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Victory in Zimbabwe Elections

**1980 IMPERIALIST
RECESSION:
HOW DEEP,
HOW BROAD?**

**TORIES DEFEATED
IN CANADA
BUT AUSTERITY
POLICY REMAINS**

Iran Masses Rally Behind Students in Embassy

By Janice Lynn

As we go to press, thousands of Iranians have been rallying in the streets outside the U.S. embassy in Tehran to support the Muslim Students Following the Imam's Line. The crowds are expressing the anti-imperialist will of the Iranian people that the ex-shah and his stolen wealth be returned to Iran.

Citing "intolerable pressures" from members of Iran's Revolutionary Council, the students had declared March 6 that they would give the council custody of the hostages.

But the Iranian masses stepped in to make their voices heard. Demonstrators at the embassy have demanded that the government make no compromises with Washington. Tehran radio has broadcast messages in solidarity with the students from throughout Iran.

Earlier in the week, members of the Revolutionary Council had ordered the students to allow the United Nations inquiry commission to visit all Americans in the embassy. The students responded that the visit by the UN Commission was a "deviationist and impossible matter." They said the visit had been ordered by the U.S. government—not by Ayatollah Khomeini, as the Revolutionary Council had tried to imply.

In a March 10 statement, Khomeini spoke out in support of the students and the demands of the Iranian masses. He backed the students' position that the UN commission should be allowed to see embassy spy documents and interview only those in the embassy who have been implicated in acts against Iran and complicity with the shah. The students want to make clear that they will only agree to an investigation into the monstrous crimes of the U.S. government, not U.S. allegations against the Iranian people, who are the victims of those crimes.

Within the United States, more and more people are learning the truth about these outrages. Breaking through the veil of lies from Washington, one of the most widely watched U.S. television shows, *60 Minutes*, aired a program March 2 documenting the connections between the U.S. government, the CIA, and the shah and his hated spies and torturers, SAVAK.

Several days after the broadcast, it was revealed that top White House officials had made a series of telephone calls to the show's producers in an attempt to bar segments of the program from being

shown. The producers refused to bow to such censorship.

As a result, millions of Americans were able to see confirmation of the charges the Iranian masses have been making against the U.S. government and of the justice of

Colombia: Repression Leads to Embassy Takeover

By David Russell

Guerrillas of the April 19 Movement (M-19) in Colombia are demanding the release of 311 political prisoners in that country. To back up their demand, they are holding more than thirty hostages, including twelve ambassadors, in the Dominican embassy in Bogotá.

The political prisoners whose release is being demanded were tried by a military tribunal last November. Although the capitalist media and the Colombian regime accuse them of being guerrillas, under President Turbay Ayala even "subversive propaganda" is punishable by one to four years in jail.

None of the prisoners convicted by the military were given an opportunity to defend themselves. The judge in their trial was the chief of the Military Institutes Brigade (BIM), which runs the main torture center in Colombia.

Some examples of BIM's work:

- Hernando Rubio, a student at the Colombian Teaching Hospital, is kidnapped. His body is found lying alongside a highway. A month later, after a mass mobilization protesting his murder, the army admitted that Rubio had died at the hands of soldiers while "in custody."

- José Vicente Camelo, a landowner, is mistakenly arrested by the military. They claim that he died of a heart attack. But after his body is exhumed, it is discovered that he had died of bullet wounds.

- Darío Arango, a city council member in Puerto Berrio and a member of the National Opposition Union is arrested. His corpse is later released by the army. It bears clear signs of torture.

Since coming to power nineteen months ago, Turbay Ayala has been attempting to crush the Colombian labor movement and the struggles of the poor peasants. This offensive against the Colombian workers and peasants has gone together with attempts to whip up war fever in Colombia against revolutionary Nicaragua and Cuba.

the demand to extradite the shah.

During the same week, several families of Americans being held in the embassy publicly denounced U.S. foreign policy in Iran and demanded that Carter apologize to the Iranian people.

Khomeini has reiterated his position—supported by the militant students—that the parliament chosen in the upcoming elections will make the final decision about the hostages.

The Iranian Revolutionary Workers Party (HKE), which is fielding a number of candidates in these elections, has made solidarity with the militant students and their struggle against U.S. imperialism a central plank of its campaign. □

Meanwhile, the Colombian army, the main force behind Turbay Ayala, has announced that it will oppose release of the political prisoners. On March 7, just



JULIO CESAR TURBAY AYALA

before talks between the government and M-19 representatives were to begin, an air force jet swooped over the embassy repeatedly.

