniform. When the rank-and-file soldiers came over to the revolution, the resistance of elite units was broken or neutralized, and the fate of the shah's regime was sealed.

In the course of the year-long mobilization that built up toward the February 9-12

insurrection, the working class came forward as the backbone of the broad mass struggle. This reflects a worldwide trend toward proletarian predominance in mass political struggles, including in semicolonial countries such as Iran. The workers began to organize committees to lead their struggle; that is, to build proletarian forms of organization, which can point toward the formation of soviets.

The overthrow of the shah's regime opened a process of permanent revolution in Iran—the Third Iranian Revolution. This revolution has demonstrated the key role of democratic and anti-imperialist demands in semicolonial countries. Whatever contradictions exist between imperialism and the native Iranian capitalist class, it is nevertheless dependent upon imperialism. There can be no "stage" of capitalist development in Iran independent from imperialism. Neither can the Iranian bourgeoisie carry through the democratic tasks of granting land to the peasants and the wherewithal to exploit it, freedom for the oppressed nationalities, or equality for women.

The mass mobilizations that toppled the monarchy occurred under the political hegemony of a petty-bourgeois nationalist movement led by the bourgeois leadership of the Shi'ite hierarchy headed by Khomeini. The prestige of that leadership is the key card which the ruling class in Iran can play in order to restore a stable state apparatus and a new bourgeois political leadership in order to crush the revolutionary process and relaunch a process of "rationalized" capitalist development in Iran. That is the course the ruling class has embarked upon with the support of imperialism.

The dynamic of the Iranian revolution continues to be one of upsurge. The magnitude of the mass mobilizations and the victory of the mass insurrection have created tremendous expectations among the workers, the urban poor, the poor peasants, the oppressed nationalities, and women. Neither the Khomeini-Bazargan regime or any other type of bourgeois rule can fulfill these expectations or rapidly crush the mass movement through repression.

To win their demands and to embark upon economic development free of the distortions imposed by imperialist domination, the working class and all the toilers will have to go forward to the establishment of a workers state, breaking the power of imperialism and its Iranian junior partner, expropriating the bourgeoisie, and opening the door to begin the construction of socialism.

In the long run there are only two possible outcomes: either the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat in alliance with the rural and city poor, which alone can guarantee the victory of the revolution, or the victory of counter-revolution. In the latter case, the bourgeoisie will once again brutally impose capitalist "law and order," and allow imperialism to reassert its direct control, as happened before with the crushing of the Constitutional Revolution of 1906-11, and the Second Revolution smashed by the CIA-sponsored coup of 1953.

Which of these two paths will predominate remains to be decided in the struggle between classes over the next months and years. In the course of the struggle the toilers can create a broad system of councils (soviets), and the political maturation of the proletariat can lead to cementing the bonds with all its allies. The workers and their allies can win if a mass revolutionary Marxist party can be built in time, in the heat of this struggle itself.

\* \* \*

The Iranian revolution is occurring in the context of a shift in the international relationship of class forces to the detriment of imperialism and in favor of the working class, owing to the defeat of American imperialism in Indochina and to the first worldwide recession after the Second World War. While doing everything it could to prop up the shah, given the antiwar sentiment of the American workers Washington was not able to send troops against the Iranian people. No other imperialist power was in a position to substitute.

An additional element was the possibility of Soviet counteraction. Given the fact of the long common border with the USSR, an imperialist invasion would directly threaten the Soviet Union.

That the imperialists were not able to directly intervene with military force to save the shah can only encourage the toiling masses everywhere.

The Iranian revolution has dealt a new blow to imperialism, further shifting the relationship of class forces on a world scale. Imperialism counted on the shah's regime and army as a bulwark against the Arab revolution, as a protector of its interests in the oil-rich region, and as a bastion of capitalist stability in the "Northern Tier" of Turkey, Afghanistan, and Pakistan on the southern flank of the Soviet Union. The Iranian masses have shattered that bulwark and bastion. Revolutionary Iran is an example for the masses in the whole region. The ruling classes from

Morocco through Egypt to Saudi Arabia, from Turkey to Pakistan, tremble at the thought of that example spreading.

The breaking of the shah's yoke has resulted in renewed struggles by Iran's oppressed nationalities for their rights. Comprising 60 percent of the population, they include Kurds, Azerbaijanis, Baluchis, Turkmenis, and Arabs, among others. Many of these groups spill over the Iranian borders, and their renewed struggles will directly affect Iraq, Turkey, Pakistan, and Afghanistan. This is true for the Soviet Union, too, where the struggles of the oppressed nationalities will be part of the political revolution against the Stalinist bureaucracy.

The Palestinian people have been given a powerful boost. From a staunch supporter of Israel and its major oil supplier, Iran has become an antagonist of the imperialist beachhead in the Middle East, cutting off oil supplies to it.

The Iranian revolution has already had a political impact on the struggle in southern Africa, with the cutting of oil supplies to the racist apartheid regime.

Imperialism has responded by attempting to shore up friendly regimes in the area, increasing its military presence, and seeking points of support in Iran to reverse the revolution's anti-imperialist dynamic. All the major imperialist powers have banded together to send emergency aid to the regime in Turkey, itself the scene of renewed struggle. U.S. Defense Secretary Brown toured the Arab countries and Israel during the insurrection in Iran, promising greater military aid. But as Begin pointed out, Iran has shown that no semicolonial country—including Egypt and Saudi Arabia—can play the role of stable outpost for imperialism in the area that Israel can, and Washington must rely

more on Israel than ever before. Carter put the squeeze harder on Sadat to come to an agreement with Israel under terms which guarantee an Israeli buildup in face of the new situation created by the Iranian revolution. Washington is also sending military advisers to North Yemen and increasing its naval presence in the Indian Ocean. At the same time, the imperialist powers have come to the defense of the new capitalist regime of Mehdi Bazargan, hoping it can stem the tide of revolution so that they can reconsolidate their economic links and control in Iran.

#### The Failure of the 'White Revolution'

Underlying the crisis of the Iranian monarchy was the failure of the shah's so-called White Revolution launched in 1962-63. The "agrarian reform," the industrialization projects that were given a boost in the 1970s by the rise in the price of oil, and the influx of petrodollars did not resolve any of the basic problems of underdevelopment caused by the long years of imperialist exploitation—on the contrary, they exacerbated those problems.

The partial industrialization did not end the dependence upon imperialism, but changed its form. It was tailored to fit the needs of international imperialist monopolies, not to achieve balanced growth of the Iranian economy. Capital goods had to be imported from the imperialist countries; investment tended in the majority of branches towards assembly of products as part of a chain of production controlled by the monopolies. A powerful consortium of the big oil companies controlled the marketing of Iranian oil, the "one crop" mainstay of the economy. The failure of this partial industrialization was accentuated by the context of imperialist exploitation.

The "agrarian reform" destroyed the

traditional agriculture of the country, not for the benefit of the peasantry, but for national and imperialist capital. Large agribusiness enterprises were established, producing for export and the needs of the imperialist-dominated world market. This resulted in a terrible destruction of productive forces caused by the elimination of the traditional modes of cultivation and irrigation (the *qanats*). Previously an exporter of food, Iran now must import 60 percent of the food required for its internal consumption.

The agrarian reform drove millions from the land. The massive exodus from the rural areas to the cities was not accompanied by the creation of sufficient industrial jobs. This led to a monstrous growth of shantytowns in the urban centers, and the creation of a huge industrial reserve army utilized by imperialist and native capital to impose a brutal exploitation of the working class.

Sixty-three percent of the population are illiterate in a country of 34 million inhabitants. Three and a half million are unemployed out of an active population of 11 million, 54 percent of households live below the "poverty level" by Iranian standards. This is the balance sheet after fifteen years of the shah's "modernization."

The international recession and its aftermath sharpened the crisis of the Iranian economy. Inflation soared to over 30 percent a year. The prices for capital goods imported from the imperialist powers rose faster than oil prices, which were also affected by the decline of the dollar. Iran began to build up debts to the imperialists.

The monarchy's much touted "liberation" of women was also a sham. While granting women certain legal concessions, lifting some of the barbaric laws codifying their oppression, that oppression remained basically untouched.

The oppressed nationalities were ruthlessly suppressed by the shah, denied all language and cultural rights whatsoever, and held in a second-class status compared to the Farsi-speaking Persians. Given the fact that much of the peasantry are from the oppressed nationalities, this national oppression is intertwined with the exploitation of the peasantry and the second-class status of many of the workers and urban poor forced into the cities from the countryside.

The facts refute all theories that the oil income was transforming Iran into a "sub-imperialism." On the contrary, the oil income sharpened the contradictions of an economy that remains under imperialist domination.

#### From the First Cracks to the Insurrection

In 1976 scandals broke out concerning corruption involving high figures of the regime and some of the fifty families who profited from the White Revolution. The



Shah, at height of powers, receiving homage from Premier Hoveida.

first differences appeared among those in power over what policies to adopt in face of the economic crisis. The monolithic facade of the dictatorial monarchy began to crack.

The shah's support for developing certain industries harmed sectors of the artisans. In the context of the world recession and its aftermath, the regime imposed on the merchants of the "bazaar" higher taxes, higher interest rates, and customs policies that favored the imperialists and the top fifty families. It attacked the working class through freezing wages and the imposition of a workers' passport. This led to an increase of the social isolation of the monarchy, reflected in the failure of the shah's attempt to build a pro-monarchy political party on the basis of the White Revolution.

The year 1977 was a turning point in the crisis of the regime. Encouraged by struggles abroad demanding human rights in Iran, sectors of the intelligentsia and of the liberal bourgeois opposition of the old National Front began to mobilize publicly to demand respect for the Constitution of 1906, which was still formally in effect, and for the freedoms it guaranteed, including freedom of the press, independence of the judicial system, etc. Faced with the success of the first mass demonstrations, the "poetry readings" that quickly turned into demonstrations against the regime, and the upsurge of the student movement, the regime decided, after getting approval from Washington, to repress the opposition currents that had appeared.

In the context of the isolation of the monarchy, the stepped-up repression by the regime had the effect of extending the movement for democratic rights. A dynamic began to unfold that characterized the whole movement: crackdowns were answered with deepening mobilization, revealing the depth of hatred for the vicious repression, oppression, and exploitation embodied in the shah's regime, as well as growing willingness to fight to the end against it.

On January 9, 1978, mass street demonstrations in the religious city of Qum protested government newspaper attacks on the exiled Ayatollah Khomeini. Many were killed when police attacked. In a pattern that came to mark the protest movement, a new wave of demonstrations began forty days later, following the traditional Muslim mourning periods of the third, seventh, and fortieth days after a death.

There was an uprising in the Azerbaijani city of Tabriz that involved almost the entire population. Workers, shopkeepers, the uprooted peasants who had flocked to the city, joined in. In the Tabriz uprising, we saw elements of the future development of the revolution. The slogan "death to the shah" was given massive voice for the first time. The discipline of the Tabriz garrison broke, and the army was unable to crush

the masses. The city came under the control of the population for a day. The shah's regime suffered a political defeat, and he was forced to remove certain officials in Azerbaijan. To regain control, he had to bring in troops from other garrisons. The Tabriz uprising also underscored the weight of the national question in the Iranian revolution. Demonstrations also took place in Shiraz and the oil city of Ahwaz, with repression leading to the next wave of demonstrations.

These demonstrations tended to be organized out of the mosques, which had been the only centers of social life not totally controlled by the regime and its police. This brought to the fore the role of the Shi'ite hierarchy. The Shi'ite current of Islam in Iran had a long tradition of intervention in political life and confrontation with the central state, as shown by the mullah's participation in the first mobilizations against imperialist penetration at the end of the nineteenth century, their involvement in the Constitutional Revolution of 1906, and the support sections of them gave to the Mossadegh government.

The financial independence of Shi'ism from the state contrasts with the Sunni hierarchies of other Islamic countries. Its ties with the urban petty bourgeoisie and the bazaar were also a factor in its opposition to the regime. However, whatever its opposition to the shah, this religious hierarchy remains a bourgeois force.

The shah's regime contributed to the politicization of the Shi'ite hierarchy through its forcing Khomeini into exile in 1963, incessant attacks upon the hierarchy designed to reduce its influence, and attempts to gain control of it. With a large organizational network at its disposal (180,000 mullahs, 80,000 mosques, and 60,000 students in religious schools and universities), the hierarchy was also able to profit from the weakness of the old political bourgeois opposition, in particular that of the National Front.

As we have seen in other countries marked by the upsurge of the colonial revolution and expression of nationalism by the oppressed, in the eyes of big sectors of the population Islam can have the meaning of an affirmation of national cultural values and identity against the grip of imperialism.

The influence of the religious hierarchy is also explained by the weakness of the workers movement, and in particular by the betrayals of Stalinism. The betrayals of the Tudeh Party in the Second Revolution, the policies of support for the shah by the Kremlin and Beijing, the repression of political and religious minorities in the bureaucratized workers states, have led many combative and devoted youth, workers and intellectuals to turn toward utopian or reformist concepts of "socialism in Islamic colors" as put forward by the

theologian Shariati or by the Mujahedeen<sup>1</sup> guerrilla organization.

The massive influx to the cities from the countryside, where the hold of religion was traditionally stronger, gave a broader popular base to the Shi'ite hierarchy in the urban areas.

Undoubtedly a key factor in the way the masses looked at the Shi'ite hierarchy, however, was the role played by Khomeini. His authority among the masses is based on the fact that he refused all compromise with the shah and the monarchy, even when National Front figures or other religious leaders were ready to make such compromises.

