

Intercontinental Press

combined with **imprecor**

Vol. 17, No. 26

©1979 by Intercontinental Press

July 9, 1979

USA 75c

UK 30p



**50,000
in Tehran
Demand
Release
of Jailed
Leftists**



**U.S. Truckers'
Slowdown Wins
Broad Sympathy
in Fight
Against Rigged
Gasoline Shortage**

Imperialist Offensive Against Afghan Revolution

By Ernest Harsch

With the support of American imperialism, counterrevolutionary guerrillas in Afghanistan are fighting to overthrow the regime of Noor Mohammad Taraki and to roll back the progressive social measures that have been carried out since the overthrow of dictator Mohammad Daud in April 1978.

The former military officers, dispossessed landlords, and religious figures leading this reactionary offensive claim that they are fighting to "preserve Islam." But their real goals are economic, not religious.

Their opposition to the measures by the current government to break the economic and social power of the semifeudal landowners is fully shared by their imperialist backers in Washington, who fear the mass mobilizations of workers and peasants that have accompanied these steps.

Since the overthrow of Daud more than a year ago, peasants have benefited from an extensive land reform, in which the holdings of many big landowners have been expropriated and distributed free. About 180,000 families have already received land (out of 680,000 families who stand to gain from the land reform).

Numerous other progressive measures have been taken since the ouster of Daud. Trade unions were legalized for the first time in Afghanistan's history. All debts owed by peasants were canceled. A literacy drive was launched and new schools and medical centers were built in rural areas. Steps were taken to improve the status of women. Publication and education has been promoted in the languages of Afghanistan's various national minorities.

These measures have won the Taraki regime considerable popularity. Hundreds of thousands of persons in Kabul and other cities have demonstrated in support of the gains they have won, frequently marching under red banners and chanting "Death to imperialism!"

The Carter administration is mortally afraid of the process under way in Afghanistan. It fears that the mobilizations of the Afghan workers and peasants could push the Taraki regime even further than it intends to go and lead to the overthrow of capitalism in that country. That would provide a powerful new impetus to mass struggle throughout central and southern Asia, particularly in the neighboring countries of Iran and Pakistan.

Although the White House has made little secret of its hostility toward the regime in Kabul, it has been forced by the

widespread antiwar sentiment in the United States to move cautiously. The American imperialists have masked their backing for the counterrevolutionary guerrilla forces by funneling assistance to them through other powers, particularly the military junta of Gen. Zia ul-Haq in Pakistan.

Armed clashes have been reported in a number of Afghanistan's provinces, and on June 23 erupted for the first time in Kabul itself. But the most sustained rightist activity has been in the east, along the border with Pakistan.

The two main rightist groups, the Hezb-i Islami (Islamic Party) and the Jamiati Islami (Islamic Brotherhood) operate from bases in Pakistan. Opposition leaders in Pakistan have accused Washington of channeling funds to the guerrillas through that country and of encouraging the Zia regime to launch a vicious propaganda campaign against Kabul.

The reactionary Afghan forces have also received backing from capitalist forces in Iran, acting through Islamic religious figures, and have been allowed to set up an office in the Iranian city of Mashad.

The Khomeini-Bazargan government in Iran fears that the example of progressive social measures in Afghanistan could help

to further deepen the Iranian revolution itself. It has denounced the Taraki regime as "anti-Islamic" in an attempt to undercut sympathy for the Afghan revolution among the Iranian masses and to block the tendency of the two revolutions to reinforce each other.

However, the most immediate threat to the Afghan revolution comes from the U.S.-backed operations in Pakistan.

Besides providing aid to the guerrilla forces, the Zia regime has threatened direct military intervention against Afghanistan. In June, the number of Pakistani troops along the 1,000-mile border with Afghanistan was reinforced and large-scale military maneuvers were carried out. Kabul has accused Pakistani forces of making several incursions across the border.

Some progovernment figures in Pakistan have openly called for an invasion of Afghanistan, under the pretext of coming to the aid of "Islamic freedom fighters."

The danger of such threats is clear.

A victory for imperialism in Afghanistan would not only lead to an overturn of many of the social gains that have been won there, but would also deal a blow to the Iranian revolution. And given Moscow's close ties with Afghanistan (which borders on the Soviet Union), an American-backed attack on that country could risk escalating into a dangerous nuclear confrontation.

Opponents of American imperialist intervention abroad should be fully aware of the dangers in Afghanistan. They should be ready to mobilize against any attacks on the Afghan revolution. □

'Weber' Ruling—Victory for U.S. Workers

By Jesse Trumbull

The entire labor movement in the United States scored a major victory June 27 when the Supreme Court ruled 5 to 2 against a suit by Brian Weber, a white lab technician, challenging affirmative-action programs for Blacks and women on the job.

By pressuring the court into rejecting the Weber suit, American workers won an important class battle, blunting the ruling class's offensive to divide the working class and weaken the unions.

George Meany, the president of the American Federation of Labor-Congress of Industrial Organizations (AFL-CIO), called it "a victory for all who believe in racial justice and who are committed to private voluntary action to end discrimination."

For Blacks in particular, the ruling was one of the most significant civil rights decisions since the Supreme Court outlawed school segregation twenty-five years ago.

Benjamin Hooks, the executive director

of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), declared on the day of the ruling that the court decision was "fundamental to the work force because it means labor can move forward in affirmative action."

The specific target of the Weber suit had been an affirmative-action program negotiated by the United Steelworkers of America (USWA) at a Kaiser Aluminum plant in Gramercy, Louisiana. To attempt to overcome continued job discrimination at the plant, the union had initiated a plan providing that half the openings in a craft training program were to be filled by Black and women workers. (See *Intercontinental Press/Inprecor*, May 20, p. 530.)

Like affirmative-action programs in general, the one at Kaiser Gramercy sought to help Black and women workers attain equality on the job, through special measures that compensated for the discriminatory handicaps, past and present, that they are shackled with. By responding to

the special problems faced by the most oppressed strata of the work force, affirmative action helps to weaken the ruling class's divide-and-rule policies, in which race and sex discrimination play an important part.

In 1974, Weber, who is employed at the Kaiser plant, filed a court suit against the union and the company, falsely claiming that the program constituted "reverse discrimination" against white males. Two lower courts upheld his suit.

That suit was part of a more general drive to roll back affirmative action gains of the last decade in the United States. Although Kaiser was technically a target of the suit, Weber boasted that top Kaiser executives were secretly cheering him on.

If the Supreme Court had ruled in favor of Weber, it not only would have scrapped the affirmative-action program at Kaiser Gramercy, but would have immediately threatened other programs negotiated by the USWA, which cover nearly a million workers. Similar plans in other industries would have been invalidated. Since the program was part of a union contract, its overturn by the court would likewise have marked a further infringement on union bargaining rights.

Realizing the threat that *Weber* posed to the American labor movement, many unions around the country went on record against *Weber* and organized rallies, meetings, and other actions to help build support for the fight to defend affirmative action. This was something new in the American labor movement. Even the conservative leadership of the AFL-CIO, which earlier had opposed affirmative action, was compelled to change its position.

This broad trade-union opposition to *Weber*, coming on top of the strong campaign by virtually every Black, Latino and women's organization, was a key element in the Supreme Court decision. In 1978, the same court had ruled in favor of a similar suit by Allan Bakke throwing out affirmative-action programs in higher education. The lack of significant labor involvement in the fight against *Bakke* had made it easier to do so.

The justices of the Supreme Court are no more partisans of affirmative action today than they were a year ago. But their decisions are not made in a social vacuum. The anti-*Weber* position taken by significant labor forces was able to generate enough pressure to convince them to retreat.

The court ruling does not mark a final victory for the struggle for affirmative action. It just means that the battle can go forward on more favorable terrain.

It can spur the labor movement, along with Blacks, Latinos and women, to fight on a new scale for goals, quotas, and meaningful affirmative-action plans to fight against discrimination, unify the working class, and strengthen the unions.

In This Issue

Closing News Date: July 2, 1979

FEATURES	692	Role of Oil in World Capitalist Economy —by Jon Britton
NICARAGUA	676	"Revolutionary Fever" Spreading —by Fred Murphy
	677	Solidarity With the Struggle of Nicaraguan People—Statement by Fourth International
	678	U.S. Hands Off Nicaragua!—Statement by Socialist Workers Party
GHANA	676	More Generals Executed
IRAN	680	50,000 in Tehran Demand Release of Antishah Fighters
PERU	680	Assembly Rejects Charges Against Blanco
KAMPUCHEA	681	Ieng Sary: Alliance With Rightists Preceded Fall of Pol Pot—by Fred Feldman
	682	"Far Eastern Economic Review" Interview With Ieng Sary
PUERTO RICO	684	The Face of U.S. Colonialism —by José G. Pérez
PHILIPPINES	685	Rice "Surplus" Workers Can't Afford to Buy
USA	686	Millions Angered Over Gasoline "Shortage" —by Will Reissner
FRANCE	687	15 Million View TV Debate With Stalinists —by F.L. Derry
ITALY	688	CP Takes Up Delicate Question of "Trotskyism"
	689	1,500 Attend Fourth International Meeting in Turin
	690	Trotskyists Assess Election Results
CZECHOSLOVAKIA	691	Interview With Petr Uhl
	691	Free the Imprisoned Dissidents!
NEWS ANALYSIS	674	Imperialist Offensive Against Afghan Revolution—by Ernest Harsch
	674	"Weber" Ruling—Victory for U.S. Workers —by Jesse Trumbull
DRAWINGS	679	Anastasio Somoza; 683, Ieng Sary—by Copain

Intercontinental Press (ISSN 0162-5594)
Intercontinental Press, P.O. Box 116, Village Station, New York, N.Y. 10014. Published in New York each Monday except the first in January and third and fourth in August.

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

Editor: Mary-Alice Waters.

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

Managing Editor: Michael Baumann.

Editorial Staff: Dan Dickeson, Gerry Foley, Ernest Harsch, Fred Murphy, Will Reissner.

Business Manager: Harvey McArthur.

Copy Editor: David Martin.

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

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

Signed articles represent the views of the authors, which may not necessarily coincide with those of Intercontinental Press. Insofar as it reflects editorial opinion, unsigned material stands on the program of the Fourth International.

To Subscribe: For one year send \$24.00 to Intercontinental Press, P.O. Box 116, Village Station, New York, N.Y. 10014. Write for rates on first class and airmail.

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

For air-speeded subscriptions to Australia: Write to Pathfinder Press, P.O. Box K208, Haymarket 2000. In New Zealand: Write to Socialist Books, P.O. Box 3774, Auckland.

European Subscribers: For air-speeded subscriptions write to Intercontinental Press, P.O. Box 50, London N1 2XP, England. Britain and Ireland, send £9.00 for one year. Continental Europe and Scandinavia, send £13.00 for one year. For airmail from London send £19.00. Address subscription correspondence to Intercontinental Press, P.O. Box 50, London N1 2XP, England.

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

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

Copyright © 1979 by Intercontinental Press.

'Revolutionary Fever' Spreading in Nicaragua

By Fred Murphy

Having failed to secure the sanction of the Organization of American States for a military intervention in Nicaragua, the Carter administration has launched diplomatic maneuvers aimed at buying time for the Somoza dictatorship and splitting the coalition of anti-Somoza forces.

Washington is searching for some means of keeping the National Guard and Somoza's apparatus intact while isolating the Sandinista National Liberation Front. But there is scant possibility that Carter's moves can succeed, owing to the depth of the revolutionary upsurge and the massive support the Sandinistas enjoy among the Nicaraguan workers and peasants.

Washington's "four-point plan" was outlined by *New York Times* Washington correspondent Graham Hovey in a June 27 dispatch:

- Resignation of President Somoza.
- Appointment of a constitutional junta or council by the Nicaraguan Congress. . . .
- Immediate appointment by that junta of a broadly based provisional administration, made up of distinguished Nicaraguans from all democratic groups.
- Immediate contact by the provisional administration with the junta appointed last week by the Sandinistas and an effort to form the most widely based provisional regime possible.

Times Managua correspondent Alan Riding provided more details of this elaborate scheme in a June 28 report:

[Somoza's] successor would then name a five-member provisional government that would include representatives of the National Guard, the Liberal Party [Somoza's apparatus], the Broad Opposition Front, the Superior Council of the Private Sector and the Roman Catholic Church. Having won diplomatic recognition from Washington, this government would invite the Sandinistas' junta to nominate two additional members of the government of "national unity."

Despite its well-publicized calls for Somoza's resignation, Washington actually wants the dictator to continue his reign of terror, weakening the armed rebels militarily and exacting a heavy toll in civilian casualties while support for a "compromise" is lined up among the capitalist opposition. According to a July 1 dispatch by Riding, U.S. Ambassador to Nicaragua Lawrence Pezzullo "has indicated that the existence of a democratic regime in the future must be guaranteed in Nicaragua before General Somoza's departure."

As of July 2, Carter's proposals had all been rebuffed. The Broad Opposition Front and the Supreme Council of the Private Sector—the two main capitalist groups—

refused to go along because they realize that Somoza is all but finished and fear being linked in the eyes of the masses to Washington's last-ditch moves to rescue the dictatorship.

The Sandinista-sponsored provisional government rejected the U.S. scheme out of hand. "We consider the plan direct intervention in the affairs of the Nicaraguan people," Sergio Ramirez of the provisional government declared June 29. Rebel spokesman Fr. Miguel D'Escoto added June 30: "It is really a shame the United States never showed as much solicitude for the entire population of Nicaragua so mercilessly slaughtered by the army it trained and equipped."

For almost a week, Somoza's warplanes rained a steady barrage of rockets, bombs, and even drums of gasoline on the working-class districts of Managua. The terror bombing forced the Sandinistas to retreat from the capital on June 28.

On July 1 the Red Cross announced that it had run out of food for 150,000 refugees in Managua and had only a three days' supply of medicine. Outbreaks of typhoid and typhus were reported in the city.

Elsewhere, rebel forces continued to hold virtually all the northwest of the country and were maintaining their positions along the Costa Rican border. The United

Press International reported July 2 that armed residents of Rivas had laid siege to the National Guard garrison there. Rivas is a southern provincial capital that has been a key objective of the Sandinistas.

Demoralization is spreading among Somoza's officer corps. "It is we who are in the real danger, not the boss," a Guard colonel told Stephen Kinzer of the *Washington Post*. "He has his millions and his airplanes ready to flee at any moment. But we, the leaders of the Guard, are the ones who will have to face the firing squad."

On June 26 the National Guard launched a "recruitment drive" aimed at dragooning young peasants, some only thirteen years old, into the fight against the Sandinistas. "The drive reflected both the large number of casualties suffered by the Guard in recent weeks and its need for thousands of new recruits before being able to retake cities now in rebel hands," a June 26 dispatch to the *New York Times* said.

In the Sandinista-held areas, "revolutionary fever is spreading," *Times* correspondent Riding reported June 27. "As rebel columns take town after town in the provinces, they are mobbed by young volunteers, many gripped by the romance of overthrowing a dynasty that began before their parents were born." □

More Generals Executed in Ghana

The Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC), which seized power in Ghana June 4, executed six senior military officers June 26 as part of its "housecleaning exercise" against corrupt officials.

Two of those executed were former heads of state: Gen. Frederick Akuffo, who came to power in July 1978 and whose regime was overthrown by the AFRC; and Gen. A.A. Afrifa, who was a key figure in the 1966 CIA-backed coup against Kwame Nkrumah and who served as head of state for several months in 1969 (after leaving the military, Afrifa became a wealthy businessman).

The others were also prominent officials: a former foreign minister and former army, navy, and air force chiefs.

All were found guilty by military tribunals of enriching themselves through corrupt practices while in office.

Another seventeen persons, most of

them senior military officers, received prison sentences ranging from five to fifteen years.

The executions bring to three the number of former military dictators executed by the AFRC. Ten days earlier, Gen. I.K. Acheampong, who ruled Ghana from 1972 to 1978, was taken before the firing squad.

Although the executions have been greeted with enthusiasm in Ghana, the generals ruling nearby Nigeria have reacted with alarm. Shortly after Akuffo and Afrifa were brought to justice, the Nigerian junta cut off all oil supplies to Ghana in protest. Ghana depends on Nigeria for 80 percent of its oil imports.