The military threats against the M-19 militants should be halted immediately, and their demands for the release of political prisoners and an end to the torture and murder of opponents of the regime should be met. That is the only just way to resolve the crisis in Bogotá. □

Pakistan's Zia Chooses Discretion Over Valor

By David Frankel

Washington's campaign to marshal reactionary forces against the Afghan revolution has been dealt a damaging setback. On March 5 Pakistani Foreign Minister Agha Shahi announced that his government would not go along with a \$400-million U.S. military (and economic) aid package. President Carter had been

relying on the Pakistani dictatorship to play a central role in his counterrevolutionary plans in the area.

"It was felt on our side," said Shahi, "that the acceptance of the U.S. offer, unless substantially modified, would detract from rather than enhance our security."

Pakistani dictator General Zia ul-Haq followed up Shahi's announcement the following day with a denial that his regime had been training and aiding rightist Afghan rebels. Zia offered to allow inspection of the Afghan refugee camps in Pakistan.

Despite Zia's claim, there is not the slightest doubt that the Pakistani regime has actively equipped and supported the rightist forces in Afghanistan and that it will continue to do so. But Zia's statement and his refusal of the U.S. aid offer represents a shift in the diplomatic stance of the Pakistani government.

Zia himself, in his opening remarks to the conference of Islamic foreign ministers in Islamabad January 27, insisted that it was not sufficient "to demonstrate by words alone our grave concern at the flagrant violation of the sovereignty and national independence of brotherly Afghanistan. . . ."

Participants at that conference, with Zia in the forefront, openly called for material aid to the rightist forces. Now, Shahi says: "Let it be stated categorically that Pakistan is determined not to allow itself to become a conduit for the flow of arms into Afghanistan."

Behind Zia's shift is the continuing change in the relationship of forces to the advantage of the world working class and against U.S. imperialism.

Within Pakistan, there has been considerable support for the Afghan revolution. The Pakistani masses, further inspired by the Iranian revolution, showed their opinion of Washington when they set fire to the U.S. embassy last November.

Zia feared that in openly acting as point-man for Washington's intervention in Afghanistan he would be courting even greater internal opposition, and perhaps the prospect of stepped-up Soviet aid to his opponents. Resentment against the rightist Afghan guerrillas and hatred of the Zia tyranny is particularly explosive in Baluchistan, which borders Afghanistan.

Zia must also have been making his own assessment of the military prospects for the rightist rebellion in Afghanistan. He must have surely asked himself whether he could rely on Washington to send troops to his aid in the event of a revolution by the Pakistani workers and peasants.

The outcome of these calculations is clear. As one U.S. official lamely commented, "it seems that the Government in Islamabad concluded that the political costs of relying on us were viewed as outweighing the economic and military benefits." □

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Black Victory in Zimbabwean Elections

By Ernest Harsch

As the election results announcing a sweeping victory for the Zimbabwean liberation movements were released on March 4, tens of thousands of Blacks in Salisbury and other parts of the country poured into the streets to celebrate.

Nervous troops of the white-led Rhodesian army patrolled the streets in armored cars. Helicopter gunships flew over the large crowds. But the demonstrators were not intimidated.

Factories and offices emptied out, as Black workers took the day off to join the jubilant demonstrations. Youths danced in the streets, shouting slogans of the Zimbabwe African National Union (ZANU), the biggest winner in the elections. In the Black townships around Salisbury, throngs of young Black men and women chanted, "Forward with the rooster," the ZANU symbol.

A dispatch from Salisbury in the March 6 *New York Times* reported, "All over town blacks who normally have hidden their feelings from whites gave vent to their joy at the prospect of being governed by a party that has pledged to transform this settler society, redistributing wealth and land and eliminating inequalities in education, medicine and other social services."

One youth explained to a reporter, "Since 1890 we have been under the yoke of oppression. The white man denied our fathers the equal rights they deserved. Now this is 1980, the year of the people's power. Through the revolutionary armed struggle our brothers have given our people the freedom they painstakingly struggled to achieve."

Despite all the efforts of the British colonialists, the Rhodesian white settler minority, and the racist South African regime to impose their own favorite candidates and install an openly neocolonial regime, the masses of Zimbabwe voted overwhelmingly for those parties that had actively fought against the colonial-settler state—ZANU and the Zimbabwe African People's Union (ZAPU), which were loosely allied within the Patriotic Front.