\* \* \*

As the cycle of demonstrations developed, they broadened out both geographically and socially. They spread to every corner of the country, and drew in the peasantry in the countryside who would travel to join demonstrations in the nearest city or town. The urban poor with their close ties to the workers, the bazaar merchants, students including down to grade-school level, women in historically unprecedented numbers, and the oppressed nationalities were more and more mobilized.

As the scope of the demonstrations grew, the shah imposed martial law on Isfahan in August 1978. After a new outpouring of antishah demonstrations following the August 19 movie theater fire set by police provocateurs in Abadan, the shah promised to make some reforms and shuffled his cabinet. But these and other concessions only stiffened the resolve of the masses, who more and more began to demand the dismantling of the entire monarchy. In early September the protests reached new heights. Three to four million participated in demonstrations on September 4. A half million jammed Tehran's streets September 7, fraternizing with the troops.

The government responded by imposing martial law and a curfew on twelve cities. On September 8, thousands were mowed down in what came to be known as "Bloody Friday."

Workers had participated as individuals in the demonstrations up to this point. In the last weeks of September the working class began to enter the battle with its own weapons and forms of organization. The first strikes prevented the regime from gaining any respite after Bloody Friday. Soon strikes were taking place among bank and telegraph workers, government and insurance workers, copper miners, dockers, textile workers, and workers on the railroads, post, buses, airlines, radio and television, and newspapers. On October 31 a nationwide oil strike shook the regime.

1. Mujahedeen-e Khalq (People's Crusaders). Usually referred to as the Mujahedeen.



The vast military machine was not enough to maintain shah's power.

The biggest demonstrations yet seen swept the country on November 5. The following day the shah placed Iran under military control and set up the military government of General Azhari. The repressive offensive was shattered by a work slowdown and the shutting of the bazaar. Demonstrations continued.

During the first days of December, full-fledged strikes were relaunched, beginning in the oil industry. These strikes became in fact a revolutionary general strike against the monarchy, and signaled the final offensive against the regime.

The industrialization of the 1960s and 1970s gave rise to a new, young working class. This new working class came from the rural areas and was concentrated geographically in cities like Tehran, Tabriz, Isfahan, Abadan, and Ahwaz. They form part of the urban poor, who tended to come to the cities in family units. Industrial workers today form one fourth of the economically active population. In addition to workers employed in large-scale industries like oil, petrochemicals, construction, steel, automobile manufacture, etc., a significant part of the working class—three out of four workers—is to be found in enterprises employing less than ten workers.

There was an outbreak of strikes in 1973-75. These were initiated over economic demands, and were limited to a few hours' or one or two days' duration. They did not lead to the formation of a clandestine organized workers movement.

In spite of the fact that the workers entered the revolutionary crisis without such organizations and without the existence of any mass workers parties, and in spite of the severe repression in the factories with SAVAK units in each factory forming company "unions," the strike wave was remarkable for the rapidity with which it developed and became politicized, and for the degree of organization that was achieved. The strike movement combined a call for higher wages with directly political demands for the elimination of martial law, freedom for all political prisoners, for the return of the exiles without

conditions or charges, for an end to censorship in the media, and for the right to form independent unions.

In the course of these struggles, tendencies toward workers control developed. Workers in the communications industry demanded the opening of the books in order to expose corruption and unequal contracts made with the imperialist monopolies. Employees in the central bank published a list of 144 high officials in the regime who had transferred large sums out of the country. In the oil industry, communications, and the atomic energy agency, workers demanded the departure of "foreign experts" and "real nationalization" of oil to break the grip of the imperialist oil trusts.

In all sectors, strike committees were formed to organize the struggle.

The power of the revolutionary general strike blocked all attempts by the liberal bourgeois figures in the National Front and by certain religious leaders to reach a compromise with the monarchy. Key were the oil workers, who held the decisive industry in their hands. This power drew behind it the merchants of the bazaar and other social layers. On the foundation of the general strike, the demonstrations continued to grow.

It was the relaunching of the mass offensive against the regime through the workers strikes that finally forced the bourgeois opposition and the religious hierarchy to line up behind Khomeini and his demand that the monarchy be swept away. This position, and the threat of being bypassed by the movement, led Khomeini to reject any compromise with Shapur Bakhtiar, the last prime minister of the shah, to preserve the regime of the masses, the Bakhtiar cabinet, the army, the SAVAK, the shah's fake parliament—all the institutions of the regime—had to go. Bakhtiar was nothing but the last bastion of the shah, backed by imperialism. (European Social Democratic parties also tried to refurbish Bakhtiar's image through their support.)

At the same time, even before Khomeini's return to Iran, which accelerated the disintegration of the Bakhtiar government, the bourgeois opposition figures were seeking a working agreement with the top military hierarchy in which the officers would announce they no longer supported the monarchy. This is why Khomeini and the rest of the bourgeois opposition refused—even after the beginning of the armed uprising in Tehran—to call for armed insurrection against the regime. This attempt to preserve the bourgeois state institutions foreshadowed the basic policy of the capitalist forces following the insurrection.

In the end, the attempt to find such a compromise with the army brass was shattered by three factors:

1. The continued support for the institutions of the monarchy by imperialism and the major sections of the national bourgeoisie, who hoped that if the Bakhtiar regime hung tough, the masses could eventually be demobilized.

2. The continued upsurge of the mass movement as expressed in the huge demonstrations that preceded, accompanied, and followed the return of Khomeini, and the solidity of the general strike.

3. The beginning of the disintegration of the discipline of the army under the impact of the mass mobilizations.

The large demonstrations of December 11-12 and the continuation of the strike movement confirmed the failure of the new repressive measures unleashed by the shah with the November 7 appointment of the military cabinet of General Azhari. In mid-December the crisis began to deeply shake the military.

Desertions, acts of sabotage, and individual resistance took on mass proportions. The first forms of organized struggle within certain units appeared. Soldiers reportedly shot at officers who attempted to force them to attack the people.

This process accelerated with the fall of the Azhari cabinet, brought down by the oil workers' strike; the departure of the shah on an "extended vacation"; and the inability of the Bakhtiar government to demobilize the mass movement despite the support of the imperialist powers, the army brass, and sections of the bourgeoisie.

The opposition reached its highest level in the air force, especially among the *homafars*, the skilled technicians whose training and work are closest to those of the skilled industrial proletariat. In January, the struggle of the *homafars* spread nationwide with political hunger strikes and organized participation in the street demonstrations.

Resistance by the *homafars* to the attack carried out by the Royal Guard on February 9, 1979, sparked the mobilization and arming of the plebeian masses in Tehran—the beginning of the victorious popular

insurrection. On the second day of the battle, the general command—finding itself unable to send the rank-and-file soldiers to crush the masses and carry out a coup—began to retreat, while seeking a compromise with the liberal and religious opposition. Their goal was to save as much of the army as possible. However, it became necessary for them to order the rank-and-file soldiers to go home.

A sector of the urban workers and plebeian masses and students with weapons seized from the barracks, airmen, and some other soldiers, along with units from the guerrilla organizations, attacked Royal Guard and SAVAK strongholds and other bastions of the old regime in Tehran. They were backed by massive defiance of the curfew throughout the city. The insurrection spread to the other cities, and the monarchy was destroyed throughout the country.

#### **The Situation Immediately Following the Insurrection**

Following the overthrow of the monarchy, the Khomeini-appointed government of Mehdi Bazargan found itself in office, trying to rebuild the discipline of the army and in general to restore capitalist law and order. Khomeini's plan to build an alternative bourgeois regime to that of the shah was put into practice.

The masses overthrew the repressive regime almost barehanded. Much of the army was in disarray, especially in Tehran. While certain elite units around the country were still intact, the army could not be utilized owing to political reasons, and neither could the police. The workers were still on strike—including the government workers—further paralyzing the state.

Armed plebeian youth organized mainly through neighborhood committees in Tehran and other cities continued to defend the barricades set up during the insurrection to control the movement of people at night. Some of the hated mass murderers of the old regime had been captured during the insurrection; others were arrested, along with thousands of SAVAK agents, by these neighborhood guards.

The neighborhood committees had been organized through the mosques at the time of the oil workers' strike at the end of December. Often they were formed at the initiative of local religious authorities in order to take charge of the distribution of oil, gas, and basic foods. They also organized participation in, and marshals for, the mass demonstrations surrounding the return of Khomeini. The youth, urban poor, students, and workers organized in the marshal squads participated massively in the insurrection, despite the appeal for calm by the religious hierarchy. After arming themselves they continued to function as the armed guard of the revolution.

A week after the insurrection, the workers returned to their factories in re-

sponse to an appeal by Khomeini. Some of the plants, especially imperialist-owned enterprises, did not reopen. Where they could the workers held assemblies in the factories and offices to discuss their demands and establish ongoing committees, either by continuing the strike committees or electing new ones. In addition to economic demands, the workers discussed the need for unions and for control over the appointment of managers. Government workers raised similar demands. Having fought so hard for democratic rights, workers demanded democracy on the job, and that SAVAK agents and others connected with the old regime be cleaned out. Demands were raised to open the books to expose corrupt managers and deals favoring the imperialist monopolies. This tendency toward implementing workers control was reinforced by the flight from the country of many of those with ties to the monarchy, by the capitalists' sabotage of the economy, and by the departure of tens of thousands of "foreign experts."

Some of the rank-and-file soldiers told to go home during the insurrection became involved in the neighborhood committees. The homafars were in the forefront of organization among the soldiers. They called two demonstrations in the week following the insurrection to protest the government's appointment of top generals of the shah's army. While Bazargan was forced to retreat on some of these appointments, the homafars and other soldiers supporting them raised more far-reaching demands in the course of this struggle, calling for the election of all officers, for political rights in the armed forces, for keeping the civilian population armed, and opposed the domination of the armed forces by American advisers.

Given the weakening and paralysis of the state apparatus and the upsurge of the mass movement, decisive advances towards the organization of the workers and all the toilers into councils or soviets were

possible. What was lacking was a mass revolutionary working-class Marxist party capable of giving a lead.

#### **The Capitalist Regime Attempts to Consolidate Itself in Face of the Expectations and Mobilizations of the Masses**

The character of the year-long mobilization against the shah determines the context in which the class struggle is now unfolding. The masses overthrew the regime by relying on their power alone. This has given them a sense of their own strength. They now expect that their economic, social, and political aspirations will be met.

Compounding the situation for the capitalist forces is the deepening economic crisis coming on top of the dislocations of the past year's mobilizations. There has been a massive flight of capital, further narrowing the internal market. The bourgeoisie, both native and imperialist, is reluctant to invest in many areas such as steel, construction, plastics, and other branches. Many workers returned to their factories to find themselves laid off or their plants closed, swelling the already bloated army of unemployed.

While offering some small concessions, such as the distribution of free medicines in some areas, the Bazargan government has told the masses that their demands cannot be met. At the same time, the government has offered low-interest loans to capitalists as an inducement to invest. It is possible that these funds also will find their way abroad instead. The shah learned that oil revenues could not solve the crisis, and even less so in the present situation of a much reduced oil output.

Given the crisis of the world capitalist system and the social instability in Iran, the crisis of the Iranian economy is likely to intensify, even though the policy of the new regime is to try to take measures to correct the extreme economic distortions



"Guns and tanks are only as reliable as the hands that fire and run them."



introduced by the political and economic policies of the monarchy. The regime is thus in no position to make substantial concessions to the masses, although it is likely it will have to make some. On the contrary, it must drive harder against the workers and other toilers to try to establish the conditions for large-scale capital investment again. This will bring it into increasing conflict with the masses, who, far from being defeated, are imbued with a spirit of self-confidence flowing from their successful battle against the monarchy.

The dynamic of the class struggle brings to the fore the combination of immediate, democratic, and transitional demands. After the gigantic mobilizations that overthrew the shah, the workers and toilers have begun to reorient. Here and there demands on questions such as housing, wages, the conditions of work, the labor laws, and unemployment are beginning to be raised. In the main cities, there have been important demonstrations of unemployed demanding jobs. Consciousness of the need to continue their struggles for their demands is beginning to appear in a vanguard layer of workers. The profound social and political instability, and the potential this implies for explosive struggles, is the dominant feature of the situation.

- The first major test between the revolution and counterrevolution came in Iranian Kurdistan around the Iranian New Year, March 21. In the course of the insurrection the Kurds armed themselves and established Kurdish committees throughout Iranian Kurdistan. When the central government attempted to reassert its authority through the army attack in Sanandaj, the Kurdish people put up fierce resistance against the machine guns, bazookas, helicopters, and Phantom jets of the armed forces. In spite of the massacre of hundreds of Kurds, they defeated the government's attempt. In the course of the struggle, the mobilization of the Kurdish people was deepened. The credibility and authority of Khomeini and the Shi'ite hierarchy has plummeted. This is an indication of what can happen with the advance of the revolution in other areas.

The successful resistance of the Kurds has inspired other oppressed nationalities in neighboring Azerbaijan and in Baluchistan. There were large solidarity demonstrations among Kurdish residents in Azerbaijan, and in the city of Zahedan in Iranian Baluchistan.

The oppressed nationalities are beginning to assert themselves now that the yoke of the hated Pahlavi dictatorship has been removed. This is true also for the Turkmenis, and for the Arabs in Khuzistan and along the Gulf Coast, who suffer the greatest discrimination. The capitalist government, on the other hand, must try to once again fasten that yoke of national oppression if it is to rebuild a stable central state. This means that the national



Martial law failed to halt the waves of mass demonstrations.

question will remain explosive, and will be one of the key struggles in the period ahead, even if the government attempts to defuse these struggles through demagogic "autonomy" proposals within the framework of strengthening the central state apparatus.