The imperialists have also shown concern. The West German government expressed "deep dismay" at the executions, as did the British imperialists, the former colonial rulers of Ghana. □

Solidarity With the Struggle of the Nicaraguan People!

[The following statement was issued June 20 by the United Secretariat of the Fourth International.]

* * *

The struggle of the people of Nicaragua against the hated Somoza dictatorship, arms in hand and led by the Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN), has now reached a decisive stage that will determine the future of the Nicaraguan revolution and of the Central American revolution as a whole.

The brutal dictatorship has been deeply wounded. Defending itself with all its strength, it has resorted to the most barbaric measures. Facing the broadest and best-organized Sandinista offensive to date, Somoza is trying to get out of the deep crisis that has touched the very center of his power, Managua. He is launching indiscriminate, truly genocidal attacks on the civilian population. Innumerable criminal massacres and reprisals, leaving a toll of tens of thousands dead, wounded, and homeless and unlimited destruction and suffering today mark the daily life of this martyred people of Central America. The decades-long, heroic struggle against the Somoza dynasty, which today has reached the stage of revolutionary combat, demands more than ever the support and solidarity of the proletariat of all countries, so that the offensive against the dictator can end in victory.

This international campaign for the Nicaraguan people must focus on exposing the fundamental role of the imperialists, especially the U.S. imperialists, in backing up and keeping alive the Somoza regime. The hypocrisy of President Carter's "human rights" campaign is clear to all. He supports with all the power of the United States the bloodiest tyrannies of the semi-colonial world so as to preserve U.S. imperialist domination. This support has reached the point of public threats of military intervention made by representatives of the State Department. What could be seen yesterday with the shah of Iran today is being shown again today with Somoza—U.S. imperialism is the last defender of the most brutal regimes.

But it is not only U.S. imperialism that is guilty of supporting Somoza. European and Japanese imperialism—the latter especially in recent years—are among those who do so in various ways, such as maintaining relations with the dictator. It is also necessary to denounce the role that the racist and reactionary regime of Israel



DICTATOR SOMOZA

has been playing in recent months as the intermediary of the Yankee imperialists in supplying arms to Somoza's National Guard.

The imperialist forces have an interest in backing Somoza and in fact are the basic support of his regime at a time when even important sections of the national bourgeoisie in Nicaragua have withdrawn their support from him. Somoza and his regime form the cornerstone of imperialist domination in Central America. Through finance, industry, and trade, Somozaism is tied by a thousand threads to imperialist enterprises. This network is crowned by a powerful "lobby" in the U.S. Congress itself, through which the dictator has had a permanent source of all kinds of military aid.

The downfall of Somoza would represent a victory not only for the Nicaraguan people. Its repercussions would be enormous in a region where imperialism is especially entrenched but that is now beginning to find its historic unity in the revolutionary processes that are under way. The 20 million inhabitants of Central America will feel at first hand the hot wind of the Nicaraguan revolution.

The peoples of Guatemala, El Salvador, and Honduras will be greatly inspired in their battles against their own brutal and oppressive dictatorships, which have found in Somozaism one of their essential

pillars of support. And just as the peoples of these countries totally identify with the destiny of the Nicaraguan masses, the dictators of these three countries see Somoza's battle as their own and are collaborating with him to the greatest possible degree to prevent his defeat, which would be theirs as well.

For the imperialists, it is vital to defend the counterrevolutionary bastion of Somozaism. The base for launching military campaigns against Cuba and for stepping up repression against other popular movements is in danger. The imperialists' economic plans (renovation of the Central American Common Market), military plans (the Central American Defense Council), and political plans (overall stabilization) are all on the verge of disaster. So with Somozaism in its death agony it is absolutely clear that the most audacious counterrevolutionary maneuvers can be expected from the imperialists.

The bourgeois sectors of Costa Rica and Panama—including their leading groups—hope to prevent the struggle in Nicaragua from having revolutionary consequences for their own countries. The bourgeoisies in other neighboring countries—such as Mexico, Venezuela, Colombia, and the Andean Bloc in general—are reacting in the same way. It is quite easy for them to appear "liberal" beside the butcher of Managua. They also are seeking to get in position to intervene later to neutralize the revolutionary process and put a brake on its dynamic of permanent revolution.

It is necessary to solidarize with the combat of the people of Nicaragua and their vanguard, the FSLN, to prevent their isolation.

Revolutionary Dynamics and Strategy

In the fight to bring down Somoza the broadest possible tactical agreements are justified. It is even valid to participate with bourgeois forces in such alliances. But it is extremely dangerous to compromise with these forces in establishing a provisional government. Only the classes that have struggled the hardest against Somoza and his dynasty for decades—the proletariat and the peasantry—can guarantee the true anti-imperialist victory that Somoza's overthrow would represent.

The National Patriotic Front was created recently as a means of revamping the old Broad Opposition Front. Participating in it alongside the FSLN are such anti-Somoza bourgeois forces as those represented by Alfonso Robelo, Sergio Ramirez,

Violeta de Chamorro, and other figures even better known in the world of the big bourgeoisie. This cannot be the means through which the Nicaraguan people achieve all their political, economic, and social demands. The bourgeois forces have every interest in halting the struggle for the overthrow of Somoza at a strictly political level without taking up all the social demands of the people.

A process of permanent revolution has begun in Nicaragua. The struggle against the Somoza dictatorship naturally improves the conditions for fighting for the social demands of the people (land, jobs, democratic rights). Only the independent struggle of the workers and poor peasants can guarantee their attainment. Clarity is also necessary for rejecting any direct imperialist intervention or an intervention through imperialism's agents in Guatemala and El Salvador. All this means a fight—by necessity a regional one—against capitalist economic dependence. Finally it means a class break with the bourgeoisie, and the upholding of independence and autonomy for the workers, so as to advance from here on along the road to victory.

In fact, if a bourgeois-type solution is reached after the overthrow of Somoza, it will be impossible for it to bring about a stable bourgeois-democratic regime. The economic power of the dictator Somoza himself, the longstanding difficulty the bourgeois sectors have had in putting together an opposition that could present a credible alternative, and the depth of the economic and social crisis all give the immediate demands of the masses a tendency to go rapidly beyond the bounds imposed by capitalist property in land and industry. To prevent this dynamic, the bourgeois opposition sectors—with the open agreement of the FSLN leadership—are promoting "national unity."

To gain the satisfaction of all their demands, the poor peasants and the workers will have to assert their independence in face of the plans of the so-called national bourgeoisie, reinforce their own organizations, and launch a merciless struggle against the imperialist exploiters and their representatives in Nicaragua. In doing this they will follow the example of the Cuban people.

Great new changes and historic perspectives are possible in the present situation in Nicaragua and Central America. At this crucial time in the struggle against the Somoza dictatorship, the Fourth International is calling for a vast, worldwide campaign of solidarity with the Nicaraguan people, their organizations, and the FSLN—their main fighting spearhead.

All the trade-union and political organizations of the international workers movement should be in the front ranks of this solidarity campaign with the Nicaraguan revolution, condemning and denouncing the enormous crimes that the Somoza

dynasty is multiplying to keep itself in power in its death agony. The only support that remains to it is that of imperialism, especially the Americans and their direct agents, the dictators of El Salvador and Guatemala.

The Nicaraguan people will need—and the international proletariat will provide—the broadest internationalist solidarity in order to defeat their powerful imperialist enemies.

Worker militants, democrats, and revolutionists will fight for the organization of broad campaigns and mobilizations:

- To send messages of solidarity to FSLN delegations in various countries.

U.S. Hands Off Nicaragua!

[The following statement was issued June 27 by the Political Committee of the Socialist Workers Party. We have taken the text from the July 6 issue of the *Militant*, a revolutionary-socialist newsweekly published in New York.]

* * *

Secretary of State Cyrus Vance's June 21 call for the Organization of American States to send a "peacekeeping force" to Nicaragua was an attempt to organize U.S. military intervention under cover of the OAS banner. To give this scheme an aura of legitimacy, Vance has also called for a transitional government to replace the discredited regime of Anastasio Somoza and to organize "free elections"—under the aegis of the U.S.-dominated OAS, of course.

But the normally obedient OAS rejected Vance's demand. The OAS, which Che Guevara accurately described as the U.S. "ministry of colonies," has not changed its nature. Many of its member governments, however, fear the consequences of association with Washington in a military enterprise like that. They are aware of the gigantic swell of popular support across Latin America for the workers and peasants of Nicaragua who are fighting to topple the hated Somoza dictatorship. The masses rightly suspect Washington of trying to thwart the objectives of the freedom fighters.

Having been rebuffed so far by the OAS, the U.S. rulers are seeking other pretexts to justify military intervention. That's why the Carter administration is sounding the alarm about Cuban "intervention" on the side of the Sandinista freedom fighters. In Carter's eyes, it has been quite all right for Washington to intervene in Nicaragua for forty years to keep the tyrant Somoza in power—but it is another matter entirely for revolutionary Cuba to show solidarity with the Nicaraguan workers and peasants, who are the vast majority of the Nicara-

- To send material aid, such as medications.

- To organize boycotts by port workers of all shipping to Nicaragua, in the tradition of solidarity with Vietnam displayed by the Australian stevedores and with Chile by those in Sweden.

- To demand the immediate breaking of relations with the dictator.

Down with the Somoza dictatorship!

Not one cent, not one weapon for Somoza!

Imperialists out of Nicaragua and Central America!

For a workers and peasants government in Nicaragua!

guan people.

Carter knows that a military operation aimed at crushing the struggle against the dictatorship will be unpopular among working people in the United States as well as in the rest of the Americas. And for good reason. The record shows that U.S. military interventions are not aimed at helping to establish democracy, but at crushing mass struggles that challenge imperialist domination.

The most recent use of U.S. military forces in Latin America took place in 1965, when 24,000 marines and army troops were sent into the Dominican Republic after a popular uprising toppled the old military dictatorship there. In the name of saving American lives, preventing another Cuba, and assuring an orderly transition to democracy, the dictatorial regime of Joaquin Balaguer was installed. With Washington's support, Balaguer lasted for twelve years, an era in which the Dominican workers and peasants continued to suffer poverty and repression while U.S. corporations continued to reap their profits. While Balaguer is gone now, the Dominican people remain mired in poverty and exploitation due to U.S. domination of their economy. And the threat of further U.S. military moves hangs over their heads if they attempt any basic change.

Washington has intervened in Nicaragua on numerous occasions. The country was invaded by the U.S. Marines in 1912 and was under virtual U.S. military occupation from then until 1933. Beginning in 1926, the marines were supplemented by the Nicaraguan National Guard, which was built up with U.S. military aid and which was at first commanded by American officers.

The U.S. intervention in the 1920s and early 1930s was aimed at putting down a struggle for democratic rights and national independence led by César Augusto Sandino (for whom the present-day Sandi-

nistas are named). Sandino was murdered in 1934 on the orders of National Guard chief Anastasio Somoza, father of the current dictator.

The Somoza family—among the most bloody despots in Latin American history—has ruled Nicaragua ever since, terrorizing and plundering the country and ensuring vast profits for U.S. corporations there.

Carter's Goals

Carter's goals today are the same as those the U.S. rulers pursued in Nicaragua in the 1920s and in the Dominican Republic in 1965: to preserve the country as an arena for profit-hungry capitalists and to prevent the example of the workers' and peasants' struggle from spreading.

As long as it seemed likely that Somoza could drown the rebellion in blood, U.S. officials were content to murmur a few words about human rights while secretly funneling arms to Somoza. Now that Somoza's regime seems shaky, Vance has called for him to step down, so that a change of faces can take place at the top, leaving the essential character of the government the same.

But Washington fears that this will not divert the Nicaraguan masses from pressing toward their goals. Even modest concessions to the masses tend to encourage their struggles, producing broader challenges to the completely outmoded social order. Washington's only real guarantee against this is the use of U.S. troops.

The Carter administration demanded intervention once it seemed that the Nicaraguan workers and peasants, despite the slaughter of thousands of their brothers and sisters by Somoza's killers, were not to be deterred from putting an end to the hated dictatorship. This struggle poses a threat to the stability of shaky U.S.-dominated regimes throughout Latin America, and particularly to the nearby military rulers of Guatemala, El Salvador, and Honduras.

Carter wants young working people from the U.S. to fight and die to preserve the foundations of Somoza's tyranny. The U.S. rulers want to preserve the hated National Guard, to salvage Somoza's corrupt political machine, and to guarantee the security of Somoza's vast wealth.

The Cuban Road

The Nicaraguan workers and peasants are fighting to be rid once and for all of Somoza's National Guard. They want the right to speak, to demonstrate, to form unions and other organizations that represent their interests—even if that threatens the pocketbooks of some U.S. corporations.

They are fighting so that the ill-gotten gains of the Somozas—including more than half of the country's industry, commerce, and farmland—can be made public property and used for the benefit of the

exploited and oppressed.

They are fighting for land to be distributed to those who work it, instead of being monopolized by U.S. firms and a handful of Nicaraguan land barons.

They are fighting for education for Nicaragua's children, good housing for all, health care for the masses, and jobs at decent pay.

And they are fighting to win real independence for their country, so long plundered and treated with racist contempt by U.S. imperialism.

To accomplish those things they want a government that represents the workers and peasants, not the imperialists and a handful of capitalist hangers-on.

That's why the Nicaraguan workers and farmers are inspired by the example of Cuba—and why the U.S. rulers have reason to fear that the workers and peasants, if freed from the tyranny of Somoza's military-political machine, will attempt to follow the Cuban road.

The Cubans accomplished the very things that the Nicaraguan masses are fighting for today. They smashed the brutal Batista dictatorship. And they used their newly won freedom to fight for a workers and peasants government independent of the capitalists and their political representatives, a government that led them in taking the land and overturning capitalism, organizing and arming the toilers to defend their revolution from imperialist attacks.

Cuba's Call for Solidarity

The identification of the Nicaraguan workers and peasants with the Cuban revolution is being deepened by the Cuban revolutionary government's internationalist solidarity with their struggle. The Cubans have not caved in to U.S. threats. They have refused to remain silent in face of imperialist moves against the revolutionary fighters.

On June 19, the Cuban Ministry of Foreign Relations declared that Carter was "trying to rescue the bloodiest and

most corrupt criminals in all of Latin America" and called for mobilization around the world "to prevent a new and criminal imperialist armed intervention in Nicaragua. . . ."

"The intervention of the United States would create a Vietnam in the very heart of Latin America," the Cubans declared. "The Nicaraguan people and those of Central America would undoubtedly rise up against such foreign intervention, and their other brothers in Latin America and the Caribbean could not remain indifferent to such genocide."

While Carter attempts to twist Cuba's principled stand into an excuse for U.S. moves against the Nicaraguan workers and peasants, the Cubans' demonstrated readiness to put their lives on the line in defense of anti-imperialist struggles is an important factor in the imperialists' hesitations. If the U.S. rulers nonetheless decide to attempt to land troops in Nicaragua, Cuba may also be the target of military moves.

Working people in this country should heed the Cuban call for international action to block imperialist moves against Nicaragua. We have no stake in helping Carter save Somoza's blood-drenched National Guard from destruction. We have no interest in pouring the fruits of our labor into propping up dictators.

The Nicaraguan masses who are fighting under the leadership of the Sandinista National Liberation Front are our brothers and sisters. Their enemies are our enemies. If they win their battle for freedom, all of our struggles will take place on more favorable terms. If they are set back, our rulers will move with new confidence to attempt to crush other struggles of working people around the world and to press their attacks on our rights and gains at home.

Demonstrations, rallies, and public meetings to oppose U.S. intervention in Nicaragua are on the order of the day.

U.S. hands off Nicaragua!

U.S. hands off Cuba!

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

- Enclosed is \$24 for a one-year subscription.
- Enclosed is \$12 for a six-month subscription
- Enclosed is \$6 for a three-month subscription.
- Please send information about first-class and airmail rates.

Name _____

Address _____

City/State/Zip _____

Country _____

Make checks payable to

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

50,000 in Tehran Demand Release of Antishah Fighters

More than 50,000 persons gathered at a June 29 Tehran rally sponsored by the People's Fedayeen organization.