ZANU, led by Robert Mugabe, received 63 percent of the Black popular vote, winning fifty-seven out of the eighty seats reserved for Blacks in the new parliament. (The other twenty seats had previously been set aside for whites.)

With a clear majority of seats, Mugabe will become the first prime minister of a Black-ruled Zimbabwe when the country gains its independence from Britain in several weeks.

The other main liberation group, Joshua

Nkomo's ZAPU, won 24 percent of the vote, gaining twenty seats.

Taken together, the two constituents of the Patriotic Front thus won a resounding total of 87 percent of the 2.7 million Black votes cast. Mugabe has invited Nkomo's forces to join in forming the new government.

Bishop Abel Muzorewa, who closely collaborated with the white settlers and who received substantial backing from the apartheid regime in neighboring South Africa, was trounced. Although he spent nearly \$30 million during his lavish campaign, his party managed to retain just three seats.

The gains of ZANU and ZAPU showed that both liberation groups had built up significant support in their years of struggle. Although the Rhodesian armed forces had not been militarily defeated, the guerrilla armies of the Patriotic Front were successful in wresting day-to-day control of large sections of the countryside out of the hands of the white-minority regime.

ZANU in particular was the big winner in the elections, largely because it played the most active role in the guerrilla war. It was also very vocal—more than ZAPU was—in promising to institute land reform and other social measures to benefit the Black masses.

The election results came as a shocking blow to the white racists and the British and American governments, who had hoped to prevent the most radical groups, particularly Mugabe's ZANU, from coming to power. Assassination attempts were made against Mugabe. The white-led military warned of a possible coup. The Rhodesian government apparatus was thrown behind Muzorewa's campaign, and some 25,000 Black "auxiliary" troops loyal to Muzorewa intimidated and harassed voters.

But in the end, all that could not prevent Blacks from voting for the parties that they wanted.

The British and American governments officially greeted the elections—after having done everything they could to subvert them. But the real reaction of the imperialists was better reflected in the London stock market, where the prices of Rhodesian government bonds plummeted, as did the stocks of companies with Rhodesian holdings.

Following his election, Mugabe denied that there would be any immediate nationalizations and announced that he would retain Gen. Peter Walls, the commander of the Rhodesian army, in his post. Although

Mugabe has called himself a Marxist-Leninist, he declared on March 4 that "the economic structure of the country is based on capitalism and whatever ideas we have must build on that."

The imperialists, however, will place little confidence in Mugabe's pronouncements. They fear ZANU's mass base of support and are worried that the Patriotic Front electoral victory will spur the Zimbabwean workers and peasants forward. Expectations for social change are now high among Blacks. As they mobilize to improve their social position and rid the country of the decades-old legacy of white supremacy, the Zimbabwean leadership could be pushed further than it is now prepared to go.

The imperialists are also frightened that the victory of the Patriotic Front will inspire anti-imperialist fighters in the rest of Africa, particularly in the South African ruled colony of Namibia, and in the imperialist bastion of South Africa itself.

Big obstacles and dangers still lie ahead of the Zimbabwean liberation struggle. The election results have placed the Zimbabwean masses in a better position to fight for their rights, but they have not yet broken the power of the white settler community or ended imperialist domination of the country.

Whites still dominate the regular armed forces, as well as the police and state apparatus. White capitalists, both local and foreign, still control the economy. The imperialists have already begun to put the squeeze on Mugabe to go slow on promised social reforms.

Hundreds of South African troops remain stationed in the country. South African Prime Minister P.W. Botha warned that if the new regime did anything to undermine South African "security," Zimbabwe "will have to face the full force of the Republic's strength."

The existence of the ZANU and ZAPU armies—and especially the mass mobilizations in support of the liberation forces—will compel the imperialists to proceed cautiously. So will the continued presence of thousands of Cuban troops in Angola—a reminder to Washington and Pretoria of the stunning setback dealt to their last major intervention against a liberation movement in southern Africa. The Cuban government has repeatedly expressed its unconditional support to the Zimbabwean freedom struggle.

But the danger of military intervention remains, as does the necessity for international solidarity with Zimbabwe. The imperialists will do everything they can to prevent the Zimbabwean workers and peasants from taking power into their own hands. □

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How Afghan War News Is Faked

[The following are major excerpts from an article by Victor Malarek that appeared in the February 9 issue of the *Toronto Globe and Mail*. It shows how the capitalist news media manufactures reports about the rightist Afghan guerrillas.]