The fight of the oppressed nationalities is also intertwined with the struggles of the working class, peasantry, and agricultural workers. The mobilizations of the oppressed nationalities will more and more have a tendency to raise broader class demands. The relation of these national struggles to the peasantry can be seen among the Turkmenis. In the wake of the insurrection, Turkmeni peasants and Baluchi agricultural workers in Turkmeni Sahra, the key large-scale agricultural center, have taken over hundreds of estates. Following the Kurdish success, they seized police stations and army bases which led to armed clashes with the central government. The government has tried to force these peasants and agricultural workers to give the land back to the landlords, but so far have been unsuccessful.

The massive exodus from the countryside has resulted in large concentrations of the oppressed nationalities among the urban poor and workers in the cities. This is one reason why the government found it difficult to whip up Farsi chauvinism in the Persian cities during the Sanandaj events—it took the opposite course of attempting to play it down.

- In the process of attempting to assert its authority, the capitalist regime has made a series of attacks on democratic rights. The first problem that it attempted to grapple with was the fact that large sections of the urban population were armed. Khomeini issued an edict stating that it was a "sin" to keep the captured weapons. The regime has had a partial success in collecting the weapons by hav-

ing the mosques control the arms of the neighborhood committees, but many people have kept their arms, and groups such as the Fedayeen<sup>2</sup> and Mujahedeen have refused to disarm.

The authority of Khomeini and of the Islamic Revolutionary Council around him was used also to try to stop the demonstrations of the homafars in the week following the insurrection. The undertone of redbaiting against the homafars became explicit when Khomeini banned a march by the Fedayeen and other groups in support of the demands of the homafars and of the workers for the right to elect plant and office managers. The Fedayeen, supported by other groups including the Iranian Socialist Workers Party (HKS)<sup>3</sup> then called a protest rally which drew some 150,000 in Tehran.

When the workers and personnel of the radio and television first occupied the station during the insurrection, it was utilized to help organize the fight, and began to broadcast the positions of all political groups. The Bazargan government quickly appointed Sadegh Ghotbzadeh head of the radio and television, and imposed censorship. Government intimidation and censorship has also been placed on the daily press. This control has been utilized to mount a propaganda offensive against the demands of the toiling masses and for capitalist stability.

Steps by the religious hierarchy to enforce the reactionary Islamic code against women in early March sparked the most massive demonstrations supporting the rights of women ever to occur in an Islamic country, although they represent a minority of women at present. The partici-

2. Cherkha-ye Feda'i-ye Khalq (People's Guerilla Fighters). Usually referred to as the People's Fedayeen or the Fedayeen.

3. Hezb-e Kargarane Socialist, the Iranian section of the Fourth International.

pation by women in the mobilizations against the shah had given them experience in political action and created the conditions for this counteroffensive. The government was forced to temporarily retreat on the question of legally imposing restrictions on women's rights as a result of these mobilizations, but has launched a new campaign against women through mass propaganda. In the further course of the revolution we can expect new eruptions of struggles by women.

Suspected SAVAK agents, top officers of the shah's army, and other figures of the old regime responsible for untold crimes were arrested by local committees. All were sent to the Islamic Revolutionary Council or similar bodies set up in different cities, known as the "Imam's Committees."<sup>4</sup> Many of the SAVAKi and other agents of the shah's regime were released. Under the pressure of the masses, some of the most hated figures were given secret trials by "Islamic courts" and executed. The purpose of the secrecy, as well as the refusal of the government to open the SAVAK files to public view, is to prevent the exposure of the links between the criminals and others in the state apparatus, including those high up in the new regime, and their links with the capitalists and managers.

"Islamic courts" also tried people on morals charges, executing some for homosexual behavior and flogging some people for such things as adultery or drinking alcohol. While these cases have not been widespread, they represent attempts to intimidate the population. Opposition has tended to curtail such practices.

Selective repressive moves against the left are probable in the next period. Such

4. "Imam" is a title connoting "messiah" in the Shi'ite religion; here, of course, it refers to Ayatollah Khomeini.

blows against the vanguard, however, will not be sufficient to decisively set back the toiling masses, and on this basis can be fought.

• One of the factors that will determine future development is what happens with the committees thrown up in the course of the struggle against the monarchy. Fundamentally, the religious hierarchy, the government, and the Islamic Revolutionary Council are trying to reduce their social base and to integrate them in the bourgeois state apparatus. Because of their role in the mass struggle against the monarchy, however, they are still seen by the masses as instruments which they can utilize to fight for their demands. All this is reflected in contradictions within the committees.

Through the religious hierarchy and the mosques, the Islamic Revolutionary Council moved to control the neighborhood committees. Discussions in the mosques have dwindled, and with that, the base of these committees has been narrowed. At the same time, they still contain people mobilized in the course of the struggle against the shah, and reflect to a certain extent the contradictions in the society at large.

The Imam's Committees, appointed from above, which stand over the neighborhood committees, also contain the same contradictions, but include more conscious rightist elements, including ex-SAVAK agents in many cases. This has led to some struggles to remove such agents.

The capitalist forces also moved to try to control the workers committees through appointments to them from the Imam's Committees. Certain weaknesses existed in the workers committees from the beginning. The council of oil workers in Ahwaz, for example, over-represents the white-collar workers, with only two or three

representatives of production workers on the 120-person council. Redbaiting by the government and the Islamic Revolutionary Council has had some success in limiting freedom for political tendencies and discussions within these committees, as well as blunting the demands for elements of workers control.

Within some workers committees, figures from the old company "unions" tied to SAVAK have also emerged. They are backed by the new regime and the Imam's Committees. These figures, sometimes using physical violence, oppose the formation of unions—under the assertion that in an "Islamic Republic" workers don't need unions. This is the government's position. However, the desire to build unions is widespread among the workers. The opposition of the regime to their creation stems from the fear that they could become the basis for building or revitalizing broad workers committees, and from the understanding that any upturn of capitalism in this semicolonial country can only be launched on the basis of a savage superexploitation of the workers. The construction of independent trade unions is one of the key questions in the unfolding class struggle in the present period.

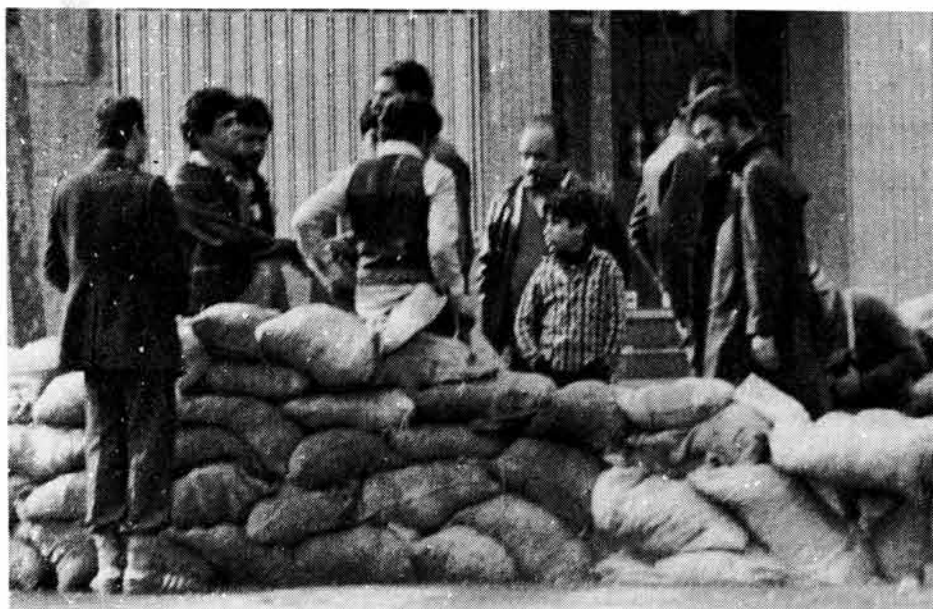
In the course of their struggle against the shah, however, the experience of organizing committees to lead their struggles has spread throughout the broad masses and the working class. We can expect that future mobilizations will see a resurgence of workers committees or others such as neighborhood committees, whether this takes the form of revitalizing the existing committees or the building of new ones.

• The new regime must seek to rebuild a stable bourgeois state apparatus. That is why it is protecting SAVAK agents and trying to stop exposures of links between the shah's regime, and officials in the present regime. It is trying to give a new image to the army and police—that they have changed their spots and are now on the side of the masses. It is cautiously attempting to have the police assume their "normal" functions.

At the same time, a goal of the new bourgeois regime is to rationalize the functioning of the state apparatus which was distorted by specific needs of the shah's regime.

As the army attack on Sanandaj demonstrates, some of the elite army units and officer corps remain intact. The regime is rebuilding the army from the top down. One of the obstacles it faces is that the overthrow of the shah was also a big political defeat for the army. Moreover, rank-and-file soldiers, especially in the Tehran region where there was the greatest collapse of the army discipline and fraternization during the insurrection, have not returned to the barracks.

Part of the regime's plans to demobilize the armed youth is to incorporate them into a "National Islamic Guard," which



Barricade of sandbags set up during the insurrection.

Cindy Jaquith

can be utilized while the army is being rebuilt and which would not be tainted with the mass hatred that still exists for the army.

While the regime is trying to put together the state apparatus, it is forced to attempt to control the situation through its influence over the neighborhood and workers committees. These, however, due to their potential of being utilized by the masses in any mobilization, cannot be stable bases for bourgeois rule. As soon as it can, the regime will attempt to dissolve them or absorb them completely into its own apparatus.

A key element in the regime's plans to stabilize itself was the referendum for the "Islamic Republic." The plebiscitary referendum was designed to limit the choices before the people to *for* or *against* the "Islamic Republic," as well as to block the convocation of a sovereign constituent assembly and the full debate that would entail over the nature and form of the government, and the burning social and economic questions facing the masses.

Utilizing demagoguery about the "Islamic Republic," which large sectors of the masses hope will solve their problems, the ruling class sought to reconsolidate the capitalist state. They hoped that a massive vote for the "Islamic Republic" would boost their authority to defend capitalism and capitalist policies against the needs and aspirations of the masses.

In addition to utilizing religion as an argument for an "Islamic Republic," the bourgeoisie has tried to justify the referendum and other steps they have taken as necessary to uproot the remnants of the monarchy and to break the grip of imperialism. In fact, they are blocking the dismantlement of the old state apparatus and paving the way for imperialism.

In this context, the campaign for an "Islamic Republic" is aimed against the left and "communism." Under this cover, the ruling class has begun a campaign for "national unity" aimed against the independent mobilizations of the workers, peasants, oppressed nationalities, and all the toiling masses.

Political debate was curtailed in the campaign for the referendum, and threats were made that democratic rights would be further repressed after it. Thugs have been organized to counter left demonstrations, the women's demonstrations, and to silence dissidents in some of the factories. No political parties other than the Islamic Republican Party have been recognized. There has been harassment of leftists, including militants of the HKS.

The explosion of the struggles of the Kurds, Turkmenis, and other oppressed nationalities, which included clashes with the army, undermined the authority of the referendum in the country as a whole and blocked its even being held in certain areas. Whatever success the regime now claims for the referendum, it is clear that it

did not result in stabilizing the social situation as the regime had hoped.

• Central to the ability of the weak bourgeoisie to advance its interests is the authority of Khomeini. This authority stems from his uncompromising stand against the monarchy. Now he is using it to block the further development of the revolution and back the consolidation of the new bourgeois regime. Without this cover, the government could not hope to



Freed political prisoners greet crowd.

carry out its counterrevolutionary aims.

Khomeini's authority also boosts that of the religious hierarchy as a whole, and of religion, which can be demagogically utilized to divert the masses. Nevertheless, religion alone will not be able in the long run to provide the ideology for a modern capitalist state, and the attempts to impose Islamic codes can backfire. In the next period Khomeini's authority will be tested against the realities of the class struggle, and can be used up if it is pitted directly against goals of the masses.

The Islamic Revolutionary Council itself stands above the Bazargan government as the seat of real power. Its exact composition remains secret. Besides Khomeini and other religious leaders, indications are that it includes conservative politicians such as Ghotbzadeh and Yazdi, as well as reactionary military figures.

The Khomeini leadership would like to impose a regime under the control of the Islamic religious hierarchy, in which the role of political parties would be restricted or nonexistent. However, this perspective is already undermined by the social reality. Organizations that claim allegiance to the working class, while still small, are growing. The National Democratic Front of Dafteri, grandson of Mossadegh, has also made gains. In broad sectors of the masses there is a profound sentiment for democracy, and even for socialism as an expression of equality and democracy (although "communism" tends to be equated with Stalinism). These sentiments can only lead to the posing of the question of the separation of the church and state.

The new regime, under the impact of the great anti-imperialist mobilization and

sentiment of the masses, has taken certain steps that have helped better its image in the eyes of the masses, such as the closing of the U.S. bases, expulsion of "foreign experts," and the breaks with Israel and South Africa. While the masses will support these and similar anti-imperialist steps the regime might take, the attempts to get the economy going again will push it to reknit its ties with world imperialism.

The difficulties the new regime faces in dealing with the mass upsurge have resulted in contradictory policies following one upon the other. There is evidence of differences within the government, within the Islamic Revolutionary Council, and between the two.