The rally, which was held to honor guerrillas killed in the struggle against the shah, demanded the release of the more than forty Fedayeen now in prison. A speaker also condemned the jailing of nine members of the Socialist Workers Party of Iran (HKS) who have been held without charges in Ahwaz for a month.

In addition to the nine HKS members arrested in late May and early June for their support to the struggle of the Arabs of Khuzestan for their rights, seven more HKS members were arrested in Ahwaz on June 23 while circulating petitions calling for the release of the first prisoners.

According to reports from Iran, all seven are in Karoun prison and are in good condition. The newly jailed Trotskyists are Haid Adib, Kambiz Lajejardi, Firooz Farzinpour, Mahmoud Kafaie, Hojabr Khosraji, Ali Hashemi, and Kia Mahdevi.

A June 24 press conference protesting their arrest and demanding the release of all sixteen HKS members was widely reported in Iran.

While the Bazargan-Khomeini government has been stepping up repression of its left-wing critics, opposition to the government's policies is also increasing. Large demonstrations took place at the end of June in Khorramshahr and Abadan calling for the release of Arab prisoners who have been held since May, when the central government sent troops to Khuzestan Province to put down protests by Arabs and other workers.

There have also been sitdown strikes in factories over economic demands.

As a result of the growing campaign to free the Iranian Trotskyists, *Mardom*, the weekly newspaper of the Iranian CP (Tudeh Party), has finally come out in their defense after a long period of silence.

Sheikh Ezzedin Hoseini, the recognized leader of the Kurdish people, has added his voice to those protesting political repression. His statement noted that since the repeated protests against the jailing of the Fedayeen, the HKS members, and Arabs have gone unanswered, "we call on the Bazargan government to immediately and unconditionally release these people or to publicly state the charges against them."

Prominent members of the Writers Association also issued a statement calling the jailings "a serious attack on the achievements of our revolution, on freedom of political parties, freedom of expression, freedom of writers, and freedom of assembly."

The writers added that "by arresting

nine socialists [from the HKS] the government is trying to prevent the propagation of socialist views and deny socialists their democratic right to put a different point of view before the people."

Two dozen professors from the Polytechnic University also issued a statement calling for the release of the Trotskyist prisoners.

Protests from around the world against the arrests of Iranian Trotskyists have been sent to the Iranian government. Bala Tampoe, general secretary of the Ceylon Mercantile Union, sent a letter to Bazargan protesting the arrest of HKS members, oil workers, and steelworkers in Khuzestan. Tampoe noted that "the revolutionary mass uprising of the people of Iran against the Shah of Iran and his hateful

proimperialist regime was greeted with enthusiasm by my Union, as well as the vast majority of the people of Ceylon. . . ."

While the sixteen imprisoned HKS members are apparently not being mistreated, one of the original nine prisoners, Mahsa Hashemi, is seriously ill with a bleeding ulcer.

Protests demanding the release of the oil workers, steelworkers, Fedayeen and sixteen HKS members are needed from supporters of the Iranian revolution around the world.

Telegrams should be sent to Prime Minister Mehdi Bazargan, Office of the Prime Minister, Tehran, Iran, with copies to the HKS newspaper *Kargar*, Post Office Box 41/3586, Tehran, Iran. □

Peru Assembly Rejects Charges Against Blanco

The Peruvian military dictatorship has been forced to drop its attempt to prosecute Trotskyist leader Hugo Blanco on a series of charges ranging from "wrecking and sabotaging production" to "attacks on public security and public tranquility."

Blanco, a deputy in Peru's Constituent Assembly, was arrested on June 8 but released on the orders of the Assembly's Executive Committee. As a deputy, Blanco is supposed to enjoy immunity from prosecution unless the Assembly decides otherwise.

On June 27 the Rules Committee met and voted to reject the charges the regime had brought against Blanco, thus ending the case. The only "evidence" the military had presented of Blanco's alleged crimes was his travels around Peru as part of his duties as an Assembly deputy.

The Rules Committee, dominated by deputies from two big bourgeois parties, the APRA and the PPC, acted under the pressure of an international defense campaign and broad support for Blanco inside Peru. Thirty-five of the 100 deputies in the Assembly had signed a petition demanding a special session to take up the charges against the Trotskyist leader.

Telegrams and messages demanding that the charges against Blanco be dropped had poured in from Europe, Canada, the United States, and Latin American countries. Four members of the Canadian Parliament from the New Democratic Party (Canada's labor party) and several Canadian trade-union leaders signed such a telegram.

In the Dominican Republic, the news of Blanco's arrest was featured prominently in newspaper and radio reports. Several

major Dominican trade unions, including the metalworkers, signed a statement demanding Blanco's release. The miners union at the big U.S.-owned Rosario gold mine paid for a newspaper advertisement urging further messages of protest.

At the special Constituent Assembly session held June 27, Blanco and other leftist deputies introduced a motion reaffirming that Blanco was absolved of the military's charges and demanding sanctions against the minister of the interior and the political police for Blanco's unlawful arrest on June 8. The motion was tabled by the bourgeois majority.

The Peruvian government is continuing its repressive efforts aimed at breaking the nationwide strike by 140,000 public-school teachers that began June 4. As of June 28, the strike remained nearly 100 percent successful despite the fact that some 350 leaders and activists of the teachers union, SUTEP, remained in jail in various parts of the country. More than 1,000 teachers have been dismissed from their jobs, and on June 18 SUTEP General Secretary Horacio Zeballos was seized by State Security agents after addressing a teachers rally at San Marcos University in Lima.

Zeballos's imprisonment could gravely threaten his health. The teachers' leader suffers from diabetes, pancreatitis, and arthritis as a result of his six months' incarceration in 1973 in the jungle prison of El Sepa.

Telegrams and messages demanding the release of Horacio Zeballos and the other SUTEP activists should be sent to Peruvian embassies or to Gen. Francisco Morales Bermúdez, Palacio Presidencial, Lima, Peru. □

Ieng Sary: Alliance With Rightists Preceded Fall of Pol Pot

By Fred Feldman

The chief international spokesman for the former Khmer Rouge government of Kampuchea has made available further information about the Khmer Rouge's part in the imperialist drive to contain and roll back the Indochinese revolutions.

The new details came in an interview given to correspondent Nayan Chanda by Ieng Sary, deputy prime minister of Kampuchea under Pol Pot. Chanda's report of the conversation appeared in the June 22, 1979, *Far Eastern Economic Review*. (See p. 682 for text of interview.)

The interview took place in Colombo, Sri Lanka, where Ieng Sary attended a meeting of "nonaligned" nations. At the insistence of the governments of Malaysia, Indonesia, and Singapore—all members of the U.S.-dominated Association of Southeast Asian Nations—the gathering recognized Pol Pot's regime as representing Kampuchea, even though it controls virtually no Kampuchean territory.

In previously published interviews with correspondent Henry Kamm of the *New York Times* and R.-P. Paringaux of *Le Monde*, Sary described the Khmer Rouge's counterrevolutionary alliance with forces of the former Lon Nol regime and the Thai military dictatorship. (See *Intercontinental Press/Inprecor*, June 11, p. 568, and June 18, p. 590.)

The prime aims of this alliance, Sary made clear, are to force Vietnam to withdraw its troops from Kampuchea and to install a proimperialist government there. He called for more imperialist aid to the Khmer Rouge, which has been badly battered by Kampuchean government and Vietnamese forces in recent months.

In his talk with Chanda, the Khmer Rouge leader reiterated the willingness of the Pol Pot forces to help preserve capitalism in Kampuchea.

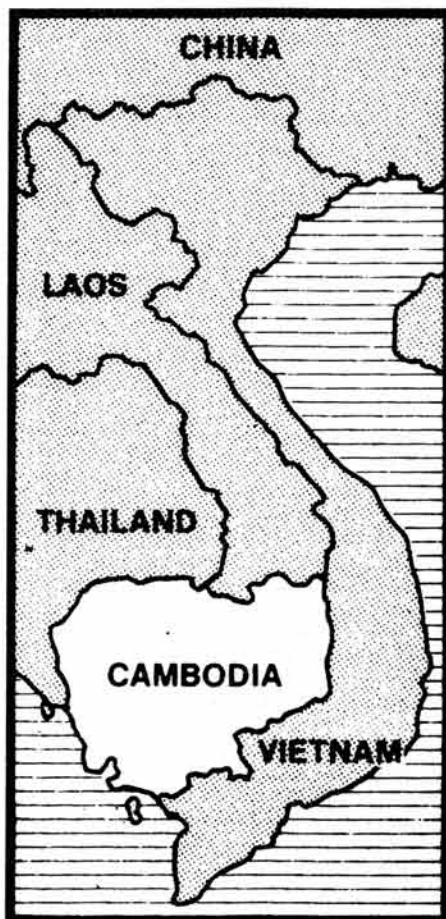
The interview placed the counterrevolutionary front forged in Kampuchea in the context of what Chanda called "a broader Indochinese conflict."

According to Ieng Sary, the Thai government "is unwaveringly behind Democratic Kampuchea. The Thai Government understands that a neutral and independent Kampuchea as a buffer means their own security."

And he told Chanda, the "Asean countries are helping us a lot."

Sary "confirmed that some Khmer Serei groups have been fighting the Vietnamese in Kampuchea side by side with Pol Pot forces," Chanda said.

"In the past the Khmer Serei considered us to be their Number One enemy. But now



the Vietnamese aggressors have become the enemy Number One," Sary told Chanda. "We are willing to forget the past and I hope that others too forget the past to join in a national patriotic united front."

Chanda noted that the Khmer Serei rightists "were once backed by the American CIA to harass Prince Norodom Sihanouk's government and later to fight the Khmer Rouge." Today the Khmer Serei are headed by In Tam, former prime minister of Kampuchea under Lon Nol. In Tam now lives in exile in the United States.

Pol Pot's spokesman revealed that the Khmer Rouge is also working with CIA-organized forces fighting the Pathet Lao regime in Laos.

Veteran U.S. organizers of the CIA's 1964-73 "secret war" in Laos (such as Edgar Buell) are now overseeing "refugee camps" in Thailand. From these bases veterans of the CIA-built private armies launch raids against northwestern Laos. The counterrevolutionary forces are based in a section of the Meo nationality that is

economically linked to U.S. and French imperialism through the opium trade.

Ieng Sary "claimed that anti-Vietnamese resistance is growing in Laos among minority hill tribes, Lao from the plains and Lao exiles uniting 'to fight Vietnamese domination.'" ("Vietnamese domination" is the counterrevolutionary's term for the close alliance the Laotian government has forged with the Vietnamese workers state to fend off imperialist attacks.)

Ieng Sary explained to Chanda that the Pol Pot regime's political and military ties with forces opposed to the socialist revolution in Vietnam long predated the January 1979 overthrow of the brutal Khmer Rouge dictatorship.

According to Sary, apart from Kampuchea the most serious resistance to Hanoi in Indochina is coming from . . . rebellious hill tribes in Vietnam's Central Highlands organized by Fulro [Front Uni pour la Libération des Races Opprimées—United Front for the Liberation of the Oppressed Races]. He confirmed what Western intelligence analysts have long suspected—that the Khmer Rouge has been collaborating with Fulro, which was once backed by the French and Americans: "The Fulro approached us for cooperation—to exchange intelligence, military experience and get guerrilla warfare training."

However, following the overthrow of the Khmer Rouge regime it has obviously become difficult for them to supply Fulro with food and ammunition: "On the contrary, they supply us with the powerful poison which only they know how to produce. Once it enters the body it immediately coagulates blood and leads to death." He claimed that in February-March Fulro killed some 200 Vietnamese soldiers in Ban Me Thuot, Pleiku and the Kontum area.

As Chanda noted, this was far from the first indication of the Pol Pot regime's solidarity with proimperialist military operations in Vietnam. Elizabeth Becker, a correspondent who visited Phnompenh in the early part of December, reported in the December 31, 1978, *Washington Post* on a conversation with a high Pol Pot official:

No one that I met during the trip wanted to admit to any killings—not even the commander of the Cambodian forces fighting against the Vietnamese on the border.

Pin was the commander of Cambodian troops fighting against the Vietnamese soldiers in bordering Tay Ninh Province. Earlier this year, Western journalists had visited that Vietnamese province and photographed villagers who had been beheaded, disemboweled and mutilated in the border war.

I asked Pin why his troops engaged in such atrocities. "That was not us," he claimed. "It was probably the national minorities uprising in Vietnam, the FULRO (the mountain people) and

the Kampuchean Krom (ethnic Cambodians who live in Vietnam.)"

Pin's reference to the decades-old proimperialist FULRO as a "national minorities uprising" indicated where the Pol Pot regime stood on support to the counterrevolutionary bands in Vietnam.

Vietnam's action in pouring troops into Kampuchea to help topple Pol Pot put a stop to Khmer Rouge attacks along Vietnam's border. It also broke the supply lines the U.S.-backed FULRO had forged through Kampuchea.

These gains did not mark an end to the imperialist drive against the Indochinese revolutions, but shifted the center of action for the counterrevolutionary alliance from the Vietnamese-Kampuchean border to the Thai-Kampuchean border. The stakes in the battle are no longer the preservation of the proimperialist Pol Pot regime, but protection of the Thai military dictatorship.

Ieng Sary's interviews are intended to prepare international public opinion for further imperialist moves against Vietnam and the new Kampuchean government.

At a meeting of Southeast Asian capitalist foreign ministers June 29, Singapore's Foreign Minister Sinnathanby Rajaratnan indicated those moves.

Using the imperialist campaign of lies about refugees from Vietnam as a pretext, he called for making Vietnam "a culprit and an international pariah."

"The second part of the proposal would be to 'bleed the Vietnamese in Cambodia,' Mr. Rajaratnan added. He said the Cambodians fighting the Vietnamese invaders should be regarded as patriots rather than as forces fighting for the regime of former Prime Minister Pol Pot" (*New York Times*, June 30).

U.S. imperialism—the dominant economic, military, and political power in the capitalist countries of Southeast Asia and thus the driving force in the counterevolu-

tionary alliance—is stepping up its demands for the withdrawal of Vietnamese troops from Kampuchea and the reinstallation of a proimperialist regime.

At the June summit meeting in Vienna between Carter and Brezhnev, the U.S. government openly demanded that the Kremlin pressure Hanoi into dropping its support for the new Kampuchean regime:

"Carter appealed in his toast tonight for the Soviet Union's ally, Vietnam, to withdraw its troops from neighboring Cambodia," reported the June 18 *Washington Post*.

At the same time, the June 18 issue of *Time* reported that "in Washington, American officials insisted that a settlement of the Cambodian situation ought to be a precondition of any further discussions," on establishing diplomatic relations with Vietnam.

The imperialists have been tightening the economic screws on Vietnam as well. The scope of the economic boycott was indicated by the April 9 *U.S. News and World Report*:

Now, the Cambodian venture has cost Hanoi most of its foreign economic aid with the exception of that from the Soviet bloc and Japan.

Hanoi, which borrowed 50 million dollars from the World Bank in 1978 for irrigation projects, wants more loans for coal mining, power development, railroad rehabilitation, industrial reconstruction and oil production. It is the bank's policy, however, to hold up loans if political conditions are tense. . . .

Most Western investors and creditors are shunning Hanoi. American chambers of commerce in Asia have withdrawn their support for early normalization of relations between Hanoi and Washington. U.S. and European bankers do not even want to discuss credits.

Another brutal aspect of the economic sabotage of the Indochinese revolutions is the refusal of proimperialist bodies such as the United Nations to help the Kampuchean people meet the growing danger of a devastating famine.

Hun Sen, the twenty-eight-year-old foreign minister in Heng Samrin's government, discussed the need for international help to overcome food shortages in an interview with Nayan Chanda that also appeared in the June 22, 1979, *Far Eastern Economic Review*:

He said his government has made requests to all friendly countries (so far only 17 countries recognise the new regime) for emergency aid, but very little has come yet.

His government has requested aid from international organisations, Sen said, but only the International Democratic Women's Organisation has responded positively. The International Committee of the Red Cross has been contacted, "but we're still waiting for their visit." Referring to their international and humanitarian organisations, Hun Sen bitterly said: "They say they would like to help Kampuchea but they don't have the means. They only talk and promise but nothing has come."