* * *

PESHAWAR, Pakistan—The door was flung open from the inside by a fierce-looking Afghan freedom fighter wearing an old weather-beaten army coat, a black turban and toting a rifle with fixed bayonet.

He was bathed in the glare of spotlight set up behind him in the room.

The scene: the headquarters of the Islamic Party of Afghanistan, situated in a reeking slum on the outskirts of Peshawar.

"No, no. Stop!" a cameraman shouted as his colleague, an Australian reporter, stepped into the room. "He did it all wrong."

"You!" the cameraman called out, pointing at the bewildered guerrilla fighter. "You will come to the door from that side. Don't put your back to the camera. He will ask for your leader and you will take him into the office. Carry your rifle in your hands like this—it looks more effective."

"Explain that to him, please," the cameraman said, waving to a translator for the Islamic Party.

The guerrilla nodded and the ever-smiling reporter trotted back outside.

"This is great stuff, mate," he said as he noticed me leaning against a wall near the doorway. "I'll only be a minute, then they'll be yours. I'm with 60 Minutes in Australia. Who are you with? Got to go. Talk to you in a minute."

Again the reporter rapped on the door. It opened, the camera was rolling and news was in the making.

Scenes like this are taking place all over Peshawar, where guerrilla groups from Afghanistan have set up provisional headquarters to plan strategies to win back their homeland from invading Soviet forces.

Reporters, cameramen and photographers from around the world—Canada, the United States, Britain, France, West Germany, the Netherlands, Japan and Finland—are here.

And what is obvious, even in the short while I've been here, is that many of them are inventing stories and shooting "action" films and photographs that rightly should be captioned simulated.

Reporters don't bother to question the flimsiest claims made by various guerrilla leaders.

A reporter from the Netherlands said: "This place makes colorful copy. The read-

ers will love it. Who cares if there's a bit of show? Anyway, these Afghans have a legitimate cause and could use a little help."

As I arrived at a makeshift hospital for wounded mujahedeen—Moslem warriors—a West German news crew had just wrapped up a shooting session.

An interpreter for the Islamic Party took me into rooms where 11 men lay on bamboo cots. Only five had obvious injuries.

One had what looked like a badly sprained or broken ankle.

"This mujahedeen was hit by a Russian bullet during a battle near Jalalabad," the party spokesman said.

A second man, whose arms were paralyzed, was also reportedly hit by a Soviet bullet.

Two other mujahedeen had casts on their legs and a fifth wore a bandage, so it was difficult to see their bullet wounds.

But the first two bore no signs of bullet entries. No scars, no broken flesh.

When this was pointed out to the Afghan interpreter, he said calmly but firmly: "These mujahedeen have been wounded by Russians as I told you."

The following day, I met the cameraman for the West German news crew at the press office operated by the Pakistan Gov-

ernment. No journalist can visit the guerrilla headquarters or refugee camps without clearance from this office.

The Pakistani press administrator asked the cameraman: "Where is your news fellow?"

"He's making up his commentary for the shooting we did yesterday," the cameraman replied with a laugh.

I asked if he believed the injuries of some of the wounded at the hospital were caused by bullets.

"No. They were not made by bullets. No holes. You have got to have a hole or scar for a bullet wound."

Asked if the news reporter had questioned the claims made by the group, the cameraman said: "No. He's not interested in facts, just a story." He laughed.

At the hotel where most of the journalists are staying, several cameramen loudly joked in a bar for foreigners about the fictional approaches their respective reporters were taking to stories.

What about some of those stirring photographs you've no doubt seen in some newspapers of bands of mujahedeen patrolling mountainous regions of Afghanistan, rifles in hand?

One thing you quickly learn is how easy it is to set up such pictures.

So-called mujahedeen will pose gladly for that kind of photo without ever leaving Pakistan. Moreover, a number of photographers have been hoodwinked into thinking they were actually taken to Afghanistan to get shots of insurgents. □

CIA Agent Caught in Kabul

On February 22, in the midst of a merchants' strike and armed rightist demonstrations in the Afghan capital of Kabul, the Afghan police arrested an American and sixteen Pakistanis.

The American, who was variously identified as Robert Lee or Robert Lezard, was said to have links with the Central Intelligence Agency. The Afghan government announced that he would be tried before a revolutionary tribunal.