The adaptations, retreats, and contradictory positions of the government vis-à-vis mobilizations of the masses, especially the oppressed nationalities at the present time, indicates the government's weakness. Its demagoguery reflects this. Support for the government among the toiling masses depends on the illusions about its will and capacity to satisfy basic demands. At the present time repression will not be able to stabilize its base. In the course of the class struggle over the next period, the illusions of the masses are going to erode. There can be governmental crises and sharp changes in the policy and composition of the government and the Islamic Revolutionary Council.

#### The Tudeh Party, the Fedayeen, and the Mujahedeen

• The Stalinist Tudeh (Masses) Party is the best-organized political party in the labor movement. Today, however, it has far fewer forces and much less prestige than it had in the period following the Second World War. The reasons for this decline in influence are the following:

1. Its responsibility for the defeats of 1945-46 in Azerbaijan and Kurdistan and in the oil strike in the south, and above all its refusal to fight the coup of 1953.

2. Its support to the demands of the Kremlin bureaucracy for onerous oil concessions in 1946-47, at the moment when the anti-imperialist movement was on the rise in Iran.

3. Its support for the shah's reforms in 1960-63, and the shattering of such illusions by the subsequent reinforcement of the Pahlavi dictatorship.

4. The Kremlin's support to the shah since 1953, which became glaringly obvious from January to December 1978.

In the framework of the Stalinist-Menshevik "two-stage" theory of revolution and the "peaceful coexistence" policy of the Kremlin, the Tudeh Party defended for an extended period a line of "democratization" of the monarchy. It made a turn only in August-September 1978. From that moment on, it tail-ended Khomeini. In no way did it participate in the insurrection. Immediately after, it declared its support to the Bazargan government, to the Is-

lamic Revolutionary Council, and to Khomeini. It came out for the "Islamic Republic." Bowing before the capitalist government which stands for the "reconstruction of the Iranian economy" and the bourgeois state, and for the "national unity" of Iran, the Tudeh Party kept quiet on the economic and social demands of the masses. At the present time it abstains from the struggle for the construction of the trade-union movement, and downplays the struggles of the oppressed nationalities.

- The leadership that formed the Cherikha-ye Feda'i-ye Khalq (Fedayeen) came in part from the Tudeh Party and to a lesser extent from the National Front. The lessons they drew from the lack of resistance to the coup of 1953 and from the fraudulent reforms of 1960-63 led them to adopt a guerrilla strategy. Under the impact of the Palestinian resistance, they began a guerrilla campaign in 1970-71. These revolutionary militants paid a very high price. They were savagely hunted down, tortured, and executed by the SAVAK and the army.

In September-October 1978, the Fedayeen went through a resurgence. Today they have the largest audience of the groups that claim adherence to Marxism-Leninism. After their active participation in the insurrection which neither the liberal bourgeois or religious opposition figures organized, sympathy and support for them broadened, including within the ranks of the workers.

After the insurrection, the Fedayeen adopted a vacillating orientation. They correctly opposed the disarming of the people demanded by the government and Khomeini. They called for a real purge of the army. They also joined the struggle of the Kurds. They made some correct criticisms of the government maneuver to hold the referendum on the "Islamic Republic." However, they still hold to certain Stalinist positions and have drawn no critical balance sheet of their guerrilla strategy; thus they fail to comprehend the need for the political independence of the working class and do not understand why the class character of the government is important. That has led them to give critical support to the Bazargan government and to fail to expose the class nature of the role being played by the religious hierarchy. Therefore they are not able to play the role they could, given their influence, to organize and politically lead the working class and its allies.

Under the impact of the unfolding revolution and the intervention of revolutionary Marxists, a process of political differentiation will certainly appear in this formation, and many will be won to consistently revolutionary politics.

- The Mujahedeen-e Khalq were born in the same context as the Fedayeen. At the end of the 1960s they launched their own guerrilla campaign. Their leadership

came from the Iranian Liberation Movement, a religious-bourgeois opposition that came out of the old National Front.

The ideological roots of the Mujahedeen are in the "third worldist" and "anti-imperialist" interpretation of Islam. In 1975, a Maoist-Stalinist wing tried to take over the Mujahedeen through a coup, leading to a split. This Maoist-Stalinist group was forced to abandon its pretense of being the Mujahedeen during 1978. Therefore it was the current most linked to Islam which appeared in the mobilizations of late 1978 and in the insurrection. Because of their history as fighters against the dictatorship they have wide prestige among the masses.

Their ideological basis and their populist-nationalist orientation has led them to give critical support to the government and to tail-end Khomeini, even if they have made correct criticisms of the antidemocratic methods of the regime. They have declared in favor of the "Islamic Republic," obscuring the capitalist nature of such a republic which is in the service of the bourgeoisie and the landlords. Unless they break with their petty-bourgeois orientation and program, they will not play a role in the fight for the political independence of the toiling masses. Nevertheless, they remain an important force which can play a role in anti-imperialist mobilizations and certain social struggles. This can have an effect on them and help sectors of them to evolve toward Marxist positions.

After decades of dictatorship and the betrayals of the Stalinists, the labor movement in Iran is politically and organizationally weak. At the same time, this



Women's demonstrations forced Khomeini to retreat on restrictions against rights.

organizational weakness means that there is no entrenched labor bureaucracy standing in the way of the workers. Spontaneous explosions of workers struggles can lead to a new growth of workers committees and to the emergence of fighting trade unions.

### The Road Forward

The period ahead will be one of deepening class struggle and sharp clashes as the ruling-class forces attempt to reestablish capitalist authority and solve the crisis of capitalism on the backs of the toilers.

The class struggle will unfold as a combination and interrelation between the struggles of the working class, the oppressed nationalities, peasantry, urban poor, and women, around such social questions as mass unemployment, housing and health, and the struggle for democratic rights. While there will be important advances and retreats, the decisive battles remain ahead of us.

In this situation, the biggest factor lacking for a victory of the working class and its allies is a mass revolutionary-socialist working-class party that can provide the necessary leadership. The construction of such a party is the task that the Fourth International and the Hezb-e Kargarane Socialist have set for themselves. Today the HKS is fighting along the following lines:

- For the defense of all the conquests of the revolution against domestic reaction and imperialism—including the expulsion of the U.S. bases; the breaking of ties with, and cutting off of oil supplies to, South Africa and Israel; the cancellation of the shah's huge orders for military equipment from imperialist governments; the cancellation of the agreement to market oil through the cartel of imperialist monopolies; and so on.

Return the fortune the shah has deposited in the imperialist banks and in other investments abroad. For the renunciation of the debt to the imperialist powers, who have sucked Iran's resources and the labor of its people long enough. Expropriate all imperialist property. Cancel all contracts with the imperialists which are to the detriment of the Iranian people.

For solidarity with the Palestinian revolution! Solidarity with the struggles of the toiling masses in the Mideast, the whole region, and the entire world!

- The plebiscitory referendum on the "Islamic Republic" is an attempt to impose a capitalist government and constitution on the people from above. For the immediate convocation of a sovereign constituent assembly, free from any interference by the government or the Islamic Revolutionary Council and under conditions of full political freedom to decide these and other questions facing the masses.

- The HKS is ready to unite with all democratic forces which defend the conquests of the revolution against the at-

tempts of the government and the Islamic Revolutionary Council to impose censorship and restrict democratic rights. Full rights for all political parties, freedom of speech, the press, radio and television, and assembly. Separation of church and state, and freedom of religion and belief in general.

- To counter the effects of inflation and massive unemployment, the hours of work should be reduced with no loss in pay to spread the available work, and wages should rise automatically with the cost of living. Payment of all the back wages owed the workers because of the general strike.

A vast program of public works and development of public services is urgently required to help fight unemployment and provide the people with badly needed services—health facilities, distribution of basic foods to the undernourished, sanitation facilities, better schools, housing, irrigation in the countryside, and a campaign against illiteracy.

For a comprehensive nationalized free health and social security system.

- For the workers to open the books of the enterprises to the public, so that the truth about the economy, deals with imperialism, and corruption can be known. Immediate expropriation of the properties of the shah and the royal family, and of the capitalists who refuse to open their factories or who have fled. Stop the flight of capital abroad. Expropriation of the banks, oil industry, and the other key branches of the economy. For the operation of all expropriated properties under workers control.

For the formulation by the workers and peasants organizations and committees, through a broad and democratic debate, of an emergency plan to overcome the economic crisis.

- The peasants need land, cheap credit, adequate machinery and fertilizers, and guaranteed markets for their products. They need access to irrigation. The expropriation of the banks and key industries can provide the means to meet those needs and help build the alliance between the workers and peasants.

- Closely connected with the fight for the social needs of the peasants is the question of the liberation of the oppressed nationalities, who were in the forefront of the struggle against the shah. For the full restoration of the language and cultural rights of the Kurds, Azerbaijanis, Baluchis, Turkmeni, Arabs, and other oppressed people in Iran. For the right of the oppressed nationalities to self-determination, up to and including the right of separation.

- Women also played a key role in the overthrow of the shah, participating in the mass demonstrations and strikes as never before in Iranian history. Against the attempts of the government and religious hierarchy to restrict their rights. For equal

wages for equal work. For adequate child-care and health facilities. For equality with men in all the organizations of the toilers and in the society as a whole.

- Dissolve all the special repressive bodies of the old regime, including SAVAK, the Royal Guards, etc. Open the files on all their crimes against the Iranian



Former Premier Hoveida at trial that sentenced him to death for crimes under shah.

people, to expose the real criminals. Against all attempts to reconstitute such bodies under whatever guise.

- The government should guarantee the rights of all the organizations of the masses, including all political parties. The organizations of the masses have the right to defend themselves against thugs and ex-SAVAK agents masquerading as revolutionists.

- For full political rights for soldiers, including freedom of speech and assembly, freedom to read all points of view, the right to join political parties, etc. The rank-and-file soldiers should elect all officers and forge links with the toilers committees to build a popular militia under the control of councils of workers, soldiers, and toilers delegates. Such a militia would be the guarantee against any attempt by rightist forces with the backing of imperialism to stage a coup.

- The workers in the factories and offices need democratic unions to fight for their immediate interests against the bosses. Unions should be built on an industry-wide basis, federated in a single democratic union structure, and be independent from the state. Unionization of agricultural workers, women workers, and immigrants.

- For the revitalization and broadening of the committees the masses created in the battle to bring down the shah. For the building of workers and neighborhood committees where they do not exist, and for the organization of soldiers and peasants committees.

These committees can be the instruments to forge the unity in struggle of the masses. In order to fight for the interests

of the workers, urban poor, soldiers, peasants, and all the toilers, these committees have to be independent from the state and from the religious hierarchy. The SAVAK agents who have tried to penetrate these committees should be purged. The committees have to be run completely democratically, and be representative of all the toilers, elected by them and subject to their recall, with all political parties and viewpoints given equal rights. For the coordination of the committees.

The objective is the formation of broadly based councils or soviets of delegates from the workers, soldiers, peasants, and neighborhood committees to conduct the overall struggle for the needs, interests, and rights of the masses.

- In order to fight for the above and other demands, the workers will have to struggle to establish workers control over their workplaces, through the workers committees.

- No capitalist government can meet the needs of the toiling masses. On the contrary, any such government will defend the interests of the bosses against those of the toilers. *For a workers and peasants republic*, a government based on broad democratic councils or soviets of the toiling masses. Such a government would cement the bond between the workers and the poor peasants, mobilize the masses to expropriate the major branches of banking and industry, break the power of the imperialists and their native capitalist junior partners, institute a planned economy, and establish the dictatorship of the proletariat, opening the way to socialism.

\* \* \*

The Fourth International and the Hezb-e Kargar-e Sosialist declare their readiness to join in united action with other forces around all the above and other demands of the toilers.

The opposite path to the one outlined here will mean to oppose the aspirations of the workers, the oppressed nationalities, the urban poor, the peasants, the soldiers, the women—and that will inevitably mean their demobilization. This would lead to openings for domestic reaction and imperialism to once again reassert their full control and reimpose another tyrannical regime under imperialism's thumb. The heroic battle of the Iranian toiling masses against the shah demonstrates that this is not inevitable. We face the upcoming battles of the next months and years with optimism, an optimism based on the proven courage in combat of the Iranian workers and toilers.

The HKS and the Fourth International and its sections everywhere call upon the workers and toilers of the world to embrace the Iranian revolution as your own! Come to its defense by demanding that the imperialists keep their hands off Iran!

April 3, 1979

## 'Islamic Republic'—New Mask for Capitalist Rule

[The following has been excerpted from a statement presenting the views of the Hezb-e Kargar-e Socialist (HKS—Socialist Workers Party), Iranian section of the Fourth International, on the March 30-31 referendum for an "Islamic republic." The translation is by *Intercontinental Press/Inprecor*.]

\* \* \*

The antidemocratic referendum is an attack against the rights of the oppressed and laboring masses!

For the immediate convocation of a constituent assembly!

For the establishment of a workers and peasants republic, the only way to assure the victory of the Iranian revolution!

With the downfall of the monarchy, that pillar of order, exploitation, and imperialism, the laboring and oppressed masses of Iran began struggling for a government that could satisfy their demands.

The defense of the revolution's gains, as well as its extension and ultimate victory, depends on the establishment of such a government.

But how can a government like that be set up, and on what forces should it be based?

The victories and gains already won are a result of the determined struggles and immense sacrifices of the tens of millions of workers and oppressed of Iran. Those gains belong to them.

The next government, one that can rescue Iran from the yoke of imperialism,

dictatorship, and underdevelopment, must be chosen by the exploited and oppressed masses themselves.

Only the Iranian popular masses are capable of finding a real solution to the crisis that imperialism and its monarchy have left us, by discussing and deciding on the course of the future government.