The Thai military dictatorship continues to step up its attacks on Kampuchea. The Heng Samrin government claimed June 11 that Thai troops are occupying part of the country. The Beijing Stalinists have threatened to come to the Thai rulers' "defense" if forces supporting the Heng Samrin government strike back against the occupiers. In an attempt to avoid clashes with Thai troops, progovernment forces in Kampuchea have been treating a strip of territory along the border as a "no man's land."

In late June, Thai troops carried out a brutal assault on thousands of Kampuchean civilians who had sought refuge from Pol Pot's gangs in Thailand. About 45,000 were forced by Thai troops into the desolate and heavily mined strip of territory that borders on Thailand. More than 300 were killed.

Although most were able to find their way into government-controlled territory, about 10,000 are reported to be trapped in the mine fields and forests along the border, without food, and suffering from epidemics of several diseases. □

'Far Eastern Economic Review' Interview With Ieng Sary

[The following interview with Ieng Sary, deputy prime minister in the deposed Pol Pot regime of Kampuchea, was conducted in Colombo, Sri Lanka, by *Far Eastern Economic Review* correspondent Nayan Chanda. We have taken the text from the June 22 issue of the *Far Eastern Economic Review*.]

* * *

The door of the plush Suite 803 at the Lanka Oberoi Hotel opened slowly and a young Khmer peered at the visitor suspiciously until another face appeared from behind to voice approval and let the visitor in. Then, a smiling Ieng Sary, clad in a

smart, steel-grey Mao tunic, greeted this correspondent courteously, poured tea and offered a selection of pastries. But throughout the interview the young Khmer guard sat on the edge of a divan, watching the door. The 50-year-old, French-educated vice-premier of the fallen Pol Pot regime, which has been accused of killing millions of Kampuchean, does not lack enemies.

However, Sary would like all his Kampuchean enemies to forget the past and unite against the most recent common enemy—the Vietnamese. During the interview, Sary revealed that present cooperation is not confined to former Khmer enemies like the right-wing Khmer Serei operating from Thailand but also extends to rebellious

tribesmen in Vietnam.

Sary said the anti-communist tribal insurgent group in Vietnam, Front Uni pour la Liberation des Races Opprimées (FULRO),* is now supplying Khmer Rouge guerillas with poison to use on arrows and on *punji*-stick booby traps. The former vice-premier in charge of foreign affairs, who has spent about a decade manipulating guerilla warfare from the shadows, also claimed that anti-Vietnamese resistance is growing in Laos among minority hill tribes, Lao from the plains and Lao exiles uniting "to fight Vietnamese domi-

*United Front for the Liberation of the Oppressed Races—IP/I

nation."

In recent months the Lao Government has accused China of making use of Lao exiles such as former neutralist leader Kong Le and Vang Pao to organise opposition to the Pathet Lao regime. Although Sary refused to provide any names, his statement appears to be the first confirmation that Lao exiles are being drawn into a larger Indochinese conflict. "In Laos," Sary claimed, "people's discontent is smouldering. One day it is going to flare up."

According to Sary, apart from Kampuchea the most serious resistance to Hanoi in Indochina is coming from the Jarai and other rebellious hill tribes in Vietnam's Central Highlands organised by Fulro. He confirmed what Western intelligence analysts have long suspected—that the Khmer Rouge has been collaborating with Fulro, which was once backed by the French and the Americans: "The Fulro approached us for cooperation—to exchange intelligence, military experience and get guerilla warfare training."

However, following the overthrow of the Khmer Rouge regime it has obviously become difficult for them to supply Fulro with food and ammunition: "On the contrary, they supply us with the powerful poison which only they know how to produce. Once it enters the body it immediately coagulates blood and leads to death." He claimed that in February-March Fulro killed some 200 Vietnamese soldiers in Ban Me Thuot, Pleiku, and the Kontum area.

According to Sary, a quarter of Kampuchea is under Khmer Rouge control and a quarter under the Vietnamese-backed Heng Samrin regime, and fighting is going on over half the country. On the western front, Sary said, the Pol Pot forces' unlikely allies are the anti-communist Khmer Serei groups which were once backed by the American CIA to harass Prince Norodom Sihanouk's government and later to fight the Khmer Rouge.

In an interview with this correspondent, Sihanouk had revealed that some 2,000 Khmer Serei led by In Tam were cooperating with the Khmer Rouge. Although Sary refused to divulge the names of his new allies, saying that "they have asked us to keep them secret," he nevertheless confirmed that some Khmer Serei groups have been fighting the Vietnamese in Kampuchea side by side with Pol Pot forces.

"In the past the Khmer Serei considered us to be their Number One enemy. But now the Vietnamese aggressors have become the enemy Number One." While admitting that in some places there is so far no full understanding with the Khmer Serei, he expressed optimism about future cooperation. "We are willing to forget the past," he said, "and I hope that others too forget the past to join in a national patriotic united front." In order to convince his erstwhile

enemies of his genuine intentions, Sary has made a grudging admission that there were "excesses" in killing while the Khmer Rouge were in power, promising a gentle and liberal regime once the Vietnamese-backed regime has been thrown out.

Wrongly considering city people to be enemies, Sary said, some cadres in village cooperatives set up with people from urban areas "did not give medicine to the sick people though there were medicines, some



IENG SARY: "Thailand and Asean countries are helping us a lot."

people were made to work hard though they were not in a position to do so. Some cadres even forbade people to grow maize or sugar cane around their houses as it was considered to be a sign of individualism. Those who had grown them were not even allowed to eat them."

When it was pointed out that this description did not square with consistent reports of large-scale killings, Sary's aide, Thioun Prasith, who sat through the interview, interjected sharply: "You have to lack some common sense to believe that 3 million people—almost half the population—have been killed." Sary added: "It is true that a million people were killed during the war (1970-75)."

Pressed to give an estimate of how many might have been killed under Pol Pot's regime, Sary said: "Several thousands." But he immediately went on to add that revenge killings and excesses were nothing compared to the Vietnamese effort to "subvert our party and government." There was a clear hint that the killings were largely related to efforts to weed out suspected Vietnamese agents from the party.

Sary now wants all the Khmers, even Heng Samrin supporters, to forget the past and unite to fight the Vietnamese. The

Communist Party of Kampuchea, he says, is ready to efface itself for the sake of unity with all groups and personalities, including Sihanouk. When this correspondent pointed out that Sihanouk considers the "Pol Pot-Ieng Sary regime" to be his Number One enemy, Sary replied: "You know him, he is like that." But he added: "By his patriotic sense he will certainly come in the direction of struggle."

According to Sary's prescription for the future, after a united front has rid the country of the Vietnamese presence there will be general elections supervised by the United Nations to form a new government. In the new order the economy would be mixed and the bourgeoisie would have a role to play. But he failed to answer how victims of the Khmer Rouge, once duped by united front tactics, would be persuaded to believe them again. He only hoped that, like the Khmer Rouge, others would "forget the past to start afresh."

Sary was also reluctant to go into detail about the Khmer Rouge's relationship with Thailand, which, he admitted, is vital for the guerilla war they are planning for the future. "Thailand and Asean countries are helping us a lot," he remarked. Although he did not go into specifics, he indirectly confirmed reports that, with the tacit approval of the Thai Government, the Khmer Rouge has been buying food, clothes, medicines and other essentials from Thai merchants along the border.

Asked about reports that the Thai Government is tilting back towards a neutral position by allowing arms-carrying Soviet flights across Thailand, Sary said vehemently: "No, no, the Thai Government permits Soviet cargo overflights but never allows them to carry arms." Then, after a pause, he conceded that it was impossible for the Thai Government to check the nature of the cargo.

In any case, Sary says, the Thai Government is "unwaveringly behind Democratic Kampuchea. The Thai Government understands that a neutral and independent Kampuchea as a buffer means their own security. It is for this consideration and for humanitarian reasons that they permitted our people to enter Thailand when driven out by the Vietnamese aggressors." Thioun Prasith hastened to add that this was only a temporary situation, for the Democratic Kampuchean forces would soon recover lost ground.

Correction

An error appears in the item in last week's issue (p. 661) explaining the background to Trotsky's unfinished introduction to a planned book entitled *War and Peace*. The fourth article Trotsky intended to include in the collection was "On the Threshold of a New World War," August 9, 1937, (in *Writings 1936-37*).

Puerto Rico—the Face of U.S. Colonialism

By José G. Pérez

[The following article appeared in the June 18 issue of *Perspectiva Mundial*, a Spanish-language revolutionary-socialist fortnightly published in New York. The translation is by *Intercontinental Press/Imprecor*.]

* * *

Vieques, Cerro Maravilla, the nationalist prisoners—these are the topics making headlines in Puerto Rican newspapers today. They stand as symbols of how the U.S. government imposed and still maintains its colonial domination over Puerto Rico.

Vieques is the largest of a group of islands adjacent to Puerto Rico that forms part of the territory of the country. It is 29 kilometers long and 6 kilometers across at its widest point. Of Vieques's 13,000 hectares of land, more than 10,000 are occupied by the United States Navy, which uses this island of 10,000 people as a target for artillery practice.

This is more or less how it has been ever since the Second World War. Things got worse a few years ago, however, after protests forced the Navy to halt its target practice on Culebra, another small Puerto Rican island. Since then the people of Vieques have pressed and fought to make the Navy stop its "war games" on their island as well.

The fishermen of Vieques, who cannot earn their living whenever the Navy is carrying out its exercises, have been in the vanguard of the movement. They have occupied beaches and sailed into firing range to obstruct the maneuvers.

The first occupation, in February 1978, aroused such support among the Puerto Rican people that even the colony's governor demanded that the war games be stopped. As a result of this, President Carter was forced to personally order the suspension of maneuvers.

In January of this year the Navy began its games once again, but again called them off after protests. Finally, in mid-May, some 1,200 Yankee Marines landed on Vieques. In the course of their training exercise, thirteen Puerto Ricans were arrested, including a journalist, an elderly woman, and three religious ministers.

Puerto Rican Governor Carlos Romero Barceló commented that the recent events prove "the total unsuitability of Puerto Rico's present political status. . . . Our nominal political status as a 'commonwealth' bears many of the vestiges of outright colonialism." It should be noted that this governor is so rabidly pro-Yankee



Some 1,200 U.S. marines invade the Puerto Rican island of Vieques May 16 in "naval exercise" that led to arrest of thirteen protesters.

that he is pushing for the formal annexation of Puerto Rico as one more state of the United States; that's why he talks about "many vestiges" instead of outright colonialism.

Frame-up and Murder

The Cerro Maravilla case involves the use of agents provocateurs against the independence movement. In mid-1978, Governor Romero Barceló declared that proindependence forces were going to launch a wave of terrorism.

Just as the governor had predicted, there arose a so-called Armed Revolutionary Movement (MRA), which claimed responsibility for several guerrilla actions. On July 25—the eightieth anniversary of the Yankee invasion of Puerto Rico—three members of the "MRA" fell into a police ambush. They were supposedly on their way to blow up the transmitter of a television station located in Cerro Maravilla.

Two young patriots, Carlos Soto Arriví and Arnaldo Darío Rosado, were killed. The third member of the group, Alejandro González Malavé, suffered minor injuries.

It turned out, however, that González Malavé was a cop, and had been the main instigator and perpetrator of the various crimes. It also turned out that the team of "MRA" members had not even brought

any explosives with them to blow up the transmitter.

The Puerto Rican government did everything it could to cover up what had really happened. An official investigation exonerated the police involved. The killers were declared heroes. The governor personally intervened to halt an investigation by the U.S. Justice Department, while at the same time he publicly denied any prior knowledge of the cops' plans.

Nine months after the murders, however, the governor was forced to reverse himself and admitted that he had indeed had prior information about the Cerro Maravilla ambush.

At the same time, the Justice Department resumed its investigation into the murders.

Free the Four Nationalists!

Four Puerto Rican nationalists have been in U.S. prisons for more than twenty-five years. Lolita Lebrón, Rafael Cancel Miranda, Oscar Collazo, and Irving Flores were jailed for carrying out armed actions in support of Puerto Rican independence. They are the longest-held political prisoners in the Americas. A fifth nationalist, Andrés Figueroa Cordero, was released from prison in 1977 when authorities believed he was about to die of cancer. He

succumbed in Puerto Rico three months ago.

Release of the four prisoners is the universal demand of all Puerto Ricans, regardless of their political views. Prisoners convicted in Puerto Rico for similar actions were released years ago.

For more than a year, Carter administration sources have been leaking rumors that the nationalists are about to be released, often implying that they will be exchanged for four American citizens serving sentences in Cuba, among them CIA agent Lawrence Lunt.

The nationalists say they will only accept unconditional freedom, not any kind of exchange or parole.

It's obvious why the U.S. government spreads such rumors—to appease the growing sentiment, both in Puerto Rico and the United States, for the release of the prisoners.

Recent articles in the bourgeois press say that it is not a matter of exchanging prisoners, but rather of "reciprocal and unilateral humanitarian gestures" by Cuba and the United States. If that's the case, Carter ought to release the nationalists at once, since Cuba is freeing not four, but four hundred political prisoners each month.

But Carter and his predecessors have not freed the nationalists, because they do not want to. And this brings us to the relation between Vieques, Cerro Maravilla, and the nationalist prisoners.

An Exploited Colony

The U.S. monopolies have more than \$18 billion invested in Puerto Rico, totally dominating the island's economy. In 1977 (the most recent year for which figures are available), some \$2.2 billion in net profits was extracted from Puerto Rico, breaking all records. If those imperialist profits had been distributed among the workers of Puerto Rico, it could have meant wage increases of more than 40 percent. And these figures do not include the profits that were reinvested in Puerto Rico.

Between 1970 and 1977, profits extracted from Puerto Rico by Wall Street quadrupled, while the real per capita Gross National Product of the island remained stagnant.

"Official" unemployment in Puerto Rico is nearly 20 percent. But if the "economically inactive" population is added—persons able to work who do not seek jobs because they know they will not find any—real unemployment stands at approximately 40 percent. If those who are underemployed are also counted—those who work a very limited number of hours—it turns out that a large majority of Puerto Rican workers suffer unemployment or underemployment. And this leaves aside more than one-third of the Puerto Rican population that has been forced to emigrate for economic reasons.

Vieques, Cerro Maravilla, the prisoners.

The brutal yoke of colonialism is imposed by the imperialists and their servants through violence and threats of violence.

What is this "game" of troops invading Vieques if not a demonstration of what would happen to all of Puerto Rico if it rebelled against the empire? What are the victims of Cerro Maravilla and the nationalist prisoners, if not a warning from Carter and Romero Barceló of what could

happen to anyone who fights to free Puerto Rico from colonial bondage?

The truth is that in Puerto Rico colonialism is not a "vestige," but the system in force. And no matter how much the Yankee imperialists and their Puerto Rican stooges insist that the independence movement is only a tiny minority, the actions of Carter and Romero Barceló show that the colonialists view it as a real danger. □

Hungry Workers Can't Afford to Buy It

Rice 'Surplus' in Philippines

News of a major rice surplus in the Philippines has been hailed as a tribute to the agricultural policies of the Marcos regime. But the April 27 *Philippine Liberation Courier* reports that working people have had little to celebrate in the achievement of "self-sufficiency" by capitalist methods.

The world market price for rice is currently lower than the cost of production in the Philippines. Thus the surplus cannot be exported at a profit. But because the government failed to allocate sufficient funds for construction of grain warehouses, much of the crop has been left in unsheltered storage facilities. What is not shipped out before the approaching monsoon season will be lost.

As always under capitalism the existence of this "surplus" means not that people in the Philippines have all the rice they need, but only that they cannot afford to buy all that has been produced.

"Statistics on food intake and nutrition," the *Courier* reported, "prove that increased productivity has not meant that Filipino people are now eating more or better quality food. In fact, the reverse is true."

Why? Because to offset the losses incurred from spoilage and from exporting rice at below cost, the Marcos regime has raised the price on rice sold at home.