At first, the U.S. State Department denied any knowledge of Lee. Then it admitted his presence in Kabul, but termed the Afghan government's charges "ridiculous." One State Department official who acknowledged that he knew Lee described him as a private citizen with no links to the U.S. government, but who had travelled in the area for "some time."

Washington's denials notwithstanding, Lee-Lezard had been previously

identified as a CIA official, before his arrest.

A February 20 press release by *CounterSpy* magazine, which specializes in exposing CIA activities, quoted a January 13, 1979, issue of the Indian newspaper the *Patriot* on the establishment of a CIA task force in Islamabad, Pakistan, for the purpose of aiding the counterrevolutionary Afghan guerrilla forces.

According to the *Patriot*, "... the recent spurt in counter-revolutionary activities on the Pak-Afghan border is apparently the handiwork of this team ... under the overall command of R. Lessard."

Counterspy confirmed that, according to its own research, Robert P. Lessard was indeed a CIA officer. He had served for ten years in Iran, during the shah's reign. He had been posted to Afghanistan for a time and has operated out of Pakistan since July 1977.

Canadian Elections: Tories Defeated, But Not Austerity

By Richard Fidler

[The following article is reprinted from the March 3 issue of the fortnightly *Socialist Voice* published in Montreal.]

* * *

For the second time in less than a year, Canadian voters have thrown out a government. Joe Clark's defeat in the February 18 general election resulted above all from mass opposition to his Conservative government's austerity program, with its 18-cent-a-gallon increase in oil and gas prices, soaring interest rates, and continued high unemployment.

The election of Pierre Trudeau's Liberal Party means that the austerity plans of big business have not been defeated.

However, the forces that will lead the fight against the anti-working-class policies of both these parties have emerged strengthened from the election.

The campaign by the trade unions in English Canada to elect the labor-based New Democratic Party [NDP], while scoring no major electoral breakthrough, nonetheless was an important step forward for the entire labor movement. Labor's identification with the NDP has politicized the unions as never before.

Why Tories Lost

For the average worker, nothing symbolized the Conservative government more clearly than its trail of broken promises. During the May 1979 election, Clark promised lower taxes, damned high interest rates, and offered a low-income mortgage deductibility plan. In office, he increased taxes, raised interest rates to record levels, and postponed the mortgage plan.

One promise Clark did keep was to move to sell off Petro-Canada, the popular state-owned oil company—while jacking up petroleum prices to meet the economic blackmail of the big private oil companies.

These were clearly unpopular actions. But Clark bulled ahead with them, driven by the growing crisis of Canadian and international capitalism. Even his most publicized and humiliating flip-flop—the decision, under massive pressure from the Arab world, to renounce plans to move the Canadian embassy in Israel from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem—reflected the deteriorating relationship of forces for world imperialism.

But Why The Liberals?

Throughout the election campaign, and indeed since the Tories' election last May, opposition to their austerity program was

aggressively spearheaded by the NDP. The Liberals, on the other hand, ran a low-key campaign. Trudeau skulked across the country, limiting public appearances to a minimum. Liberal strategists cynically reckoned that if they hid their leader and their program as much as possible, voters would forget why they had rejected Trudeau and his austerity policies only months earlier, and would choose the Liberals as the lesser evil.

And it worked. Why?

The main reason, obviously, is that the great majority of working people in Canada do not yet understand the need to vote only for workers parties against the capitalist parties. The unions' pro-NDP campaign was a big step toward overcoming this problem; but there is still a long way to go.

Many workers still have illusions that the Liberals are less associated with big business than the Tories. Ironically, these illusions have allowed the Liberals to serve as the main governing party of big business for most of this century—the Tories filling in when required.

More successful than the Conservatives at fostering the image of a party of reform, the Liberals have built a powerful machine among immigrants, francophones, and even in many unions. They have maneuvered skillfully to buy off labor and farmers' leaders with modest reforms and plush appointments. In Quebec, where labor has little tradition of independent political action, they have been able to cultivate an image as defenders of Quebec's rights against the more overt chauvinists of the Tory party.

All these factors came into play in this election: for example, in the Liberal sweep in Quebec; the high Liberal vote in francophone regions of Northern and Southwestern Ontario; and the Liberal gains among immigrant voters in Metropolitan Toronto.

But the Liberals also benefited from the NDP's failure to project a serious programmatic alternative to the policies of both the big-business parties.