The immediate convocation of a constituent assembly, in which all the political representatives of the people are allowed to participate, is the only way in which the masses can genuinely express their will.

Such an assembly would be the expression of popular sovereignty. It would be responsible to no authority except the people and their fighting organizations, and would recognize no higher power. An assembly of this type must and can be immediately established on the basis of general elections by direct, equal, and secret ballot. Illiterates as well as the educated, the youth, the soldiers—in short, all men and women in this country—must be allowed to participate in these elections.

The independent mass organizations must be allowed to supervise these elections. All political parties and organizations must have the right to freely take part in them and enjoy equal rights to present their programs and ideas.

Only such a constituent assembly can choose and set up a government that will respond to the true needs of society.

Within the constituent assembly, the HKS would propose adoption of the "Bill of Rights for the Workers and Toilers of

Iran"\* as the new constitution. It would also propose the formation of a government based on that constitution—that is, a government that represents and defends the interests of the exploited and oppressed.

That is the road along which the mass struggle is headed. Our revolution is marching toward the establishment of a workers and peasants republic, and the HKS is struggling with the masses to reach that goal.

The problems of Iranian society, from political repression to underdevelopment and poverty, cannot be solved by a capitalist government.

No capitalist government wants nationalization of industry for the benefit of the workers. No capitalist government will defend the occupation of land by the peasants who work it. No capitalist government favors the liberation of Kurdistan, Azerbaijan, or Baluchistan, or the ending of national oppression. No capitalist government will make a real effort to grant equal rights to women, the oppressed half of society.

Because of this, the antidemocratic referendum proposed by the government of Mehdi Bazargan is a direct attack against democratic rights and against all the exploited and oppressed masses of Iran.

By mounting a phony referendum instead of immediately convening a constitu-

\*See *Intercontinental Press/Inprecor*, February 5, 1979, p. 80.



Kurdish rally in Sanandaj opposes referendum.

Gerry Foley—IP/1

ent assembly, the Bazargan government is trying to put an end to the tendency of the revolutionary masses to act on their own and is trying to block them from participating in the affairs of the country to ensure that their aspirations are respected.

Instead of developing a democratic climate, without repression or censorship, in which all ideas and political programs can be expressed in complete freedom, the Bazargan government has shown that it does not have the slightest respect for the people's fundamental rights, for their political freedom, which has been trampled underfoot during the dark night of the dictatorship.

The mass media, the radio, television, and press, are subjected to very strict censorship. Political parties that criticize the government do not have the right to express themselves or to publicize their viewpoints.

By taking away these freedoms, the government is restricting all Iranians. By forcing them to choose between the old regime and the Islamic republic, it is now trying to stifle the questions that are being raised.

So far, Bazargan's provisional government has justified its existence on the pretext that it was necessary to finish off the Pahlavi dictatorship and eradicate its vestiges.

The proposed referendum now shows that the aim of the government is, in fact, to finish off the Iranian revolution and destroy the symbols of freedom that are blossoming.

Not only does the proposed referendum not allow the Iranian people to choose the form of government, but it also attempts to impede any participation by them in the decisions over the course of the new government. It is therefore a means for consolidating a regime that is against the interests of the toiling masses.

Different sectors of the exploited and oppressed masses have already begun to struggle for the kind of government they want. And that government is not the one that has been promised under the name of the Islamic republic.

The workers and unemployed, who are struggling for the nationalization of all large companies and financial establishments under workers control, have already shown through their actions what kind of government they want.

The peasants, who are struggling to oust the big landlords, seize the land, and abolish their debts and obligations, have shown what the new class relationships in the countryside must be and what kind of government must replace the Pahlavi monarchy.

The oppressed national minorities who are struggling for freedom from national oppression and for their self-determination have clearly expressed themselves, declaring "No!" to this electoral farce of the referendum.

The Iranian women who are struggling today to win equal rights have made their demands known to the future government.

The undemocratic referendum and the proposed government do not in any way answer these demands.

Instead of responding to the needs of the oppressed, the Bazargan government has held out its hand to the capitalists and big landlords to help install the "Islamic republic," a new mask for a government of the capitalists.

Instead of nationalizing the factories that the industrialists shut down, throwing hundreds of thousands of workers out of work, the Bazargan government has offered the capitalists huge subsidies.

Instead of defending the poor peasants who have been ruined by the big landlords and capitalists, the Bazargan government is trying by all means to block their struggles.

Instead of recognizing the right of the oppressed peoples to self-determination, the Bazargan government is using all the propaganda tools at its disposal to distort the real nature of their struggles. It has even sent in the "Islamic National Army" to repress them.

Instead of defending the just demands of women, the Bazargan government has given the green light to its thugs to attack the women's meetings and their peaceful demonstrations.

These are examples of what the Islamic republic holds out for the people. It is no wonder that the government wants to rally votes and try to justify its actions on the basis of an undemocratic referendum, without any prior discussion.

In the midst of all these attacks against freedom of expression, association, and the press, against the legitimate rights of the workers, toilers, youth, women, national minorities, and soldiers, government agents have begun a shameless propaganda campaign on the nature of the Islamic republic. The provisional government's aim is to foster illusions among the masses, so as to persuade them to partici-

pate in a referendum that is opposed to the interests of the people in their struggle against imperialism.

The provisional government's referendum is in contradiction to popular participation in the affairs of the country. It will therefore have no legitimacy.

By now it is clear that the Islamic republic is a government of the capitalists.

The repression against the Kurdish people and the tragedy of Sanandaj show what road the government is following to combat one of the strongholds of the revolution. They reveal the nature of this Islamic republic.

By limiting democracy and by trying to impose itself through the referendum, the government demonstrates its capitalist nature.

But today in Iran there is a new power that is rising up: the power of the workers and toiling masses of the cities and the countryside, the power of tens of millions of oppressed and downtrodden.

It is that power that can save our country from dictatorship, misery, and underdevelopment and that can build a society on new foundations.

Only the Iranian masses can guarantee the victory of that power, by extending their struggles and by consolidating their fighting organizations. Only in that way can a workers and peasants government be established in Iran.

The referendum proposed by the provisional government is designed to block the struggles of the various sectors of the oppressed people.

We are against this undemocratic referendum!

Instead of participating in this referendum, we propose building the struggles of the oppressed masses. That is the only way to defend, guarantee, and extend the gains of the revolution.

The convening of a constituent assembly is the central demand of all the toiling masses. This central demand for a constituent assembly must be raised above all in the neighborhoods, the factories, the coun-

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tryside, the high schools, and the universities.

The referendum fraud cannot prevent the realization of these demands. The setting up of a workers and peasants republic is the only solution to resolve the problems of the exploited and oppressed. Despite the referendum for an Islamic republic, the workers and toilers of Iran

will continue to fight for the establishment of such a government.

The HKS does not stand in the way of the workers and toilers participating in the referendum. But voting for the Islamic republic is not the same thing as voting for the interests of the toiling masses.

Public meetings must be organized to

discuss the necessity for a constituent assembly, as the only way to establish the unconditional sovereignty of the Iranian masses.

No to the referendum before the convocation of a constituent assembly!

No to the undemocratic referendum!  
For a workers and peasants republic!

## For Solidarity With the Kurdish Freedom Struggle!

[The following statement was issued in March by the Hezb-e Kargaran-e Sosialist (HKS—Socialist Workers Party), the Iranian section of the Fourth International.

[The translation is by *Intercontinental Press/Inprecor*.]

\* \* \*

Halt the massacre of the heroic Kurdish people!

For the immediate and unconditional withdrawal of the army from Kurdistan!

Recognize the right of Kurdistan to self-determination!

Five days of military operations by the army in Sanandaj, involving attacks against the city's inhabitants with machine guns, tanks, helicopters, and Phantom jets, have left a large number of dead and wounded.

The extent of this massacre recalls the terror of the Pahlavi dynasty. It exposes the true face of the provisional government of Mehdi Bazargan and his army, led by General Gharani. This government, which came to power as a result of the uprising of the broad masses, is conservative to the core. It cannot tolerate the just demands of the Iranian people. That is what is behind the massacre of the heroic people of Sanandaj.

The intense national oppression of the Arab, Kurdish, and Turkmeni nationalities, as well as those in Azerbaijan and Baluchistan, began with the establishment of Reza Khan's government of terror.

The domination of the bloody Pahlavi autocracy and the pillage of Iran by world imperialism have always gone hand-in-hand with the brutal oppression of the

national minorities by the central government.

Instead of building solidarity among the Iranian people, who are composed of various nationalities, the Pahlavi dynasty—both the brutal father and the criminal son—created the myth of an "Aryan race" and unleashed oppression and repression against all the national minorities, who together make up a majority of the Iranian population. The solidarity among the Iranian people that appeared during the Constitutional Revolution gave way to divisions and Persian chauvinism. Reza Khan and Mohammed Reza Pahlavi outlawed the languages and cultures of the minorities.

The general political repression in the country was especially acute among the national minorities. After fifty years of Pahlavi rule, even the leaders of the present government, who have no interest in granting the rights of the oppressed nationalities, recognize the effect of this oppression: Baluchistan and Kurdistan suffer from poverty, Azerbaijan is much poorer than the rest of the country, and the Arabs and Turkmenis have the status of second-class citizens.

Now that all these peoples are rising up, now that Kurdistan stands in the forefront of the struggle of all the oppressed nationalities in Iran, the response of the central government and its armed forces is to make use of threats, intimidation, machine-gun fire, helicopters, and Phantom jets.

Freedom from national oppression and the right to self-determination are inalienable rights of all oppressed peoples. In

Iran, the liberation of the oppressed nationalities from the yoke of oppression by the central government poses the question of life or death for imperialist domination. Without the liberation of the oppressed peoples, imperialism will maintain its domination. Just as the autocracy was strengthened on a foundation of national oppression, so freedom and democracy cannot be realized without the liberation of the oppressed nationalities.

Yes, the struggle of oppressed Kurdish people for their right to self-determination is part and parcel of the struggle to break the grip of imperialism over Iran, to realize true democracy, and to free the workers and all laboring people from the exploitation of the capitalists and landlords.

The history of the revolutionary movements in Iran has already given proof of this.

The Constitutional Revolution, which aimed to overthrow autocracy and colonialism, drew its strength from the solidarity of the workers of all nationalities. With the defeat of the Constitutional Revolution, autocracy and colonialism were reinstated. The peoples of Azerbaijan, Kurdistan, and Baluchistan and the oppressed Arab and Turkmeni peoples were put down by Reza Khan. His policies against the national minorities opened the way decisively to the consolidation of imperialist and autocratic domination.

After the Second World War, the revolutionary movements in Azerbaijan and Kurdistan unleashed an upsurge of workers and all the toilers. With the brutal attack on Azerbaijan and Kurdistan by the monarchy's repressive forces, with the defeat of the national liberation movements of these two oppressed peoples, freedom was destroyed throughout Iran. The struggle of the Iranian workers lost its momentum. When the movement for the nationalization of the oil industry developed several years later, the revolution had already lost its strongholds in Azerbaijan and Kurdistan.

It is not without reason that today, after the victory of the revolutionary insurrection and the overthrow of the brutal monarchy, all the peoples of the oppressed nationalities have begun to rise up.

Bazargan's provisional government, under the guise of fighting "separatists"



Sanandaj, site of March massacre of Kurds.

Gerry Foley—IP/I



and defending the "sacred national borders," is falsifying the reality of the revolutionary movement of the Kurdish people.

At a time when the tremors of the Iranian revolution can be felt all the way to the White House, Bazargan's statements about the Iranian borders and neighboring countries are nothing but meaningless words. At a time when the Iranian revolution has given heart to the Palestinian people and made Israel tremble, it is also profoundly affecting all the oppressed peoples of the countries in the region.

The fact is that Bazargan and the army of the central government want to separate the great revolution of the Kurdish people from the Iranian revolution, to isolate and repress it.

Today, however, everyone throughout Iran is talking about the army's bloody massacre of the people of Kurdistan. Doctors and hospital workers in Sanandaj have condemned the repression to which the Kurdish people have been subjected. A group of oil workers and of teachers have likewise denounced the attack, as have the oppressed Turkmeni people.

Everywhere, Kurdistan is being discussed. More and more people are lining up with the just struggle of the Kurdish people and giving them their support. The new year's present of the army to the people of Sanandaj was a massacre.\* But this massacre aroused everyone.

Today, in each factory, university, high school, gathering, and meeting of the working masses, we must demand an end to the massacres. It is now clearer than ever before that the army of the central government can never defend the peoples of the oppressed nationalities.

The demand for the withdrawal of the army from Kurdistan must become the general demand of all those who support the Iranian revolution and all those who are struggling against imperialism.

The oppressed people of Kurdistan must decide their own future!

The HKS is prepared to help all militant forces and organizations spread the word about the Kurdish revolution and mobilize solidarity with the Kurdish people. □

\*The Iranian new year, March 21, came during the fighting in Sanandaj.—IP/I

Yes, we voice solidarity with the victory and the hopes of the Iranian masses and the Socialist Workers Party. Your victory is our victory; your struggle is our struggle!

The Zionist mass media has tried to portray the massive Iranian revolution as a reactionary religious upheaval, to convince the Jews of Iran to emigrate to Israel and thereby strengthen the Zionists' colonial scheme.

Tell them, comrades, that to emigrate to Israel is to participate in the exploitation and oppression of the Palestinian Arab people; that they will not find security here, nor peace, nor freedom, but permanent war and insecurity. Show them, comrades, that they have nothing to fear from the Iranian revolution, but the whole world to gain.