As part of its campaign to boost rice production, the regime set up a system of cheap credits to encourage rice growers to switch to capital-intensive methods of farming. While this scheme did lead to an overall increase in productivity, its main beneficiaries were corporate farms, sugar plantations that switched to growing rice, and the few relatively prosperous farmers who could borrow enough to buy agricultural machinery and fertilizers.

But for poor farmers, the vast majority, the government rice projects have been a disaster:

"Poor peasants, lacking sufficient funds to buy the recommended quantities, have tried to use 'some' fertilizer, 'some' insecticide, enough to drive them hopelessly into debt but not enough to affect the size of their harvest. Many have, as a result, lost their lands."

And this is hardly accidental. The regime's new Agricultural Incentives Act was specifically designed to attract corporate investment in agriculture. Agribusiness concerns are encouraged to take over peasants' small holdings, often through the institution of contract farming.

"Contract farming" is nothing new to Filipino peasants. According to the *Courier*, "Farmers in Mindanao where Dole, Del Monte, and other agricultural giants are expanding pineapple and banana production, have learned that it means being forced to sign incomprehensible papers which, for a token payment, permanently deprive them of control over their lands. The alternative to signing is usually protracted government-sanctioned harassment by corporation employees. Losing their lands, the so-called partners in contract farming can only hope to become a part of the grossly underpaid rural labor force or join the swelling ranks of the unemployed."

A record rice harvest results in higher prices and poorer diets for Filipino workers, while much of the crop is left to rot, and peasants go bankrupt. What a tribute to Marcos' agricultural policies. □

Still Available Complete Back Files (Unbound) Intercontinental Press

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

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

Millions Angered in U.S. Over Gas 'Shortage'

By Will Reissner

One of the lesser casualties of the mammoth gasoline lines that are dotting the American landscape is President James Carter. A Gallup poll released at the end of June reports that only 29 percent of the American people approve of the way Carter is handling his job.

It is worth recalling that when public revulsion forced Richard Nixon out of office in August 1974, the final poll before his resignation indicated that his approval rate stood at 24 percent.

But the anger at the contrived gas "shortage" goes far beyond dislike for the president's performance. There is a deep-seated sense of outrage sweeping the United States.

Working people are angry at the oil companies for their flagrant profit-gouging and the artificial gas shortage. And they are angry at the government and capitalist politicians for letting the oil companies get away with it.

Stuart Eizenstat, Carter's chief adviser on domestic affairs, was warned by New York Mayor Edward Koch that the American people are in "the worst political mood since Vietnam and, in some cases, even worse because it's more immediate."

Steve Lawrence, who covers the gas crisis for the *New York Daily News*, contrasted the present sentiment with the mood during the last gasoline shortage, which occurred in 1974. Today, he notes, "the mood has turned ugly—furious, deadly, in fact. People do not believe that the reasons for the current gasoline shortage are clear at all. And they want revenge."

A June 26 *Wall Street Journal* editorial called the attention of its readers to the situation of "people being killed in gasoline lines and gunshots ripping through truck cabs," and warned that "the social fabric of this society is stretched tauter than anytime in a decade."

People are furious, in Lawrence's words, because they "think the government is in the hip pocket of the oil companies."

Working people's view that the government is acting in the interests of the oil companies is absolutely correct. They know the gas "shortage" is a form of blackmail for higher prices and they see the government is unwilling to lift a finger to force supplies onto the market.

The oil companies say that the shortage is due to increased consumption and the Iranian revolution, which supposedly cut supplies to the U.S.

But New Yorkers used 2 percent *less* gas in May than a year ago and face mammoth lines. U.S. oil imports are up 3.5 percent over a year ago.

Federal officials have acknowledged that national gasoline production is "roughly the same" this year as last, while the refiners are releasing less to gasoline stations.

Although the federal government claims to be perplexed over what happened to the remaining gasoline, working people know.

"Ask anybody on a gasoline line," Steve Lawrence writes in the *Daily News*, "and they will tell you the same thing: 'The oil companies and the dealers are holding out for higher prices.'"

This was confirmed by the *Wall Street Journal*. Their June 26 editorial bluntly stated that "the gasoline lines, with their inconveniences and distempers, could be abolished overnight, literally with the stroke of a pen. President Carter need only exercise his authority to lift price controls from gasoline" and the so-called crisis would be over.

One way or another, higher prices are coming fast. The normal price for unleaded gasoline is expected to exceed \$1.50 per gallon by midsummer (more than double the price a few months ago), at which point the gasoline crisis should miraculously disappear.

Although the anger of American working people remains for the most part atomized and is expressed individually, the potential for an organized, effective fightback by the labor movement can be seen in the reaction of workers to the nationwide slowdown by over-the-road truckers who own their own rigs.

The independent truck drivers are refusing to haul freight and are tying up highways in support of several demands, including more diesel fuel and compensation for their higher fuel costs.

The employers' government is already blaming the truckers for coming food shortages, higher prices, and plant layoffs, and the truckers' protests often block traffic on crowded routes for hours. Nevertheless, workers have been extremely sympathetic to the truckers' actions and excited that *somebody* is finally beginning to fight back.

The most dramatic example of this support was seen on June 23 and 24 in Levittown, Pennsylvania, a heavily working-class industrial suburb of Philadelphia. On June 23 a convoy of protesting

truckers moving through an intersection was stopped by a line of heavily armed police with guns drawn. The police dragged truckers out of their vehicles and began to viciously beat them.

As this was happening people began pouring out of their houses and off a nearby gas line to come to the defense of the beleaguered drivers. Eventually the crowd swelled to 2,000.

Some 150 cops attacked the crowd with riot sticks and dogs. Sixty-nine people were arrested and thirty-three hospitalized, most with dog bites.

The following evening 3,000 people gathered to show their support for the truckers, their opposition to the phony shortage, and their disgust over the cop riot. This time they were attacked by 300 cops, and a pitched battle ensued as demonstrators tried to protect themselves.

This dramatic demonstration of support for the truckers has had an impact on police in other areas of the country. On June 26, for example, when more than 100 trucks tied up thirty miles of the Long Island Expressway leading to New York City, the police reaction was far more subdued.

The officer in charge of the cops at the scene told the *New York Times* that "we [the police] are maintaining a position of neutrality, giving the truckers an opportunity to exercise their free speech." They had apparently learned something about the relationship of forces.

The widespread sympathy for the truckers clearly indicates that the potential exists for a massive response to the price-gouging of the oil companies and the government's complicity. But the only force capable of organizing the sentiment is the American labor movement.

A huge campaign could be launched behind demands to open the books of the oil trusts and place the energy industry under public ownership, with the workers exercising control over their own health, safety, and job conditions.

The trade-union leadership is unwilling to launch such a campaign because it is tied hand and foot to the Democratic Party—the major capitalist party in the U.S. But socialists in the unions have an unprecedented opportunity to raise these demands, as well as to discuss the need for labor to break from the political parties of the oil trusts and form its own party based on the trade unions.

With inflation now running at a 13.4 percent annual rate, and with the administration's own economists forecasting a lengthy recession, there is absolutely no reason to believe that American working people are going to feel any less angry in the near future, even if they can buy all the gasoline they need without waiting in line . . . at \$1.50 per gallon. □

15 Million View TV Debate With Stalinists

By F.L. Derry

PARIS—"I am a member of the French Communist Party," the young man told the standing-room-only audience when he finally got the microphone.

"I agree with the speakers here, Trotsky was a great revolutionary, like Gramsci. Stalin lied about Trotsky. We have to make sure that everyone knows the truth."

This was just one of the responses from the floor at a June 12 panel discussion entitled "Who Was Trotsky?" organized in Paris by the Institut Léon Trotsky. At least 300 people had crowded into a room designed for only half that number to discuss the life of the revolutionary leader.

The panel included Pierre Naville, one of the leaders of the Trotskyist movement in the 1930s; Pierre Frank, one of Trotsky's secretaries in 1931-32 and still a leader of the Fourth International; Jean-Jacques Marie, a leader of the Organisation Communiste Internationaliste (OCI); Pierre Broué, also a member of the OCI and the scientific director of the Institut Léon Trotsky, which is currently editing Trotsky's writings in French; Vsevolod Volkof, the grandson of Trotsky; and historian Philippe Robrieux, who was the general secretary of the Union of Communist Students before he broke with Stalinism. Jean-François Godchau, who also works with the Institut Léon Trotsky, chaired the meeting.

The wide diversity of opinions expressed from the floor shows the growing interest in Trotsky and in Trotskyism. Numerous former members of the Trotskyist movement from the 1930s and 1940s attended, as did former and current members of the French Communist Party. Liberal and Social Democratic points of view were also expressed by some members of the audience. This was reflected in the rather heated debate about Trotsky's role in the suppression of the Kronstadt rebellion and the accusation that this helped prepare the ground for Stalin's rise to power.

The panel was only the latest in a series of activities, sponsored by the Institut Léon Trotsky, which have helped to spark a national debate about Trotsky. This debate has begun to reach into the ranks of the French Communist Party itself.

This debate about Trotsky reached a high point several weeks ago. In fact, the week beginning May 13 could well have been called "Trotsky Week" in France. Dozens of articles about Trotsky, his life, and his assassination filled major French newspapers. A five-part supplement to a large daily paper published hundreds of photos to illustrate the life of the Russian

revolutionary leader. A long-awaited film *Staline-Trotsky, le Pouvoir et la Révolution* was shown on prime time French television May 15 to an estimated audience of 15 million viewers.

The film was followed by a televised debate involving official representatives of the French and Italian CPs and the French Socialist Party, a leading dissident from the French CP, a former minister of the interior in the French government, and two leading Trotskyists—Alain Krivine, member of the Political Bureau of the LCR (French section of the Fourth International); and Pierre Broué. The debate was reported in all major French newspapers, including the CP's daily, *l'Humanité*.

For five days, *Le Matin*, a mass-circulation daily close to the Socialist Party, ran an eight-to-twelve page daily supplement containing pictures of Trotsky with an accompanying text explaining the major points in Trotsky's life. The "Trotsky Supplement" was widely advertised on French radio. The pictures are part of a larger documentary assembled by David King which has already been published in English. The Institut is preparing a French edition with a new text they have edited and assembled.

Le Matin also published an article on Trotsky's assassination based on interviews with representatives of the Institut Léon Trotsky. The May 16 issue reported that Broué had told them that "the Communist Parties can no longer get rid of Lenin's companion by calling him an agent of Hitler. 'But in speaking of Trotsky they run the risk of letting a lot of skeletons out of the closets. In all the CPs, including those that call themselves Euro-communist, there are many people who have blood on their hands, who to one degree or another took part in the assassination of Trotsky, of his son, of the Spanish and Italian Trotskyists, and others.'"

The same day, *Le Monde* ran an article by Broué on Trotsky's murder and the recent death of Ramon Mercader, Trotsky's assassin.

Interest in Trotsky was also shown by journals that do not share the left pretensions of *Le Matin*. The Paris daily *France Soir*, a fairly conservative paper that supports the current French government, ran a long article beginning on the front page and filling the entire second page that showed Trotsky as a revolutionary, steeled by years of prison and exile.

Of course, such a journal could not explain the nature of Stalinism and the reasons for Stalin's rise to power. For

France Soir, Stalin's victory was due to Trotsky having "failed to pay heed to Stalin's growing power." Nevertheless, the simple recounting of the major events in Trotsky's life is itself a terrible blow to the entire Stalinist mythology set up to cut off members and supporters of Communist parties from Trotsky's revolutionary ideas.

The publication of these articles led up to the televised showing of the film *Staline-Trotsky*, based on a scenario written by Jean Elleinstein, a leading intellectual who is often described as a "dissident" CP member. The film attempts to portray the events preceding the expulsion of Trotsky and other oppositionists from the Communist Party of the Soviet Union at the end of 1927. The scenario has been published as a book with a long introduction by Elleinstein.

While the book is a fictionalized account, it claims to be based as much as possible on documentary evidence. In particular, the dialogue at the Central Committee meeting where Trotsky was expelled is taken directly from the stenographic record published at the time.

In spite of this, the film is not an accurate portrayal of these events. The Left Opposition of Trotsky, Zinoviev, and Kamenev is pictured as being composed of cosmopolitan intellectuals who celebrate New Year's Eve with a lavish celebration, dressed in the latest Paris fashions. Stalin is seen as a wily, ruthless man of the people.

In Elleinstein's scenario the group around Bukharin, in alliance with Lenin's widow Krupskaya, is made to represent the old Bolshevik cadres. Bukharin has great illusions in Stalin. First, he thinks, we will get rid of the Left Opposition and then we will take care of Stalin. Krupskaya is depicted as being much more pessimistic, recognizing that Stalin is too ruthless for Bukharin.

In addition, Stalin and Trotsky are portrayed as part of the same ruthless Leninist tradition, the "new tyranny" as Elleinstein calls it. "Why do you reproach us our ruthlessness?" Stalin asks. "Didn't you, Trotsky, do the same thing against your opponents? Didn't you suppress the revolt in Kronstadt and the Workers Opposition? Didn't you imprison and execute your opponents, just like we are doing now? Didn't you try to militarize the trade unions?" For Elleinstein's Stalin, "bourgeois democracy is a luxury we cannot afford".

Elleinstein sees the Stalin-Trotsky fight as a struggle over "democracy." Stalin,

with greater ruthless realism, has recognized the impossibility of democratic rights in backward Russia, while the utopian character of Trotsky's demands are in contradiction with his own actions in the past. Thus, according to Elleinstein, the struggle over "democracy" is really only a struggle over "power."

By limiting the debate to the domestic political conditions, Elleinstein almost completely misses the real questions debated in 1927. These were Stalin's support of Chaing Kai-shek in China, Stalin's counterrevolutionary policies during the general strike in Britain in 1926, and the Stalin-Bukharin policy of supporting the rich peasants in the Soviet Union.

If these questions had been raised in the film, it would have been clear that there was more at stake than just "power." What was at stake was the abandonment of revolutionary policies by a conservative bureaucratic layer, which was counterposed to the continuing revolutionary policies of the Left Opposition.

This central aspect of the Stalin-Trotsky conflict is lost because Elleinstein does not see Trotsky as a revolutionary and Stalin as a counterrevolutionary. Nevertheless, it is noteworthy that for the first time a major production of Stalinist origin has presented Trotsky as something other than a conscious counterrevolutionary.

The Institut Léon Trotsky took advantage of the opportunity presented by the television showing of the film to open up a public discussion about Trotsky to the broadest possible audience. The Institut demanded a public debate to follow the showing of the film, with Trotskyist representation on the panel.

The showing of the film and the debate were postponed three times: first because of local elections; then because French President Giscard d'Estaing was on a trip to Moscow and the government felt that showing the film at the time would be a diplomatic embarrassment; and finally, at the demand of the French CP, which did not want the film shown before its recent convention had been completed.

The French CP initially refused to take part in the debate—although both Elleinstein and an official representative of the Italian CP would be present. As it became clear that the film and debate were attracting considerable attention, the CP capitulated.

Twenty-four hours before the scheduled showing of the film, the CP announced that it would send Jean-Paul Scot as an official representative. Scot is an intellectual who has recently written articles about Bukharin, another "unperson" in the Stalinist version of history. Scot could thus claim to be less "tainted" by Stalinist

falsification and open to restoring some degree of historical truth to the Trotsky-Stalin struggle.

Even though the film was not particularly favorable to Trotsky, Scot was obviously nervous. In response to a direct question from Alain Krivine, Scot answered that Trotsky was neither an agent of Hitler nor a counterrevolutionary. "We are all for restoring historical truth," he said. "But we have to be careful. We don't want to set Trotsky up as an antimodel to Stalin."

This, in short, is the entire problem for the CP's—and not just in Europe. How can the CP take its distance from its entire tradition of lies and slanders, of Moscow trials and assassinations of its opponents, and at the same time protect its members from the ideas and programs of these opponents? Can Trotsky, the man, be separated from Trotsky's struggle for the Fourth International? Can the CP "rehabilitate" Trotsky, the sole Bolshevik leader who never capitulated to Stalin, and at the same time not "rehabilitate" Trotskyism? More than any other revolutionary, Trotsky's personal life was inseparable from the struggle for a revolutionary program.