On our part, we will do everything within our power to halt all Israeli provocations, which are designed to heighten anti-Semitism among the Iranian masses so as to get the Jews of Iran to identify with the Israeli state.

The Iranian masses have no reason to attack Jews. However, they have many reasons to consider Israel as one of their immediate enemies, an enemy that has not and will not hold back from employing all necessary means to support the stooges of imperialism and return them to their posts.

The Iranian revolution has won its first battle. But, as in all other revolutions, if it does not advance, it will slip back. The existence of a revolutionary workers party capable of mapping out a road for the advancement of the revolutionary process is a guarantee of future victories.

The Socialist Workers Party is today the only party that strives to mobilize the working masses on the basis of class independence; that demands free elections to a constituent assembly to eliminate the remnants of the monarchy and establish a workers and peasants government that will lead the Iranian masses to real independence from imperialism, to prosperity, to full democratic freedoms, to complete equality between men and women; a government that will recognize the right of national minorities to self-determination and that will move forward to socialism.

Comrades, an enormous responsibility rests on your shoulders. The entire Fourth International must mobilize to place at your disposal the necessary resources to fulfill the tasks that the Iranian revolution demands of you.

Imperialist reaction united Israel and Iran in an "unholy" alliance. Solidarity between the Arab revolution and the Iranian revolution will be the response of communist internationalists to the maneuvers of our common enemies.

Long live the Iranian revolution!

Long live the Socialist Workers Party of Iran!

Long live international solidarity between the Arab and Iranian revolutions!

February 14, 1979

## From Israeli Trotskyists

## Greetings to Iranian Socialist Workers Party

[The following open letter, scheduled for publication in the March issue of *Matzpen Marxist*, was adopted by the United Central Committee of the Revolutionary Communist League (the Israeli section of the Fourth International) and the Palestine Communist Group, which are in the process of unification.

[The translation is by *Intercontinental Press/Inprecor*.]

\* \* \*

Dear Comrades,

It is with excitement and pride that we have learned of the formation of the Socialist Workers Party in liberated Iran. After years in which you, as revolutionary Marxists, had to carry out your activities in exile, you have returned, together with tens of thousands of other political exiles, thanks to the heroic struggle of the Iranian peoples.

The importance of the Iranian revolution goes far beyond the borders of your own country. The Iranian masses have demonstrated to the masses of the Middle East and of the whole world that the most barbarous despotism, the most sophisticated weaponry, and the most diverse methods of repression are ineffective when confronted with the determination of the

masses to take their destiny into their own hands and to win their freedom and rights through struggle.

That is why the dogs of international reaction fear the influence of the Iranian revolution among all the masses of the Middle East, especially in Saudi Arabia and Egypt, where the sacrifice and determination of the masses of Iran have renewed the faith of the masses in their own strength and in the prospects for revolution.

The events in Iran have a special importance for us, as active revolutionary communists within the state of Israel. The bringing down of the Pahlavi tyranny is a defeat for one of the loyal allies of the Zionist regime and its main partner in defense of imperialist order in the Middle East. The Iranian masses have eliminated a major obstacle to the advance of the Arab revolution, and the Palestinian national liberation struggle in particular.

The Zionist regime was an active and direct partner in the repression of the peoples of Iran and in the maintenance of the notorious shah on his throne. The internationalist solidarity of the revolutionary forces of Israel will be small compensation for the crimes that have been committed against the Iranian masses in the name of the people of Israel.

## How the Revolution Came to Turkmenistan

By Gerry Foley

IRANIAN TURKMENISTAN—Both the social struggle of the peasants and the fight of the oppressed Turkmeni nationality are deepening here.

The Turkmenis have taken back all their historic land, which had been stolen from them by the big landowners and officials of the shah's regime. They have seized some 30,000 to 50,000 head of livestock, as well as the farm machinery of the landlords. They are in the process of electing councils in all the villages, as well as a central council of the Turkmeni people.

A socialist-minded leadership, loosely linked to the People's Fedayeen, has emerged and is gaining the confidence of the Turkmeni people. In particular, it has led them in the fight against the racist Persian gangs organized by the old landlords acting through the local Imam's Committees.

The Imam's Committees recently staged a savage pogrom against the Turkmeni people, and the signs of it are still visible on the headquarters of the Turkmeni council building in Gonbad-e Qabus. The metal gate leading to the courtyard is full of bullet holes, apparently made by an automatic weapon. Inside the building, all the glass in the doors is broken. Holes have been put through the walls in some places.

The Turkmeni leadership obviously has many excellent qualities. Otherwise it could not have led the struggle so successfully thus far. But it suffers from a lack of realistic political perspectives for defending the gains of the Turkmenis and leading the struggle forward. For example, the leaders of one village council told me that the peasants had not really benefited from the expropriations yet because they have no money to buy gasoline to operate the farm machinery or to get fertilizer. I asked how they thought they could obtain what they needed, and suggested that it would be quite reasonable to demand that the government provide free gasoline, since the country faces a food shortage and domestic consumption of petroleum products represents only a tiny percentage of Iran's total oil production.

The council members responded that they had not considered making demands on the government or getting support outside their area. In general, they seemed to look to the Turkmeni leadership to provide what they need, although there is no conceivable way that it can do that by itself.

The leaders, on the other hand, have little understanding of the reality that the

fate of the Turkmeni struggle depends on what happens in Iran as a whole. They thought they could exploit the contradictions between the government and the Imam's Committees to do anything they wanted in Turkmenistan, including sentencing all the local capitalists to be expropriated and jailed as enemies of the people.

This is despite the fact that the Turkmeni area is surrounded by Persian settlements where widespread racial hatred of the Turkmenis still exists. Also, the government has stationed about 500 troops in just one small Turkmeni town. At present, however, the Turkmenis view the troops as allies against the racist Persian gangs.

But the Persian forces are already beginning to show their hand. While I was in Gonbad-e Qabus, troops tried to seize about 3,000 sheep and give them back to the landowners. The Turkmeni leadership, though, is still completely unprepared politically for a confrontation with the army.

Moreover, the struggle in Gonbad-e Qabus remains quite isolated. Even in Iran, few outside the area know what the situation is. The local leadership has a certain understanding of the need to get out the facts, but apparently it doesn't feel much urgency about doing so. It thinks that revolutionary fortresses can be built among the oppressed nationalities, and after that revolutionists can sit back in those areas and wait for the revolution to advance in the rest of the country.

Only the Iranian Trotskyists are stressing that the national movements are part of the all-Iranian revolution. They make defense of the nationalities a central part of their program and propaganda.

In fact, the national movements bore the brunt of the first reactionary counteroffensive after the insurrection. With their resistance they gave the workers movement a breathing space, and now there are indications that the workers movement is reviving and moving forward again.

### A Confident People

What the Turkmeni people have already achieved should be an inspiration to oppressed nationalities the world over. The Turkmenis were so beaten down under the shah's regime that they did not participate in the movement that toppled it. But after the insurrection, they became aware that the repressive forces had simply melted away. Their old aspirations flared anew, and they took back what had been wrested from them.

Today the entire Turkmeni people—perhaps the most oppressed in Iran—is full of confidence and hope. When I interviewed the leader of one village council, for instance, all the men and boys of the village gathered to listen. Afterwards they all lined up to have their picture taken, with the obvious assurance that they had done something that really should be in the newspapers. The last thing they told me was to be sure to tell the world how much they had suffered and how much they had won.

A very strong national consciousness has developed among the Turkmeni people. That struck me as I was riding through the countryside with an elderly Russian-speaking Turkmeni, who kept pointing to the rich, flat land extending as far as the eye could see from the green, wooded foothills of the mountain chain that separates Tehran from the Caspian coastal areas. "Look," he said, "Look at our Turkmeni lands. See how vast they are, how rich, how overflowing with wheat."

This in fact is the richest agricultural area of Iran, and what happens here will probably determine whether the country as a whole is able to feed itself and overcome food shortages.

Turkmenistan is important not only for grain but for animal products as well. There are vast herds of cattle and sheep in this region. But most of the cattle appear to be in bad shape and poorly fed. Despite the fact that the area is well-suited for mechanized farming, I could see groups of people everywhere working with primitive instruments.

### Revolution Touches Smallest Villages

A Persian village I visited in the Caspian region contrasted sharply with the Turkmeni settlements. There, people are still in the grip of the landlords and moneylenders. Their annual expenses tend to be higher than their incomes. The only farm machinery was in the hands of a few well-off farmers who rented it out to the other peasants.

A laborer in that area makes about \$4 a day in the fields or in the nearby village. Many of the men cannot find work at all, and are without jobs for long periods.

The people were wary. I thought that this must certainly be one place that had been left untouched by the Iranian revolution.

Then I visited the village mosque, a bare room spread with carpets. Apparently

there was no professional clergyman, because the building was empty and open to all. On the wall there was a black-rimmed picture of a young man. One of the local teachers told me that the man was "our martyr."

He had been killed in an antishah demonstration that the villagers had held on

the highway. These peasants would have had to walk at least two miles along the rutted dirt path to reach the paved road, where they faced the guns of the shah's repressive forces. And who knows how much farther they would have had to walk to link up with other peasants.

At an earlier stage, this village had

probably been ahead of the Turkmenis. But the struggle had ebbed, probably because there was no leadership that the people could rally around.

Nonetheless, the Iranian revolution had put down deep roots even in that remote village.

April 13, 1979

## Not an Easy Task

# Tehran Regime Seeks to 'Phase Out' Revolutionary Committees

By Gerry Foley

The supreme commander of the central Imam's Committee of Iran, Ayatollah Mahdavi Khani, held a new conference on April 25, together with national police commander Col. Nasser Mojallali, to announce that the revolutionary committees would be dissolved. "Reliable" members of the committees would be incorporated into the police force.

The April 26 *New York Times* reported: "Ayatollah Khani said that all equipment now used by the komitehs [revolutionary committees] should be turned over to the police. He said that as the membership of the police force increased the revolutionary committees would be phased out and more of their members would join the police force or return to their previous occupations."

Actually, most committee members have never left their occupations. They have continued working at their regular jobs and have kept their ties with the masses of working people and poor. That is one of the reasons why both the religious leaders and the government officials are anxious to "phase out" the committees, which arose as neighborhood defense organizations and carried out the mass insurrection that overthrew the shah's regime.

Neither the committees nor the insurrection were desired by the religious leaders. The objective of the procapitalist forces in the opposition had been to save as much as possible of the police and army as a basis for rebuilding a stable bourgeois order after the ouster of the shah. Just before the uprising in Tehran, they had reached an agreement with the military commanders providing for a "peaceful" transfer of power. But they were unable to head off the mass insurrection that had been building up for months.

With the military and police forces left demoralized and mangled by the uprising, the procapitalist forces in the opposition were obliged to try to keep control of the situation by manipulating the committees.

The religious leaders appointed regional committees and a central committee to "coordinate" the local bodies. They sent mullahs and theology students into the committees to assure their "Islamic" character. They sought to purge all the politically conscious and militant elements. They also encouraged ex-SAVAK agents to come in to continue their work of repressing socialists and militant workers under the cloak of the committees.

Nonetheless, the capitalist forces have been unable to make the committees into reliable instruments of repression. There is a thin layer of reactionaries on top, but the bulk of those actually carrying out the work of these bodies are armed, revolutionary minded youth—about 5,000 in Tehran alone.

One example of the "unreliability" of the committees was an incident that happened in Tabriz in mid-April. Members of the Iranian Socialist Workers Party (HKS) were arrested for selling their paper in the streets of the city. They were taken to the committee headquarters, where there were about twenty young men with guns. These activists outspokenly opposed the arrest of the Trotskyists, and told the official who had brought them in that he had no right to interfere with the propagation of any political views. To make their point clear they all bought copies of the Trotskyist paper right under his nose.

There have been many cases when Trotskyists arrested by reactionary committee members have been able to argue with the committee and essentially win their point. So it is obvious why the government and the religious leaders want to get rid of the committees and rebuild a professional police apparatus.

The claims in the international capitalist press that the call for "phasing out" the committees represents a victory for Prime Minister Bazargan's government over Ayatollah Khomeini are false. All the capitalist forces in Iran agree on the need

to liquidate the committees.

Khomeini does want to maintain some sort of "Islamic" paramilitary organization directly under his control, but the committees cannot serve that purpose. It has already become evident what Khomeini wants. In mid-April, the Holy Warriors of the Islamic Revolution were launched with a rally at Tehran University addressed by Khomeini's chief ideologist, Abdul Bani Sadr.

The new paramilitary organization then held an openly reactionary demonstration, calling for the execution of all leftists. Further actions of this kind were held in subsequent weeks, but most were relatively small. The Holy Warriors and their orientation are not supported by more than a small percentage of those active in the committees.

It is not going to be easy for the regime to get rid of the revolutionary committees. The thousands of young fighters who seized weapons during the fight against the shah's army and police are not going to give them up readily after having had to confront the armed repressive forces barehanded.

Nor will it be easy to get the masses to accept a new police force. By late April, only a few traffic cops had reappeared in the streets of Tehran, and even these were generally ignored by motorists and pedestrians alike.

The Bazargan government and the religious leaders are far from having achieved the power to liquidate the Iranian revolution. In fact, they are beginning to lose their tenuous political grip on the masses.

Thus, it is not likely that the religious leaders and the government will be able to make the committees disappear. Instead, they risk making it clear to the revolutionary minded activists in these committees that there is a fundamental contradiction between what these bodies represent and the conservative leadership that has gotten control of them. □

# AROUND THE WORLD



## One Killed, 40 Injured as British Cops Riot

More than 40 persons were injured and more than 300 arrested when British police attacked a demonstration of 5,000 people opposing a racist National Front rally in the predominantly Asian London suburb of Southall on April 23.

One demonstrator, thirty-three-year-old Blair Peach, former president of the East London Teachers Association, died of injuries inflicted by the cops.

Most of those arrested were Asian youth. Asian organizations in Southall had called for a general strike and shop shutdown in the community to protest the National Front rally. This call was supported by numerous left groups and by the Anti-Nazi League.

Tariq Ali, a leader of the International Marxist Group, British section of the Fourth International, who is a candidate for Parliament from Southall on the Socialist Unity slate, was viciously attacked by police during the demonstration.

Ali was thrown down a flight of stairs and then forced to crawl on his hands and knees through a line of club-wielding cops. He suffered a concussion and a head wound that required four stitches to close.

The National Front is an extreme right-wing organization that calls for the expulsion of nonwhites from Britain. It is fielding 301 candidates for the May 3 elections to the British Parliament, and is carrying out a provocative campaign in Southall.

Neither Labour Party Prime Minister James Callaghan nor his Conservative challenger Margaret Thatcher condemned the police riot in Southall. They each made hypocritically "evenhanded" criticisms of the demonstrators and the National Front Nazis alike. Both the Labour and Conservative parties have put forward legislation to restrict nonwhite immigration into Britain.

Two demonstrations were called to protest the April 23 police attack. On April 28 Asian organizations, as well as the Anti-Nazi League and Socialist Unity, planned to demonstrate in Southall. On April 29 there was to be a demonstration in Brick Lane, another largely Asian community that has been the scene of National Front harassment of immigrants. That demonstration was initiated by Socialist Unity and received the support of twenty-eight other organizations.

Tariq Ali resumed his electoral campaign several days after his beating at the hands of the police. He reports that recep-

tivity to his candidacy is growing in Southall.

### W. Germans Lose Zaïre Rocket Base

After considerable criticism from other African governments, the Zaïrean regime of Mobutu Sese Seko announced April 27 that it was renouncing part of a contract signed three years earlier with a West German company providing for missile testing in eastern Zaïre.

Under the agreement, Mobutu had leased a 39,000-square-mile area to the Orbital Transport und Raketen Aktiengesellschaft (OTRAG—Orbital Transport and Rocket Company) until the year 2000. The contract gave the company virtually sovereign rights over the territory.

Despite claims by all those directly concerned that the company was only testing weather and communications satellites, there were numerous reports that OTRAG was involved in developing military missiles with the backing of the American and West German governments. (For a detailed account of OTRAG's activities in Zaïre, see a "A West German 'Cape Canaveral' in Zaïre?" in *Intercontinental Press/Inprecor*, April 24, 1978, p. 491.)

These reports were a major source of embarrassment to the West German government, as well as to OTRAG, and finally led to a de-escalation of the program in Zaïre. OTRAG has now been directed by Mobutu to halt its experimental and rocket-launching activities.

An OTRAG representative noted that "the political climate has become difficult recently and we have looked to other solutions outside Zaïre."

### Royal Guest Unwelcome in Bahamas

Growing numbers of Bahamians have expressed their opposition to the presence of the exiled shah of Iran in that island country. Mohammed Reza Pahlavi arrived in the Bahamas on March 30 from Morocco, where he had spent most of his time after fleeing Iran on January 16.

According to the *Nassau Guardian*, the shah "appears to be settling in for a lengthy stay" at his ocean-front hideaway on Paradise Island. The deposed monarch is being protected by Bahamian troops armed with tommy guns.

Opponents of the shah's presence in the Bahamas—which has a predominantly Black population—have cited his long-standing support for the racist South African regime and his violation of the human

and civil rights of the Iranian people.

The one-time "Light of the Aryans" has a family fortune stolen from the Iranian people that is estimated to be as high as \$25 billion. His presence in Morocco prompted student demonstrations against him and led Moroccan King Hassan to circulate strong hints that the shah had overstayed his welcome in that country.

The outcry in the Bahamas has come from Black rights groups, political parties, an Islamic organization, and various individuals. The Black Village Youth Association has called for demonstrations against the shah's presence.

### Massacre by Somoza's Troops

Nicaraguan National Guard troops retook the city of Estelí on April 15, after ten days of heavy fighting with guerrillas from the Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN) who had stormed the local garrison on April 5.

During the battle, dictator Anastasio Somoza's National Guard bombed Estelí from the air and imposed a reign of terror on the parts of the city it controlled. "Townspersons who took refuge in San Juan de Dios Hospital during the fighting said soldiers burst into the building Thursday [April 12], took 40 young people out and shot them," an April 16 Associated Press dispatch from Estelí reported.

After the FSLN guerrillas fled to the mountains surrounding the city, the National Guard sealed off exits to Estelí and refused to allow residents to enter or leave.

There were differing estimates on the number killed in the fighting. Residents told the Associated Press that ninety-four persons had died, while the National Guard claimed to have killed forty-six guerrillas. But it is quite likely that the toll was much higher. According to the AP dispatch, "Government sanitation teams wearing face masks burned bodies, dead animals, and garbage. Nearly every building in this city of 35,000 showed evidence of the fighting. Some were scarred by bullets, others reduced to rubble by artillery fire."

### U.S. Shipyard Strikers Return to Work

On April 23, members of United Steelworkers Local 8888 began returning to their jobs at the Newport News, Virginia, Shipbuilding and Drydock Company, thus halting a hard-fought eighty-five-day

strike for union recognition at the biggest shipyard in the United States.

Previously, steel union officials had called on strikers to go back to their jobs on April 16. They had urged acceptance of a demand by the shipyard's virulently antiunion owners, Tenneco, that strikers return to work "unconditionally."

But on April 13, several thousand members of Local 8888 met and voted unanimously to suspend the strike only on their own terms. The strikers demanded assurances from Tenneco that all union members could return to their old positions at their old rates of pay.

State and city police then backed up Tenneco's effort to crush the strike by launching a vicious attack on the strikers' picket lines on April 16. The cops also attempted to storm Local 8888's headquarters, but were driven back by the determined steelworkers. (See *Intercontinental Press/Inprecor*, April 30, p. 432.)

The police violence failed to break the resistance of the strikers, and Tenneco was forced to make a concession. On April 21 Steelworkers District Director Bruce Thrasher announced that Tenneco had reversed its position on "unconditional return," thus meeting the "membership position on return to work."

The union's decision to suspend the strike was based on the fact that 45 percent of the shipyard's 15,500 workers had already returned to work, while Tenneco had succeeded in tying up the battle for union recognition in legal proceedings that could take months or even years to resolve.

While the strike failed to secure union recognition for Local 8888, the morale of the returning strikers remains high. The workers are now preparing for another round of struggle for union rights inside the yard.

The first test of the union's ability to regroup its forces and win fresh support will be its defense of members against victimization by Tenneco.

If the strikers had followed the recommendation of union officials and returned to work "unconditionally," prospects for a future victory would be much dimmer than they are now.

### Union Leaders Jailed in Argentina

The Videla dictatorship in Argentina jailed thirty trade-union officials on April 23 in an effort to block a twenty-four-hour general strike set for April 27 to protest the regime's economic policies.

The union leaders were seized by federal police after being summoned to the Labor Ministry in Buenos Aires, ostensibly for a meeting. They were reportedly forced to sign confessions that they had violated the draconian National Security Law, which provides penalties of up to six years' imprisonment for "inciting" strikes.

Initial news reports indicate that while several Buenos Aires subway lines were shut down on April 27, most Argentine

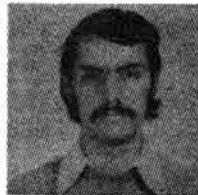
workers did not heed the call for a general strike. This was partly the result of the arrests and the threat of more repression, and partly owing to a split in the trade-union bureaucracy.

All the arrested officials were from the wing of the bureaucracy known as the "Commission of 25." The other faction, the National Labor Commission, refused to back the general strike call.

As of April 27, twenty-one of the "Commission of 25" leaders were still jailed. Eleven more unionists were arrested in Córdoba on that day.

### Rafael Awad García

Colombian Trotskyist leader Rafael Awad García died April 15 of injuries suffered four days earlier in an automobile accident in Bogotá. Awad, twenty-three years old, was a member of the National Executive Committee of the Revolutionary Socialist Party (PSR), a sympathizing organization of the Fourth International.



"Despite his youth, Comrade Awad had a considerable political career," Eduardo Medrano wrote in the April 30 issue of the PSR's newspaper *Combate Socialista*. "In fact, he played an important role in the development of Trotskyist forces in Colombia and in the formation of the PSR.

"A little after his seventeenth birthday, he joined the Bloque Socialista [BS—Socialist Bloc], a heterogeneous group that nonetheless was one of the first training grounds [in Colombia] for revolutionary Marxist fighters. . . . At the beginning of 1976 a tendency arose in the BS that sought to win that group to the Fourth International. It split away and formed the Liga Obrera Comunista [LOC—Communist Workers League]. Awad was one of its best builders. He was also a dedicated activist among the working class. His comrades recall his activity in the workers' district of Casucá in Bosa during that year."

Awad helped to lead the LOC as it fused with a number of other groups moving toward Trotskyism in 1977 and 1978. He was elected to the PSR's Central Committee and National Executive Committee at its founding congress in October 1978.

### Liberian Cops Gun Down Protesters

Monrovia, the capital of the West African country of Liberia, was shaken April 14-15 by a series of protests against proposed increases in the price of rice. About thirty demonstrators were killed by police, and nearly 400 were injured.

The ferment began after the Ministry of Agriculture proposed that the price of rice—a staple of the Liberian diet—be raised from \$22 a bag to \$30.

Opponents of the move applied for permission to demonstrate, but were refused

the necessary permit. Nevertheless, some 2,000 protesters defied the government April 14 by marching toward the Executive Mansion, where they were met by a line of police and tanks. When the demonstrators refused to disperse, the cops fired directly into the crowd.

Incensed by the slaughter, the protesters continued their actions into the following day, directing their anger against such government symbols as the Finance Ministry building and the headquarters of the ruling True Whig Party.

Between 100 and 200 soldiers were flown in by the regime in neighboring Guinea to help President William Tolbert put down the unrest. Washington also lent Tolbert a hand, flying in emergency medical supplies. (The Liberian economy is dominated by American rubber companies.)

Tolbert claimed that the demonstrations were organized by "wicked and evil men to bring chaos and disorder to the country with the eventual objective of overthrowing the government." He accused the Progressive Alliance of Liberia, which is composed largely of students, of stirring up opposition to the regime.

On April 21, Tolbert closed down the University of Liberia on the grounds that it was a "breeding ground of revolutionary ideas." Several government opponents have been arrested, and the police have begun house-to-house searches.

The protesters did win a victory, however—Tolbert was forced to cancel the price rise.

### Black Miners Strike in S. Africa

About 4,400 Black gold miners—among the most exploited of all Black workers in South Africa—went on strike in early April at the Elandsrand gold mine sixty-two miles west of Johannesburg.

Since the miners are not allowed to have their own union, they had no established body through which they could press formal demands. Some of them told reporters that one of the reasons for the strike was dissatisfaction over wage levels.

On April 8, about 800 of the striking workers rallied for several hours at a nearby soccer field, while helicopters circled overhead to intimidate the miners into going back to work.

Police reinforcements from Fochville, Carletonville, and Potchefstroom were brought in to help put down the strike.

According to a report in the April 14 weekly edition of the Johannesburg *Star*, "Groups of miners sitting on the surrounding hills were driven back into their hostels by the circling helicopter and mine security guards with dogs."

Several hundred miners expressed their anger by attacking company buildings and timekeeping equipment. Police and security guards battled with the miners for about two hours.

The strike ended shortly after this vicious police assault.

## Japan's Biggest Reactor Shut Down by Government

By Dan Dickeson

Japan's Nuclear Safety Commission (NSC) ordered a temporary shutdown of the country's largest nuclear power plant on April 13.

The NSC's decision came amidst a wave of protests touched off by news of the nuclear accident at Three Mile Island in the United States.

On April 2, antinuclear coalitions including district councils of the Sohyo trade-union federation in Fukuoka and Shizuoka demanded an immediate shutdown of the nuclear power plants in those prefectures (provinces).

The Nagasaki chapter of the Japan Congress Against Atomic and Hydrogen Bombs (affiliated to the Socialist Party) also issued an emergency appeal "for the immediate shutdown and dismantling of all nuclear reactors, and immediate decommissioning of the nuclear-powered ship *Mutsu*." The appeal noted that the *Mutsu*, now docked at the nearby port of Sasebo for repair of a radiation leak, is powered by a pressurized water reactor (PWR) that could have the same type of accident as the PWR at Three Mile Island.

In Kyoto, a stronghold of the Communist Party, the local CP council demanded that construction of a planned reactor in that prefecture be held up "pending a thorough examination of the safety questions" raised by the accident in the United States.

In Tokyo, the Liaison Council Against Nuclear Power, a coalition of several groups, issued a statement demanding the immediate shutdown of all nuclear plants, and calling for the resignation of all five members of the Nuclear Safety Commission.

On April 5, a 100-member delegation representing antinuclear groups from throughout Japan demanded to meet with the minister of international trade and industry in Tokyo. When their request for a meeting was refused, they staged an overnight sit-in in the ministry building, which received extensive publicity.

In each case, government officials responded to the protests merely by pledging to study the problem. Many hastened to point out that while nearly all of Japan's twenty nuclear power plants were supplied by American companies, none had been manufactured by the same firm that built the ill-fated plant at Three Mile Island.