Evidence is accumulating that many in the ranks of the CP are following this debate on Trotsky and are asking these very questions. □

Forced to Tell Part of the Truth

European CPs Take Up Delicate Question of 'Trotskyism'

Under the pressure of growing interest in Trotsky and Trotskyism, West European Communist Party publications aimed at intellectuals are admitting more and more of the historical truth about Trotsky's role in the Russian revolution.

In the June 22 issue of *Rinascita*, the Italian CP's intellectual weekly, historian Giuseppe Boffa recommends Isaac Deutscher's biography of Trotsky.

"Trotsky, along with Lenin, was the main leader of the second revolutionary wave that brought the Bolsheviks to power in the fall of 1917," Boffa writes.

"Lenin . . . was not in a position . . . to actually lead the new revolution. . . . It fell to Trotsky, his resolute ally against the hesitations of the other Bolshevik leaders, to determine the means, the timing, and other principal political features of the victorious insurrection."

Boffa goes as far as to refute Stalinist slanders about the theory of the permanent revolution.

"This theory is better known for what was said about it in often dishonest polemics in the Bolshevik party in the 1920s than for the role it actually played in the

revolutionary struggle. The differences between this theory and Lenin's conception . . . were more of 'emphasis' than substance. In reality both Lenin and Trotsky came to think in similar ways and to reach similar conclusions about the same problem."

Some of the truth about Trotsky is also told by Jean-Paul Scot in the May 26 issue of *France Nouvelle*, the French CP's intellectual weekly. Scot acknowledges the main historical facts about Trotsky's role in the revolution. He even makes some concessions to the truth about present-day Trotskyism.

"We cannot share the view of those who see Trotskyism as a form of 'anti-Leninism' and characterize it as 'opportunism,' and a 'variety of ultraleftism,' an 'ideology of the petty bourgeoisie.'"

Scot also rejects the attempt of some "liberal" Stalinists, such as the French historian Jean Elleinstein, to dispose of Trotskyists with the weapons of the bourgeois liberals they are courting. He says he cannot accept the "conclusion that Trotskyism is a mirror image of Stalinism, a hostile twin brother."

As far as the West European CP leaderships are concerned, however, the truth about Trotsky and Trotskyism is to be limited to historical discussions among intellectuals. When Trotskyists pose a problem for them in practical politics, they resort to the familiar sort of Stalinist slander.

For example, the June 1 issue of *l'Humanité*, the daily of the French CP, claimed that the Trotskyist program for the recent elections to the European parliament was based on the same concept as that of right-wing bourgeois figures and Social Democrats. What it supposedly had in common with those forces was excessive internationalism, since the article said it "harked back to positions . . . of some spiritual forebears of Laguiller/Krivine [the Trotskyist candidates] who . . . condemned the attacks against the Hitlerite occupiers in the name of fraternity among peoples."

However, the West European CPs will find it more and more difficult to admit half of the truth in talking to intellectuals, and continue to dish out pure lies to their working-class ranks. □

1,500 Attend Fourth International Meeting in Turin

By Anna Libera

As part of the joint campaign of all the European sections of the Fourth International for an international answer by the workers to the capitalist crisis, the Italian Trotskyists of the Revolutionary Communist Groups (GCR) organized an assembly in Turin May 19-20. Delegations from all the European sections participated.

About 1,500 persons took part in the two-day gathering. Half were from Turin, and most of these were workers. More than a hundred workers came from FIAT. There were also many trade-union activists, in particular members of the Piedmont regional leadership of the steelworkers union. They made their presence felt in all the discussions.

The rest of the participants came from other cities in Italy and from other countries. The largest delegations from abroad came from France, Switzerland, and Germany. Comrades were also present from the Netherlands, Austria, and Spain, and from as far away as New Zealand and Iran.

The large participation of Turin workers reflected the strong base our comrades have in the big plants in this city and in the local unions, as well as the growing interest in the answers offered by the Fourth International. Another reason for the large turnout was that the assembly was designed for debate. The Fourth International invited all the forces in the Italian workers movement to take part in the discussion, to present their orientations, and to discuss ours.

This concept of discussion was far from being shared by all the forces in the workers movement. We saw an example of this in Turin itself. The bourgeois press and *l'Unità* [the Communist Party] reported on the assembly, as did the radio. The only papers that said nothing about it were the dailies of the centrist organizations (even though representatives of these organizations were invited and took part in the discussions).

Out of pure sectarianism, Democrazia Proletaria announced three days before the assembly that it was holding a national meeting on terrorism Saturday afternoon and Sunday [May 19-20] in Turin and tried to draw away the trade unionists who were to participate in the GCR assembly.

Democrazia Proletaria, it is to be hoped, learned that sectarianism does not pay. Only a few dozen people turned up at its meeting on Saturday afternoon, and it had to call off the Sunday sessions. It should be noted especially that many DP activists rejected the sectarian attitude of their

organization and participated in the Fourth International assembly.

Ernest Mandel introduced the main debate on Saturday afternoon, which was on the strategy for building a workers Europe. Other participants in this discussion were Leo Rota, Italian Communist Party candidate in the European elections; Pino Ferraris, from the leadership of DP; Alberto Tridente, national secretary for international affairs of the Metalworkers Federation (FLM); a representative from the Italian SP; and a representative from the Party of Proletarian Unity (PdUP).

Mandel outlined the analysis the Trotskyists make of the situation in Europe. He said: "Ten years after the onset of the social crisis and five years after the onset of the second great economic crisis of capitalism, there is no reason to expect that this situation will be resolved quickly in a way favorable to the bourgeoisie."

He dwelt on the grave attacks on the workers in all countries that have been a result of the capitalist crisis. But along with this, he pointed out that the workers have responded differently to this crisis than they did to the one in the 1930s. It is obvious, he explained, that every economic crisis represents an attack on the working class, and may disorient sections of workers. But two fundamental features have to be highlighted in order to get a real picture of the situation in Europe.

In the first place, the workers have not accepted the crisis as something inevitable, and they are defending their past gains tooth and nail. Secondly, the fact that the workers are not counterattacking is not the result of any lack of combativity on their part. It stems essentially from the policy followed by their political and trade-union leaderships, which have accepted the "social pact," "austerity," the "Moncloa Pact," and the Barre Plan, all of which were designed to make the workers pay the costs of the crisis.

Despite all these attacks, Mandel said, the bourgeoisie "has failed to achieve a decisive increase in the rate of exploitation." They have not even been able to blunt the combativity of the workers enough to move on to the subsequent stages of the offensive they are determined to carry out.

In the initial discussions, the organizations taking part presented their positions with a frankness that surprised more than a few of the representatives from abroad. This was the case when the Italian CP representative explained his party's respect for the imperialist military alliances, in particular NATO.

Ferraris of the DP explained that the capitalists were carrying out a plan designed to break down the working class. This was to be done through massive automation in the advanced capitalist countries and through shifting other aspects of production to the countries of Southeast Asia. The present crisis, therefore, would deprive the working class of its ability to play the key role in transforming society. This role would henceforth have to be played by "new social forces"—the youth, nonunionized workers, and so on.

The most interesting debate was with Tridente from the Metalworkers Federation, who had just returned from the congress of the European Confederation of Trade Unions in Munich. He dissociated himself from the standard speeches that are made in the union movement, "which talks about internationalism but does not practice it." He stressed: "I would rather see an international struggle by workers in the various plants of some big corporation than ten resolutions on internationalism at a congress." He pointed out, correctly, that only practical experience would raise workers' internationalist consciousness.

Mandel amplified this point. He said that it would be enough today, for example, if 500 union activists in the various Europe-wide corporations developed a "telephone habit," that is, if they had contacts with activists in the different plants owned by the same corporations and picked up their telephones as soon as a problem arose.

Such possibilities were illustrated in the discussion on trade-union struggles in Europe. Trotskyist activists at FIAT in Turin and SEAT in Barcelona (owned by the same corporation) who are also members of the union committees in their plants, explained how they developed links and organized meetings between unionists in both factories—despite the reluctance of the leaderships—in order to wage a joint struggle against Agnelli. (The discussion among trade-union activists begun at the assembly in Turin was continued at the Fourth International workers conference in Antwerp on June 2-3.)

On Saturday evening, discussions were held on the struggles of women and youth in Europe.

On Sunday morning, the assembly was concluded with a rally. A FIAT comrade opened the program by describing the present situation in the struggle over the renewal of union contracts. Then Deodado Toledano, a member of the Spanish section of the Fourth International and of

the Workers Commission at SEAT, talked about the situation in Spain.

Lidia Cirillo from the Political Bureau of the GCR described the political battle the Italian Trotskyists were waging in the

campaign for the parliamentary elections. Ernest Mandel gave the concluding speech. A comrade from the Iranian Socialist Workers Party, who was passing through Italy, gave greetings to the rally.

it is obvious that the choice remains one between a ruling-class solution through a defeat of the workers and a workers' counteroffensive that can impose an anticapitalist solution to the problems of joblessness and the marginalization of youth; employment "off the books," with no social benefits; loss of buying power; company reorganization, and energy policy.

Trotskyists Assess Results of Elections

[The following has been excerpted from a statement on the June 3 Italian elections issued by the Political Bureau of the Gruppi Comunisti Rivoluzionari (Revolutionary Communist Groups), the Italian section of the Fourth International. The translation is by *Intercontinental Press/Inprecor*.]

* * *

Millions of workers have understood that only by firmly defending the camp of the working class can they prevent the Christian Democrats and the bosses from making them foot the bill for resolving the economic crisis. Their votes have helped block the capitalists' attack, which was aimed at significantly reducing the electoral strength of the workers movement and reversing the relationship of class forces so as to be able to dictate their own terms.

Despite the drop in votes for the Italian Communist Party, the workers camp maintained its position. The capitalists are unable to form a government made up only of their own parties. To run the country, they must once again call for the aid of the bureaucrats in the workers movement, even if in doing so they try to divide the Communist and Socialist parties. Everyone knows that a shift to the right cannot at this time provide the bourgeoisie with a solution.

The consolidation of the pro-Christian Democratic center is more the result of the electoral law (which has little to do with proportional representation) than of a real shift in votes.

In this regard, it is enough to point out that the votes for the Liberal Party rose 0.7 percent, an increase that is nearly the same as the total vote for the United New Left (NSU). But the NSU did not get the stipulated minimum percentage of votes and thus was accorded no seats. The Liberal Party, on the other hand, gained five additional deputies. (In reality, these parties increased their percentage as a result of the abstentions and blank ballots that hit the largest parties.)

The bourgeoisie as a whole was not able to win over the marginal and petty-bourgeois voters lost by the CP, for the absence of a class perspective was reflected in abstentions and the casting of blank ballots (the rate of which was not exceptional, but nevertheless higher than normal for Italy).

The Communist Party, as a result of its support for the government's austerity

policies, had introduced an element of division between the North and the South, between youths and adults, between unemployed and employed workers, and between men and women. The vote results showed that it was precisely in those sectors (youths, unemployed, the South) that the CP lost support within the workers movement, paying the price for its decision to support "national unity."

The Socialist Party, for its part, completely failed in its attempt to shift the relationship of forces within the workers movement to its favor. Far from becoming the arbiter of Italian politics, it will from now on be subject to dramatic pressures that can extend the rifts among its ranks and cadres to all levels of the organization.

As for the vote for the far left, it reflected a predictable ambiguity. A significant number of votes destined for the left ended up with the Radical Party, an anticommunist bourgeois formation that took advantage of the reformists' failure to fight for democratic rights to improve its position, thereby distorting the meaning of hundreds of thousands of votes.

The United New Left, an electoral slate put up by *Democrazia Proletaria*,¹ paid heavily for its failure to draw a clear distinction between itself and the Radical Party and for developing an orientation toward the "opposition" that lumped together both the main bourgeois party (the Christian Democracy) and the main workers party (the Communist Party). Its vote fell below the necessary minimum for parliamentary representation, and it therefore received no deputies.

The PdUP,² on the other hand, gained as a result of its opposition to the historic compromise and its call for class unity among the left, even if its strategic perspectives are not qualitatively different from those of the reformists.

As a whole, the results of the elections provide a distorted reflection of what is actually happening in Italy. The make-up of the new Parliament could give the impression that the problems of the country can be resolved only through long negotiations and arduous institutional maneuverings.

Looking at the social situation, however,

1. Proletarian Democracy, a bloc of small left parties that claim to stand to the left of the Communist Party.—*IP/I*

2. Partito d'Unità Proletaria (Party of Proletarian Unity).—*IP/I*

The apparent status quo in Parliament is in conflict with the reality of a confrontation over basic problems, in which the participants are not the new deputies but the broad masses.

The demand for "national unity" raised by the reformists after the elections is in conflict with the need to fight for a victory for the metalworkers and other industrial workers in their contract struggles; with the need to wage a struggle for the thirty-five-hour workweek; and with the need for a general strike that can deal a blow to the bosses' arrogance—a strike that does not just register the relationship of forces now existing after ten years of struggle, but that aims to transform it qualitatively and transfer it to the level of government power.

At a time when Socialist Party leader Craxi continues to speak of a bipolarization between the Christian Democrats and the Communist Party, presenting the Socialist Party as a third force, it must be pointed out to the comrades of the Socialist Party that in no case can they enter the government and that it is only through the unity of the workers movement that a perspective for defeating the bosses can be forged.

We must seek to prevent the debates over parliamentary formulas from weakening the power and unity of the workers movement. We must fight, in fact, to increase the independence of the trade-union movement from the bourgeoisie and from the political maneuvers between them and the reformist leaders.

As for the activists of the reformist parties, who are confronted by the poor electoral showing of their parties, we must strive to bring them toward a different political perspective that breaks with all illusions about a "historic compromise" and the possibility of reforming capitalism.

Today, we must strengthen those forces that are clearly fighting for the unity and independence of the workers movement and for the mobilization of the workers against the schemes of the bourgeoisie. □

Notice to European Subscribers

Strikes affecting air-freight service are delaying subscriptions mailed from London and may do so for several more weeks. Each issue is being mailed immediately upon arrival.

'I Am Part of a Movement Which Opposes Imperialism and Stalinism'

The following interview with dissident Czechoslovak socialist Petr Uhl, originally obtained in January 1979, was excerpted in the June 14 issue of *Socialist Challenge*, weekly newspaper sponsored by the International Marxist Group, British section of the Fourth International.]

* * *

Question. When did you become a Marxist?

Answer. I became a Marxist while I was still at college. I was very much influenced by the courses on Marxism, especially those of Professor Jiri Hermach. This was 1958-63. It is interesting for me that today Professor Hermach is one of the signatories of the Charter.

At the beginning I was a reformist. I had a critique of the bureaucratic system but I thought that the faults could be overcome gradually. I was very politicised by my experiences in France during the 1960s. I was there for two months in 1965, then again in 1967, and three times in 1968.

In Paris in 1965 there was this internal crisis and debate in the Communist Party's student organisation, the UEC. There were three tendencies: a "pro-Italian" (Togliatti) tendency, the Trotskyists, and the Stalinists. This is where I first met Alain Krivine, the leader of the Trotskyist tendency.

I took part in all the big battles. I prepared myself for the discussions and I intervened. I also took part actively in their work. I used to hand out leaflets with the pro-Italian tendency.

I brought back with me from France the famous letter of the Polish dissidents Kuron and Modzelewski. When the Prague Spring, the democratisation process, began in Czechoslovakia in 1968 I translated it into Czech and the Student Parliament in Prague published it and distributed it.

We made about a thousand copies. It was possible to do that then; the bureaucratic structures were loosening up. The translation and publication of the Kuron letter was my first important political act.

Q. What was your personal involvement in 1968?

A. In Prague, in the spring of 1968, there was a left-wing discussion club organised by Zbyně Fiser (a philosopher, poet, at the time a Maoist, a propagandist of the Peking line, but also in favour of self-organisation and workers' councils). This question of self-organisation and workers'

councils was in fact the main issue of discussion in the club.

I played an active role in this club and was the editor of its Information Bulletin. The club was really an amalgam of the far



PETR UHL

left, the Stalinists, a few Khrushchevites, and so on. We had about one hundred in Prague, more in the provinces. The club disintegrated at the time of the invasion.

I was also active in the trade union movement. At the time I was a teacher in the Prague Technical College. There was a trade union committee of eight people elected by the college and I was elected to this committee in April 1968.