Under pressure from spreading protests, however, a series of local government bodies began to openly call for a reassess-

ment of the country's nuclear development policy. In at least two towns where nuclear power plants are scheduled to be built, the mayors demanded that the central government and electric power companies suspend construction plans.

Officials in Tokyo continued to insist, however, that there was nothing to worry about. Nuclear Safety Commissioner Hideo Uchida, who had been dispatched to the United States to "investigate" the Three Mile Island accident, stated April 9 that "there is no need to alter the designs or safety regulations for nuclear power plants in our country in light of the recent accident."

But on April 12, it was reported that Westinghouse Electric Company, the American manufacturer of the PWRs used in Japan, had advised its customers of a design defect in the reactors. Faulty instrument readings could prevent the reactors' emergency core cooling systems from switching on automatically in an emergency. The company suggested that this problem could be circumvented by having reactor technicians operate the emergency cooling system by hand.

This was apparently more than officials in Tokyo felt they could explain away, under the circumstances. The following day, after what were described as thirteen hours of "intense deliberation," the Nu-



Yomiuri Shimbun  
Antinuclear protesters accost government officials in Tokyo. Banner reads: "Nukes? No thanks! Shut 'em down!"

clear Safety Commission ordered the shutdown of all eight Westinghouse PWRs in Japan until the design problem could be corrected and safe operation assured. On April 16, Oi Reactor No. 1 in Fukui Prefecture became the first operating nuclear plant ever shut down on orders from the NSC.

As it turned out, at the time of the NSC's order, Oi Reactor No. 1 was the only PWR in Japan that was actually operating. The other seven were already down, either due to technical problems or for routine maintenance work. Most nuclear plants in Japan have been plagued by equipment malfunctions and unscheduled shutdowns ever since they were installed.

The NSC's decision represents a concession to opponents of nuclear power in Japan. It puts the government and the power companies in a weaker position in the struggles to come. Power company officials expressed hope that they could come up with "adequate safety guarantees" and restart Oi Reactor No. 1 within ten days. But the burden of proof is now on them.

Electric power companies have already announced postponement of construction on two new nuclear plants in Ishikawa and Miyagi.

On April 14, in response to a call by the Tokyo Liaison Council Against Nuclear Power, more than forty groups joined to form an action coalition to build further protests aimed at shutting down all nuclear plants.

An important factor in the new upsurge of antinuclear protests has been the participation of trade unions. The official stance of the Social Democratic leadership of Sohyo (like that of the Communist Party) is to press for "adequate safeguards" rather than to demand the closing of all nuclear power plants. Nevertheless, those unions are being drawn into united actions with groups that refuse to compromise on this question.

The NSC's decision to shut down reactors that were admittedly defective means that in the impending fight over restarting the PWRs, the debate over whether to call for "safe nukes" or "no nukes" will come to the fore.

The Trotskyists of the Japan Revolutionary Communist League are demanding the immediate closing of all the nuclear plants in Japan, and disclosure of all corporate and government secrets concerning the nuclear industry. □

## Continuing Crackdown On Oppressed Nationalities in USSR

By Marilyn Vogt

The Kremlin bureaucrats' drive against the movements of the oppressed nationalities has claimed two more victims. Crimean Tatar leader Mustafa Dzhemilev was sentenced to four years' internal exile March 6 for "violating rules of administrative surveillance." And dissident Ukrainian historian Mykhailo Melnyk was found dead in his home the same day, following a police search.

For Dzhemilev, this is the fifth term he has received for championing the right of the Crimean Tatars to return to live in Crimea. The Tatars, a Turkic people, were forcibly deported from their homeland to Central Asia by Stalin during World War II and are still denied the right to return.

Dzhemilev was arrested February 8, after more than a year of persistent police pressure. After serving his fourth term, he was released from prison camp in December 1977. Throughout 1978, however, the KGB imposed special restrictions tantamount to house arrest. Dzhemilev was kept under constant surveillance, while being denied his request to live with his aged parents in Crimea. Instead, he was restricted to Tashkent—capital of the Uzbek Republic—where he had to report to the police three times a month.

In December 1978, Dzhemilev was told by the police that he was no longer subject to special surveillance. But when he went to the airport to leave Tashkent, he was apprehended by police and informed that the special surveillance was again in force.

A February 7 Associated Press dispatch from Moscow reported that Dzhemilev had renounced his Soviet citizenship and asked to emigrate to the United States because of the intense police harassment. On February 8, he was arrested.

Following his arrest, Dzhemilev began a hunger strike. He had gone on a similar hunger strike when he was arrested in June 1975, just as his third term was to have ended. That time, he continued the hunger strike for ten months, weighing only seventy-seven pounds at the time of his sentencing in April 1976.

Dzhemilev's health was seriously undermined from the ten-month protest and from the harsh conditions of imprison-

ment. He may not be able to survive a new term. According to a report in the March 8



DZHEMILEV: 4 years internal exile.

*Le Monde*, Dzhemilev was so weak that he was taken on a stretcher to the building

where his current sentence was delivered.

Soviet civil-rights activist Andrei Sakharov went to Tashkent to try to see Dzhemilev but was refused a meeting with him. He condemned the sentence, reporting that it coincided with a "reinforcement of repression against the Crimean Tatars."

On the same day Dzhemilev was sentenced, the KGB's continuing campaign against the Ukrainian Helsinki Monitoring Group led to the death of Ukrainian Helsinki Monitoring Group member Mykhailo Melnyk.

According to a March 12 Reuters dispatch from Moscow, Melnyk's body was found in his home near Kiev soon after a KGB search had been conducted there. The dispatch reported that "dissident sources" believed Melnyk had committed suicide by poisoning himself.

That same night, the KGB conducted searches in the Ukraine and in Leningrad and Moscow, of thirteen homes of other persons linked with the Helsinki groups. Some of the searches lasted all night, Reuters reported.

To date at least six members of the Ukrainian Helsinki Group have been imprisoned. Five of them have received terms ranging from twelve to fifteen years each.

## Greek Government Forced to Bury Antigay Bill

An international protest campaign has forced the Greek government to withdraw a bill that would have constituted a sharp attack on women, male homosexuals, and democratic rights in general.

The bill, drafted under the military dictatorship and revived by the Caramanlis government in mid-1978, defined prostitutes and gay men as "indecent persons," and provided a penalty of one year in prison for soliciting or "improper or provocative behavior offending public shame and decency." Under the measure, police would have had the power to force homosexuals to undergo "medical tests" for venereal disease and "therapy."

The campaign against the bill was initiated by AKOE, a recently formed gay-rights organization in Athens, which collected 250 signatures from prominent intellectuals, artists, writers, and journalists.

In addition, actions were organized in many countries. These included demonstrations in West Berlin, Stockholm, and at Greek embassies and consulates in

Perth, Ottawa, Vancouver, New York, London, and Amsterdam.

Additional pressure on the Greek government came in the form of a petition signed by 96 percent of the representatives in the lower house of the Dutch parliament, as well as letters signed by several organizations of the workers movement in Spain, including the Communist Party and the Revolutionary Communist League (LCR).

In Greece, the youth group of the CP (Interior) came out against the measure, as did several university faculty departments.

### Memo to Troops In Next Imperialist War

"In an effort to economize on replacement costs [for American combat losses during Vietnam War], the Army adopted a system whereby individuals instead of units were fed into the replacement stream. It was modeled after a system used in the auto industry to replace spare parts."—Richard A. Gabriel, in the *New York Times*, April 15.

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## Thai Army Backing Rightists in Kampuchean Civil War

By Fred Feldman

The Carter administration is using the military dictatorship of General Kriangsak Chamanand in Thailand to carry out a large-scale covert intervention on the side of the Khmer Rouge forces and other rightists in the Kampuchean civil war.

The objectives of the operation are to prevent the consolidation of the Vietnamese-backed Heng Samrin regime, deepen the disruption of the Kampuchean economy, and make possible the reinstatement of a proimperialist regime.

One aspect of the U.S.-organized drive is an effort to forge the Khmer Rouge and other rightist armed bands—which have often been at each other's throats in the past—into a single counterrevolutionary army.

The April 21 *Le Monde* reported: "Prince Sihanouk . . . said in a Hong Kong magazine that a contingent of 2,000 soldiers commanded by General In Tam, formerly prime minister under Lon Nol, has moved to the Khmer-Thai border, where he is going to unite with troops of Pol Pot to fight Heng Samrin."

Sihanouk was also cited in the April 24 *New York Times*. According to correspondent Henry Kamm, the former monarch "said that his Chinese hosts had told him that they were financing Khmer Serei soldiers to fight alongside the Pol Pot forces, who also enjoy Chinese support."

The attempt to pass off the Khmer Serei forces as being financed by Beijing is typical of the imperialist propaganda that portrays Washington and Bangkok as innocent bystanders in a "war between communists" in Kampuchea. In fact, the Khmer Serei have been controlled and financed by the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency since the early 1960s. Its core are Kampuchean soldiers who were trained by the U.S. Special Forces.

Thai military forces are also seeking to help the Khmer Rouge retain control of enclaves along the border. But Kampuchean and Vietnamese troops backing the Heng Samrin government, which has the sympathy of the overwhelming majority of Kampuchean soldiers in the civil war, are driving the rightist bands ever closer to (and often over) the Thai border. There is thus a growing likelihood that Thai forces aiding the Khmer Rouge will come into open conflict with Kampuchea and Vietnam.

"In recent weeks," the April 21 *London Economist* reported, "Khmer Rouge troops, in tight spots, have been allowed to cross into Thailand, where the Thai forces have fed them, given them medical treatment,

rearmed them and then trucked them across the border to re-enter the battle, sometimes at tactically improved positions."

In contrast, when progovernment Kampuchean soldiers are forced into Thailand in the course of battles, they are seized by Thai soldiers and interned in refugee camps.

The Thai regime is also aiding the reactionaries by herding refugees into rightist-controlled enclaves. Few Kampuchean soldiers are willing to support the Khmer Rouge terror gangs once having escaped their control. Many Kampuchean refugees indicate their preference for the Heng Samrin government, and a few have even returned to Kampuchea to fight for it.

Kamm reported from Bangkok in the April 24 *New York Times*: "Thailand wants all Cambodians who have fled here since the Vietnamese invasion to return, the Pol Pot troops in order to continue the fight, and the others to prevent their becoming an obstacle to good relations with the Cambodians resisting the Vietnam-dominated regime of Heng Samrin."

"Thailand is officially neutral," Kamm stated. "But privately, Thai officials . . . make no secret of their hope that the Pol Pot forces will continue to be a viable foe of the Vietnamese. Thailand views Vietnam's supposed striving for regional superiority with far greater concern than the cruelty of the former Pol Pot regime and wishes that regime had survived."

Like U.S. propaganda during the Vietnam War on the danger of "North Vietnamese conquest," the Thai-U.S. talk about "Vietnamese regional superiority" is code for their fear of the further extension of socialist revolution.

The fall of Pol Pot's capitalist government in January, coming on the heels of the overturn of capitalist property relations in southern Vietnam in early 1978 and advances in the Laotian revolution, threatened to bring socialist revolution to Thailand's borders. Carter and Kriangsak fear that this may inspire workers and peasants in Thailand to topple the military regime there. To forestall this is the central goal of the deepening U.S.-Thai intervention in Kampuchea.

The Thai regime's intervention in Kampuchea is no independent operation. This regime is dependent economically and militarily on U.S. imperialism. Since the 1950s, every level of government in Thailand has functioned in tight collaboration

with the CIA and the Pentagon.

During the U.S. war in Indochina, tens of thousands of Thai troops were sent to fight the liberation forces in Laos and Kampuchea. Then, as now, Thai military operations were under U.S. direction.

In January, just after the fall of the Pol Pot regime in Kampuchea, Kriangsak visited the United States. Carter's promise of increased military aid to the Thai dictator coincided with stepped-up efforts to supply the Khmer Rouge and help them control border enclaves.

Aside from selective leaks to the capitalist media, the organizers of the U.S.-Thai intervention keep it shrouded in secrecy. The aim is to hide the U.S. government's role in aiding and organizing the rightists, as well as to cover up the full extent of Thai military participation. In addition, the Thai rulers are concealing the brutal measures taken to force refugees into rightist-controlled enclaves.

The Beijing regime is playing a counterrevolutionary role in this struggle, fronting for U.S. imperialism in exchange for diplomatic and economic deals. Beijing's February invasion of Vietnam was an unsuccessful effort to force the Vietnamese to end their support to the Heng Samrin government in Kampuchea.

In the current negotiations in Hanoi to settle the "border dispute," Beijing has continued to insist that Vietnam withdraw its troops from Kampuchea. This amounts to insisting that Kampuchea be turned over to the Khmer Rouge and other proimperialist armed gangs. And Beijing has dropped hints that it would support Thailand in the event it is "attacked" by Vietnam or Kampuchea.

Above all, Beijing's actions throw a smokescreen over the U.S. role in the Kampuchean civil war—fostering illusions that the war is simply an extension of the Sino-Soviet dispute rather than a stage in the long struggle between imperialism and the Indochinese peoples.

Working people all over the world have a vital stake in insisting that U.S. imperialism and its Thai agents stop supporting reactionary forces in Kampuchea. The U.S.-Thai intervention can lead to still greater U.S. involvement—perhaps in the form of massive assistance to "democratic Thailand" against "Vietnamese expansionism."

Working people should demand that the U.S. and other governments recognize the Heng Samrin regime, and that massive aid be provided to reconstruct Kampuchea and feed its people—with no strings attached.