Through my position in the union structure I was able to participate in union activity at a national level. I was a delegate to nation conferences, for instance, and was able to intervene at this level.

After August I looked for a new milieu to work in. The club had disintegrated. My union was far too weak and also too reformist to offer any real possibility. I was a teacher, and not in industry, so the question of workers' control didn't arise in such an immediate way in my union.

At this point I linked into the student milieu. I had many friends in the Arts Faculty and also in my own faculty from student days. I played an active role in the student strike in November 1968 and out of this strike we formed the Movement of Revolutionary Youth (MRY).

Q. What role did you play in the creation of the MRY? What were its activities?

A. I played a very central role. My comrades were generally about 24-25 years of age. I was 28, experienced, had been abroad, knew the revolutionary movement in Western Europe, had read and so on.

In the beginning the MRY was a discussion group. It was open; its manifesto was distributed publicly, read publicly at student meetings. But gradually it became more and more clear that we couldn't appear publicly at all.

We produced at this time and distributed a 100-page document which was mostly extracts from Trotsky, Bukharin, three or four articles from Czech Marxists, the Praxis group, Djilas and so on. These all dealt with political, social and philosophical questions and the goal of this action was to promote discussion on the nature of the political and social system. This was done clandestinely.

The MRY had no stable structure. It was very spontaneous. We attempted to form cells but that failed. In June 1969 we discussed what we would do for the first anniversary of the invasion in August.

Some tracts of a nationalist character already existed, so we decided that we

Free the Imprisoned Czech Dissidents!

Petr Uhl is one of ten human-rights activists now being held in Czechoslovakia and facing possible prison terms of one to ten years.

The ten, all signers of Charter 77 and members of the Committee for the Defense of the Unjustly Persecuted (VONS), face frame-up charges of "subversion" and "activities inimical to the interest of the Czechoslovak state."

They are: Petr Uhl, Otta Bednarova, Jarmila Belikova, Dr. Vaclav Benda, Jiri Dienstbier, Vaclav Havel, Dr. La-

dislav Lis, Vaclav Maly, Dana Nemcova, and Dr. Jiri Nemeč.

All ten have been adopted as prisoners of conscience by Amnesty International.

It is urgently requested that telegrams and statements demanding their immediate release be sent to President Gustav Husak, Prague, Czechoslovakia, or to Czechoslovak embassies abroad.

Copies of such messages should be sent to Anna Sabatova, Anglicka 8, Prague 2, Czechoslovakia.

would prepare a Marxist tract. There was no committee which decided this, it was a result of very spontaneous discussions in the group. But under which name could we produce such a tract?

It wasn't possible for us to publish it as the MRY because everyone knew who we were and the police would know who to go for. So we picked on the name Revolutionary Socialist Party as a cover-name for the MRY.

There were two tracts produced, a Manifesto and an Appeal to Youth. I was the principal author of the Manifesto. When it was finished there were a few people who were not happy with it. They then wrote the Appeal to the Youth. But the Appeal was actually a very good text. It was less ideological, but good.

After August 1969 the brutality of the police was so great, and was increasing, that we decided to establish an illegal movement. It was still not a party, but we were much more rigidly organised. We had cells, a co-ordinating committee, a division of labour and of responsibility.

We were very much against spontaneism but we didn't yet make any attempt at democratic centralism. We were about 100 people. We had a clandestine journal and in the autumn of 1969 we were able to distribute leaflets.

But the political situation was generally very unfavourable. Because we were clandestine we were penetrated by the police. Soon 19 out of 100 were in prison. I got four years.

Q. What kind of balance sheet would you make now of the MRY experience?

A. It was a very positive experience. It was one whole year of concentrated politi-

cal activity, political activity in a free movement, freely associated. This was something extremely important for us. All our organisations before that were controlled by the state, just as they are now once again.

Nevertheless, it was wrong to found this clandestine organisation in August 1969, because clandestinity can only lead to sectarianism, passivity, and isolation.

I don't say that clandestinity is wrong in general, or that it is always wrong in the states of the Eastern block. But clandestinity is a phenomenon linked to retreat or defeat of the revolutionaries.

Positively, it can conserve revolutionary consciousness. But in the 20th century, in the bureaucratised and degenerated states of Eastern Europe, it is not possible to wage an effective struggle against the political system if we exist in clandestinity.

Q. In the MRY in 1969 you were no longer, shall we say, of the 'pro-Italian' tendency of 1965, but a Trotskyist, a revolutionary Marxist. How did you come to Trotskyism?

A. Already during the Prague Spring in 1968 I was a revolutionary Marxist and I said so openly in the club. I wasn't a member of the Fourth International but I received all the documents of the FI and my best friends were in the French Section.

Also, shortly before 1968, in 1966-67, I had read Trotsky in Czech. I read *The Revolution Betrayed* and a collection of Trotsky's writings from 1927-28. But most important for me were his histories of the Russian Revolution, both 1905 and 1917. Those two works are a great "school of revolution."

I am not a nostalgic Trotskyist. I make a critical analysis of what Trotsky has written and done. Actually I don't like the word Trotskyism and I prefer to speak simply of revolutionary Marxism.

It is wrong to say that there are two antipodes, Trotskyism and Stalinism. I am part of a movement which opposes capitalism and imperialism and consequently I oppose Stalinism. It is my anti-capitalism which is the basis of my political consciousness, and it is this anti-capitalism which takes me to Trotskyism.

I maintain that the only solution to the Czech situation is not bourgeois democracy—although it has more freedoms than we have here now—but a completely different social system, based on self-organisation, with the political structures of a direct democracy, with a real emancipation of the working class, of youth, of women.

When I speak here of organs of direct democracy, of self-organisation, this does not mean I am against parties. What I am against is a system where people cannot make their own decisions but someone else makes decisions for them.

I am in favour of political parties, with clubs, papers, radio and television, agitation and propaganda and the freedom for parties to make proposals, suggestions, present political alternatives which people can choose to follow if they wish—not only follow but participate in.

Parties are a means of politicisation, of education. But they are not organs or exercisers of power. Power must be in the organs of the working class and not in the parties. The workers in the councils, in the organs of direct democracy are not responsible to any parties but only to those who elected them. □

Role of Oil in the World Capitalist Economy

2. Rise and Fall of Shah's 'Modernization Program'

By Jon Britton

[Second of two parts]

The first article in this series began with an examination of the roots and character of the 1973-74 energy crisis. It showed that—contrary to the claims of Washington and the capitalist media—the shortages and extraordinary price increases of oil and refined products at that time were not mainly the result of the Arab oil boycott or of decisions made by the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC). Rather, they reflected a massive shift in the market owing to earlier investment cutbacks by Exxon, British Petroleum, and the other oil giants, aimed at

boosting an "inadequate" profit rate, as well as to capitalist hoarding and mushrooming demand associated with an inflationary world economic boom.

The first article further explained that the semicolonial ruling classes of the oil-exporting countries, including Iran, took advantage of the weakened position of U.S. imperialism because of its debacle in Vietnam to hike their share of soaring oil-industry profits and to increase their control over oil production. And it described the imperialists' response to those blows.

This article examines the profound effects on Iran of the accelerating rise in oil

revenues in 1971-74 and their subsequent shrinkage in 1975-78 owing to a renewed oil glut.

* * *

Iran's oil revenues skyrocketed in the early 1970s as taxes levied by the OPEC governments on oil production rose in step with petroleum prices. Measured in current dollars (not adjusted for inflation), Iran's income from oil exports rose as follows:

1970	\$1.1 billion
1971	1.9 billion
1972	2.3 billion
1973	5.6 billion
1974	22.0 billion

This deluge of "petrodollars," in turn, had a big impact on the shah's "modernization program." In February 1973, the shah unveiled Iran's fifth and most ambitious development plan. It called for expenditures of \$36.4 billion over five years, nearly triple the \$13.6 billion spent during the fourth plan (1968-73). After the gigantic jump in oil revenues that occurred in subsequent months, the planned expenditures were nearly doubled again, to \$69 billion, with 17% allocated to the industrial sector.

The plan projected an *annual* increase in value-added for the auto industry of 20%, for machinery 38%, for metals 32%, and for chemicals and petrochemicals 27%.

The shah predicted that by 1983 Iran would be producing 15 million tons of steel a year, 1 million tons of aluminum, and 3 million refrigerators and television sets. He promised that by 1985 automobile production would hit a rate of 1 million units per year, roughly one-tenth of 1978 production in the United States.

Government Spurs Industrialization

As the recipient of oil revenues, the shah's government had long been the main instigator of industrial growth in Iran. A sizable portion of these revenues were invested directly in state-owned industry (accounting in 1975 for a full 60% of all industrial investment). Another portion was funneled to the private sector through various "development banks."

Stiff duties on imported goods—averaging about 80%—further promoted domestic production.

Overblown promises and exaggerated statistics aside, and despite tremendous chaos and waste, industrialization proceeded at a rapid pace in Iran. Beginning in 1968, output of the manufacturing sector expanded at a 14% annual rate in real terms. This was fueled in part by an earlier rising trend in oil revenues owing to rapid expansion of oil production in the 1960s. From 1973 to 1976, the average growth in industrial output rose to a 17% annual rate. By 1977-78, manufacturing accounted for 16% of Gross Domestic Product.¹

Oil Virtually the Only Export

Iran's surge of industrial expansion in the 1960s and early 1970s did not make the country into a major exporter of industrial goods, such as South Korea has become. A key reason for this was the great expansion of oil exports in both physical and value terms. Oil accounted for nearly 90% of total export income in 1975-76. The resulting massive inflow of revenue eliminated for a time any need to develop other export-oriented industries to earn foreign

exchange to pay for imported goods; that is, until such time as the country's oil had been substantially depleted.

Instead, the regime made a conscious decision to direct investment initially toward industries producing goods for the internal market, which was expanding rapidly and could be protected against foreign competition by means of tariffs.

The internal market grew so rapidly in 1971-76—thanks in large measure to the inflow of petrodollars—that domestic industry and agriculture could not begin to meet the rising demand. As a result, and also because of the 1974-75 world recession, the volume of non-oil exports actually fell by 10% during that period, and the volume of imports of all kinds surged to unprecedented levels. Food imports alone in 1977 were valued at \$2.6 billion.

Cargoes Rot in Harbor

By 1975 ships were arriving in such numbers that many were having to wait more than 100 days to unload their cargoes. Once the goods were landed, they often remained on the docks for weeks, and many decayed or corroded as a result. In 1975 alone the Iranian ruling class paid out \$1.5 billion in penalties (more than 7% of its oil income) because of such delays.

Another feature of Iran's industrialization is less common in this age of gigantic capitalist enterprises: There has been a disproportionate growth of small, labor-intensive units. In 1976, for example, only 17% of the Iranian labor force worked in the 6,000 manufacturing units having ten or more employees.

This peculiarity stems at least in part from the great rise in incomes of the ruling rich during the oil boom. Handicraft activities were strongly stimulated as the privileged minority spent freely on luxury goods, including the expensive hand-woven rugs Iran is famous for. Carpets are also popular with the rich abroad, and have long been the country's biggest non-oil export item.

Still, in overall terms Iran has one of the larger manufacturing labor forces in the semicolonial world. And this force is concentrated in just a few industrial centers. In 1973-74, nearly half of all the industrial units in the country were located in the Tehran area. The other main centers were Isfahan (8%); Tabriz and environs (7%); and Khuzestan Province, the oil-producing area (7%).

The number of workers per plant is probably higher in Tehran than elsewhere, since a high proportion of handicraft enterprises are located in rural areas. So the majority of the industrial labor force is almost certainly located there. This geographical concentration adds to the cohesiveness and power of the Iranian working class, helping to offset its dispersal in many small units.

Iran's rapid pace of industrialization over an extended period cannot be attrib-

uted solely to the government's large and rising oil revenue. In fact Iran reflects the general tendency for economic growth to be most rapid at the "less developed" periphery of the capitalist world. This is particularly true in those countries, such as Iran, where precapitalist social structures and relations of production have been largely supplanted by, or transformed into, capitalist ones.

Impact of Oil Revenue

Still, oil was a particularly important factor in Iran's industrial development. Most importantly, petroleum exports provided huge revenues that could be transformed by the ruling class through its state into capital; at least, that portion not squandered on armaments and graft could be so transformed. Oil thus had a big effect on the *tempo* of economic growth, which in turn affected the rapidity of social change and the concrete course of the class struggle.

The oil-fed boom expanded the size of the Iranian working class, boosted its social weight, and infused it with the vigor of youth as millions of new workers, including many women, were added to the employment rolls.

As late as 1946, 75% of the entire work force was engaged in agricultural production. But by the late 1970s the figure had fallen to around 33%. Out of a total labor force of 10.6 million in 1977, an estimated 6.8 million worked outside the agricultural sector; of these a full 2.5 million, or close to a quarter of the total, were employed in manufacturing of some kind.

Oil exploration and production created the first substantial section of the Iranian working class, beginning around the turn of the century.

Decisive Weight of Oil Workers

Iranian oil workers now number some 45,000. Many, probably the majority, are second-generation. That is, they are the children of the working class formed in Khuzestan in the 1930s and 1940s. There is a tradition of struggle among these workers—suppressed but never completely stamped out by the shah—that stems from the major role they played in the 1946-53 mass upsurge known as the Second Revolution.

Although few of these workers live or work in Tehran, they are nevertheless the strategically most important section of the Iranian proletariat, owing to the place of oil in the Iranian—not to say the world—economy. These workers joined the recent mass upsurge against the shah later than many others, but when they closed down oil production in December 1978 it marked a decisive turning point: the monarchy was dealt a mortal blow.

Other sections of the Iranian working class are largely first-generation in composition, having migrated into the cities from the countryside in the 1960s and 1970s. This is particularly true in construction,

1. *Iran: Dictatorship and Development* by Fred Halliday (Middlesex, England: Penguin Books, 1979) was a major source of facts used in this article.

where the work force underwent explosive growth during the most frenzied period of boom from 1973 to 1975.

Peasants Driven Off Land

The rapid expansion of the Iranian working class was greatly facilitated by the effects of a "land reform" instituted as part of the shah's "White Revolution" beginning in 1962.

This scheme—partially the result of "encouragement" from a Kennedy administration anxious to head off further Cubas around the world—failed to raise per capita agricultural production substantially. In fact, production of many foodstuffs actually declined. But it did have a major impact on the Iranian countryside, transforming to a substantial extent precapitalist relations of production and exchange into capitalist ones and driving millions of peasants off the land and into the cities.

A large part of the old landowning class became rural and/or urban capitalists when they were compensated for the land they gave up for redistribution. This was done either with shares of government-owned industrial firms in the cities, or with money, which was then frequently invested in urban real estate or capitalist enterprises in the cities or countryside.

Not a few landowners were exempt under the land-reform decrees, but many of these were already operating on a capitalist basis using wage labor. For example, tea plantations and orchards fell into this category.

Other landowners kicked the peasants off the land and quickly mechanized their cultivation to qualify for exemption.

Through the reform, under half of rural families came into possession of some land, some with the prospect of owning it if payments could be kept up over a fifteen-year period. Most of these were better-off peasants who had already been farming land under sharecropping or other arrangements. (Prior to the reform about 5% of the peasants are believed to have owned the land they tilled.)

However, most of these peasants got land under the reform in amounts too small to be viable. More than two-thirds received plots of under five hectares [one hectare=2.47 acres], while outside the north the minimum area needed to support a family is seven hectares. As a result, many peasants couldn't keep up their payments, fell further into debt, and again became landless, or they were forced to join government-run corporations that had been organized to carry out large-scale farming.

The majority of peasants who received no land at all were the worst off to begin with, most being landless laborers, and their situation deteriorated further under the reform. With the spread of mechanization and huge "agribusiness" operations, unemployment became massive and chronic and millions of the rural impover-

ished were forced into the cities to look for work.

Rising Expectations

While the economy was expanding, many were able to find jobs, especially in construction. Despite low pay and appalling living conditions, their hopes and expectations of a better life soared during the economic boom. This was also true of the working class as a whole, and of wide layers of the middle class.

The expectations of large sections of the population were also stimulated by the spread of education. The need for an educated work force became acute as industry expanded, and this forced the government to greatly enlarge Iran's educational system at all levels. By 1975-76 there were sixteen functioning universities and three more being formed. In the 1976-77 school year, the national student body reportedly reached 7.7 million (out of a total population of 34 million), of which 170,000 attended universities and other post-secondary institutions.

In addition, more than 40,000 Iranians (according to some estimates as many as 100,000) were studying abroad.

The regime also attempted, beginning in 1963, a so-called drive against illiteracy in the countryside. The results were meager. In 1975 illiteracy in the rural areas remained at 60% for men and 90% for women.

Still, the expansion of the educational system in Iran had some significant results, not the least being a student radicalization in the 1960s and 1970s that helped to catalyze the mass radicalization of Iranian society that led to the overthrow of the monarchy.

Social Toll of Shah's 'Modernization'

The rising expectations of the masses began to be frustrated almost as quickly as they were engendered, even while the oil-fueled boom in Iran was still in its rising phase. One reason for this was that as the shah's "modernization" proceeded, the gap between rich and poor became more and more glaring.

A study of urbanization in Tehran, based on research conducted in the early 1970s, noted "the massive gulf in life-style between the bulk of north Tehrani residents and the bulk of those in the south," and continued:

Despite the lack of data on incomes, casual empiricism suggests that in no European city can this gulf be so wide; moreover the evidence suggests that as Iran's economy grows and Tehran grows with it this gulf is actually widening.

Fred Halliday, who quotes the study, goes on to observe:

Southern Tehran is the Iranian exemplar of unplanned migration to the towns, in the absence of housing and social services to cope with the influx. An additional problem is caused by

the fact that Tehran has no modern sewage system, and is partly encircled by mountains; the waste and polluted air are most concentrated in the lower, southern part. [*Iran: Dictatorship and Development*, p. 186]

World Recession a Devastating Blow

Rising expectations were much more acutely frustrated after the props were knocked from under the Iranian economy by the 1974-75 world recession.

As industrial production dropped in the imperialist countries and capitalist firms began drawing on their hoarded fuel supplies, demand for crude oil plummeted. As a result, oil production in Iran fell by 15% in the first half of 1975. Government revenue slumped even more sharply, forcing budget cutbacks.

In face of dwindling profit prospects, private investment fell off and a flight of capital ensued (up to \$2 billion in private funds were sent out of the country in a few weeks).

The wholesale dumping of rials caused the Iranian currency to depreciate at an even faster rate than before, posing the threat of runaway inflation.

A graphic illustration of the effects of this depreciation, combined with an acute shortage of housing, was the rise in rents in Tehran—200% in 1974-75 alone. Some workers ended up having to spend as much as 60% of their wages on rent, and the impact on living costs for most workers was immense. Middle-class families were hard hit too, as rents for modest two-bedroom apartments in Tehran soared to \$1,000 a month.

Food prices also rose, but less spectacularly because of government subsidies.

Rise in Strikes

Downward pressures on real wages led to a big rise in the incidence of strikes, from only a handful reported in 1971-73 to as many as twenty or thirty in 1975. These occurred in the absence of genuine trade unions, the only "unions" allowed being SAVAK-run, government-sponsored outfits whose sole purpose was to discipline the work force and maximize productivity.

Most of the strikes concerned wages, bonuses, and hours of work, and some of them resulted in gains for the workers. The majority of strikes were quickly and brutally put down, however. Nevertheless, they reflected a changing mood and relationship of class forces that did not bode well for the regime.

To deflect and defuse this threat, the shah launched three campaigns beginning in mid-1975 that were designed to portray his government as popular and anti-imperialist. One was against price gouging, another against corruption. The third campaign was to establish workers' shares in industry.

The latter scheme was an attempt to get workers to consume less by selling them shares in the companies they worked for

(thereby reducing "excessive demand"), and to produce more, since they would now allegedly have a stake in the profitability of the enterprise. Of course, this turned out to be mainly a symbolic exercise.

The phony anticorruption drive of the shah, the biggest grafter of all, led to some slaps on the wrist of a number of foreign companies, including arms manufacturer Grumman, the British sugar company Tate & Lyle, and Siemens of West Germany.

The drive against high prices led to more serious punishments, however. The regime accused the bazaar merchants, mostly small shopkeepers, of price-gouging—an attempt to make them into scapegoats for the inflation. Thousands of *bazaari* were arrested or fined for violating price controls; in other words, for the "crime" of adjusting their prices to reflect the depreciation of the regime's own currency.

This demagogic campaign had no effect on inflation, since it dealt only with symptoms and not causes. But it did accomplish one thing: A tight-knit and influential sector of the population was definitively turned against the monarchy. The *bazaari* were later to play an important role in organizing the mass demonstrations in Tehran and other cities in 1978 and 1979 that brought down the shah.

Economic Crisis Deepens

Although the imperialist countries had all begun to recover from the world slump by late 1975 and early 1976, the economic crisis in Iran continued to worsen. This was directly ascribable to the fact that foreign demand for Iranian oil remained slack despite the upturn, while large new supplies of crude were coming onto the world market.

The earlier rise in prices, combined with government legislation in the oil-importing countries, had resulted in extensive conservation being practiced by both consumers and industry, thus holding down demand. During the five years from 1973 to 1978, energy use in the United States increased only half as fast as real Gross National Product, whereas energy use in the previous twenty years had grown at the same rate as GNP.

A further damper on demand for oil was the slow-growth, "anti-inflation" policy adopted by virtually all the imperialist governments up to the time Carter took office in early 1977 (when a "loose-money," expansionist course was embarked on by the U.S. ruling class²).

On the supply side, soaring crude-oil

2. The other imperialist governments moved toward more expansionary policies in late 1977 and early 1978. In late 1978 the Carter administration and the Federal Reserve Board had veered back toward "tight money" in order to forestall an all-out flight from the sinking dollar. See "Year of Crisis for the Dollar," *Intercontinental Press/Inprecor*, December 25, 1978, p. 1402.

prices in the early 1970s encouraged rapid expansion of oil production from the North Sea and Alaska—high-cost fields that now were profitable to exploit. Oil began flowing through the Alaskan pipeline in June 1977, enabling the U.S. to reduce its oil imports.

Mexico also expanded its output and oil exports.

In February 1976, the Iranian government reported that the reduction in its oil revenues had slowed the country's growth rate by 60% since early 1975, and it announced a record \$2.4 billion budget deficit for the new fiscal year.

State Planning and Budget Minister Abdol Majid Majidi acknowledged that "after a period of rapid economic growth . . . it is necessary to accept a more modest rate that is possible to maintain."

Despite a projected slowdown in industrial growth, the government reported that military outlays for the next twelve months would hit \$8 billion, a rise of 8% from the previous year.

Continued, if more modest, growth of government-financed industrialization and of military expenditures appeared feasible because revenue derived from taxes on oil production remained at a very high level compared to that prevailing prior to the quadrupling of the posted price of oil by OPEC in 1973-74. The posted price—and therefore the rate of taxation—was actually raised further by the OPEC governments, including Iran, in late 1975 and again at the end of 1976, despite sluggish demand for oil.³

3. The term "posted price" refers to an imaginary price that is used as the basis for computing tax and royalty payments.

The prices at which oil is actually sold on the market fall into two categories: the "spot price," which fluctuates daily and most accurately reflects market conditions at any given time; and "contract prices," which are negotiated for extended periods such as a year or two. Most international oil transactions are carried out on a contract basis.

Prior to 1973, most of the oil pumped out of the ground in the Mideast belonged to the integrated oil companies participating in producing consortiums such as the Arab-American Oil Company (ARAMCO). It was not sold on the market but rather was shipped to the companies' refineries all over the world for processing into gasoline and other products.

For the big U.S.-based companies, the cost of this crude oil was not the prevailing market price, spot or contract, but the cost of production (extremely low in the Mideast, sometimes less than 20 cents per barrel), plus the tax levies and royalties paid to the "host" governments, minus the amount their U.S. taxes were reduced by tax credits and deductions deriving from those payments.

This situation continues to hold true except that varying portions (depending on the country) of the oil produced today belong to the host governments through partial or complete nationalizations, and most of this crude is sold to the companies at negotiated contract prices that may or may not correspond to the posted price, depending on market conditions.

But the tax rises only encouraged the oil giants to step up all the more their efforts to increase production in the North Sea, Alaska, and elsewhere. Thus OPEC members were forced to freeze the posted price beginning in 1977. Since the posted price is set in dollars, and the dollar began to depreciate again at the very time the freeze was imposed, oil revenues of the OPEC governments declined sharply in terms of purchasing power from then until December 1978. (At that time, soaring free-market prices for crude oil and tightening supplies—owing mainly to an accelerating worldwide economic boom and renewed capitalist hoarding—encouraged the OPEC governments to lift the freeze and begin to raise their tax levies once again.)

Before indicating the devastating impact on Iran's economy of the further decline of oil revenue in 1977-78, it is worth noting that 1976 was marked by a significant rise in small-scale actions on the part of guerrilla groups in Iran, directed against the hated monarchy. The activities of these courageous, antishah fighters were no doubt an echo of the brief flare-up of workers' struggles the previous year and at the same time a harbinger of the mass struggles to come.

At the time, however, the regime had no difficulty containing the actions of these small, isolated groups, and many of their members ended up in prison or in front of firing squads.

Oil Glut Forces Austerity Drive

Once again the most immediate effect of declining oil revenues (measured in constant dollars) was on government finances. In March 1977 State Planning and Budget Minister Majidi announced the budget for the next fiscal year. It provided for a \$2.3 billion drop in military expenditures and a reduction in foreign aid and investment amounting to \$1.2 billion. The largest cut, however, was in "general administrative affairs," where the budget was reduced 20.5% to a total of \$2.8 billion, resulting in the elimination of many price subsidies.

Other parts of the projected budget were increased substantially. A total of \$12.4 billion was allocated to promote the development of Iran's export capability in industrial goods, a 51% increase. This was aimed at reducing the government's heavy reliance on oil revenues, which amounted to 80% of total income in the 1975-76 budget.

Projected "social service" expenditures were also increased sharply, no doubt partially reflecting the urgent need to do something about the festering urban crisis.

Not many months passed after adoption of this still rather optimistic budget before it became clear that the economy and the shah's "modernization program" were in shambles. By June 1977 the country was suffering a nationwide energy shortage (!),

which forced many industrial plants to operate at only 60% of capacity. In Tehran a system of rotating blackouts was imposed to save power, which was later extended to the entire country.

In August, the shah felt constrained to reshuffle his government, appointing a new prime minister, Jamshid Amouzegar, to replace Amir Abbas Hoveida. According to the August 13, 1977, issue of *Facts on File*, Hoveida's resignation was "attributed to public discontent with bureaucratic red tape, high taxes, shortages of commodities and energy cutbacks marked by five-hour daily blackouts throughout the country."

A few days after taking office, Amouzegar announced a drastic, \$35 billion cutback in Iran's industrial development program. He played down the retreat by saying it reflected a shift toward greater reliance on private enterprise for economic development.

The halt to industrial expansion, which only a little while before had been going along at a breakneck pace, hit the construction sector particularly hard and resulted in massive unemployment among construction workers.

Iran's total unemployment was officially reckoned to have risen to 375,000 in 1977 (about 3.5% of the total labor force), but this figure is ridiculously low. There were no unemployment benefits, and so there was little incentive for workers to register as unemployed. Women and the uneducated generally were especially unlikely to register when out of a job. Official estimates were also based only on those who had looked for work the previous week.

An indication of the hidden unemployment that plagued the country was provided by the *Tehran Economist* when it stated: "At this time, there are 700,000 healthy but idle people who busy themselves by selling lottery tickets, watching cars, or peddling. . . ."

Role of Mullahs

In Iran the mullahs, or Islamic religious leaders, have traditionally dispensed charity out of the contributions of their supporters. Their role in this regard was particularly important in view of the lack of government unemployment benefits.

It seems likely then that in this period of massive layoffs, the mullahs were besieged by requests for aid far in excess of their modest—and no doubt dwindling—resources. (The mullahs are not part of a wealthy church establishment, as is the case with priests and preachers of the major Christian denominations, but operate more or less independently, competing with one another for influence.)

At the same time there were signs that the destitute urban masses were becoming increasingly alienated from the monarchy and ready to resist its barbarous actions. In fact, the first major mass confrontation with the government, in mid-1977, in-

involved impoverished persons living in the outlying area around south Tehran.

The government provoked the incident when it brought in bulldozers to demolish shacks that had been built "illegally" overnight. Angry residents resisted the wrecking operations. The police opened fire and some people were killed, but massive resistance finally forced the regime to back down. Subsequently, similar scenes were repeated several times.

Soon another social layer, the intellectuals and students, engaged in mass defiance of the regime through readings of protest poetry attended by thousands.

By the end of 1977, virtually every sector of the oppressed population—the bazaar shopkeepers, the peasants, unemployed, students and intellectuals, workers on the job—had become fed up with the shah's regime.

Under this pressure, many mullahs, in order to retain their influence, found it necessary to turn strongly against the shah themselves and, under the guise of preaching, to begin to voice the anger and protest of the Iranian masses.

Their role was all the more enhanced by the fact that it was only in the mosques that such sentiments could be expressed without risking immediate arrest and imprisonment or execution.

Shah Toppled

By the end of 1977 the stage had been set in Iran for the popular upsurge that got under way January 9, 1978, in the religious city of Qum. Rallying around the figure of religious leader Ayatollah Khomeini, who had come to symbolize uncompromising opposition to the regime, the antishah movement drew wider and wider layers of the population into the struggle.

By October 1978, the most powerful social force in the country, the industrial working class, joined a spreading strike wave that paralyzed more than forty cities and shut down Iran's oil production. The strikes combined demands for higher wages with calls for an end to martial law, for release of all political prisoners, and for an end to censorship.

The shah tried to contain the movement through a combination of concessions and repression. The government gave in to the strikers' wage demands and released a number of political prisoners. But the economic concessions, including some wage increases of 100%, only threw the economy deeper into crisis, and killings of demonstrators continued unabated.

Soon large numbers of rank-and-file soldiers were drawn into what was now a tidal wave of opposition, leading directly to the February insurrection that toppled the shah.

* * *

Since the shah's downfall, a new, highly unstable economic and political situation has emerged within Iran. There will con-

tinue to be a close interrelationship between the ups and downs of the world economy and developments within Iran, as well as growing interaction between the class struggle internally and internationally.

With the world capitalist economy moving inexorably toward a new overproduction crisis, Iran is faced with economic catastrophe unless a workers and peasants government is installed that will proceed rapidly to expropriate the owners of all major industry and establish nationwide economic planning.

Some Key Lessons

A number of lessons can be drawn from the events taken up in this series. The following in particular stand out:

- Because of the weakened political position of world imperialism, semicolonial capitalist governments have acted to gain more control over their raw materials and a larger share of the profits arising from their exploitation.

- Such gains, even if the main immediate beneficiaries are corrupt and tyrannical rulers such as the shah, represent blows to imperialism and are progressive from the standpoint of the toilers and the fight for socialism.

- To the extent that such gains spur industrialization and therefore the long-term strengthening of the working class, and force a major concomitant expansion of education, the ultimate effect is to spur mass radicalization and pave the way for revolutionary battles that can deal terrific blows at capitalism and ultimately lead to its overthrow.

- Because it is less dependent on foreign sources of oil and other raw materials, American imperialism has been affected to a lesser degree than its rivals by the economic shifts in favor of the semicolonial bourgeoisie and has thus gained competitively.

- The events in Iran also clearly illustrate the limits and lopsided character of industrialization going on today in the "less developed" countries—how it fails utterly to meet the needs of working people, even as it expands those needs (through urbanization, expansion of education, exposure to modern culture through the mass media, and so on). As a result, social contradictions are heightened and the potential for revolution is increased.

- A concrete analysis of the Mexican economy and the potential effects of a big jump in government revenue arising from that country's rapidly expanding oil production is outside the scope of this article. But it seems highly likely, judging from the Iranian experience, that speeded-up industrialization, rising expectations, sudden economic breakdowns, and sharpening class struggle are in store for that country as well.

June 12, 1979