NDP Policies

This was very evident on the major issue in the election: the antiworker austerity drive. The centerpiece of the Tory budget was its boost in taxes on oil and gas. NDP leader Ed Broadbent countered this with a "made-in-Canada" energy policy. It called for expanding Petrocan, a popular proposal. But it also accepted that prices must rise (although not as much or as fast as the Tories proposed). And it blamed high

energy costs on the underdeveloped OPEC countries more than the big oil companies, and centered on the alleged need for conservation and national "self-sufficiency."

This line was not radically different from the Tories' or the major oil companies' . . . or the Liberals'. And, like the rest of Broadbent's nationalist "industrial strategy" of selective handouts and tax concessions for corporations, it offered no solutions to the burning problems facing working people.

The Liberals were quick to co-opt much of Broadbent's program. They took credit for establishing Petrocan, proposed a vague "blended-price" formula for oil designed to encourage conservation and self-sufficiency, and even called their policy "Made in Canada" like the NDP's.

It hardly mattered that oil industry experts confided that the Liberal pricing formula could raise oil prices even higher than under the Tory plan within a couple of years. The point was, the NDP's proposals were so modest and insufficient—and so completely limited to the framework of making capitalism work—that it was a simple matter for the Liberals to promise what seemed like much the same thing. And they, unlike the NDP, had a credible chance of defeating the Tories.

Rumors of War

Another major issue was international affairs. The Tories—with Liberal concurrence—sought to whip up support for Carter's war threats against the Soviet Union and the Middle East oil producers such as Iran. In doing so, they hoped to roll back the antiwar sentiments of Canadian workers, to make it easier to send Canadian troops abroad for "peace-keeping" use against national liberation movements, and to justify increased spending on NATO and NORAD.

They also used the war drive to cut across opposition to their austerity policies. Canada might have to go to war, we were told, to protect its diminishing oil sources; higher oil prices, however, might lessen reliance on foreign supplies and stimulate domestic production.

The war drive is a major topic of discussion among workers. While many are confused over Afghanistan, and inclined to believe the anti-Soviet propaganda, few express any willingness to "go to war for Exxon"—or Imperial Oil.

Yet Broadbent voiced "100 percent" support of Carter's war threats. He told the *Globe and Mail* he favored increasing Canada's military budget. He put the NDP

behind the war drive in many workers' eyes. Because this line played right into the big-business propaganda about the Arabs and OPEC being the source of high oil prices, it seriously blunted the cutting edge of the NDP's opposition to the Tory budget and austerity.

Many NDP activists were angered at Broadbent's statements. Some, in demoralization, quit working in the riding campaigns. Other party members, including some candidates, openly criticized Broadbent for disavowing party policy—for example, the NDP's formal opposition to NATO and NORAD. Such criticism of the party leader in the midst of an election is quite unprecedented for the NDP.

Keeping Unions at Arm's Length

The NDP campaign was also weakened by the Broadbent leadership's efforts to avoid identifying the NDP as *labor's* party. At party rallies in some cities (Toronto, for example), NDP officials explicitly downplayed the role of the unions in the party. Broadbent failed to speak out in defense of postal workers' leader Jean-Claude Parrot, jailed during the campaign for defying parliament's strike-breaking legislation. And the NDP campaign made no particular attempt to publicize or solidarize with major labor struggles, such as the Bell telephone operators' strike for a first contract.

Like Broadbent's support of imperialist foreign policy, this reluctance to take up labor's cause was designed to prove the party leadership's reliability and "responsibility" to Canada's capitalist rulers. It failed to build the party's influence among working people, however.

Shifts in Quebec

Another problem facing the NDP campaign was the party's extreme weakness—its virtual absence as an organization—in Quebec. This undermines its ability to appear as a serious contender for governmental power in Ottawa.

Union leaders in Quebec have refused to support the NDP. Instead they support the capitalist Parti Québécois [PQ], or the Liberal Party. As for the PQ, it refuses to run in federal elections, leaving the field clear for the Liberals. It's part of the PQ's strategy of showing its willingness to co-exist with the federalist oppressors of Quebec, through "sovereignty-association."

The NDP made no attempt to mount a serious campaign in Quebec. It scraped together almost a full slate of candidates, but few were backed by any organizational muscle. Broadbent made few visits to Quebec. The Quebec Federation of Labor, which has endorsed the NDP in the past, ignored the party and the federal election, as did the other union federations.

Yet despite these weaknesses, and in the face of a decline in the vote for all other parties and a 10 percent increase in the

abstention rate, NDP support rose substantially—reversing a steady decline in the party's Quebec vote in every federal election since 1965.

The NDP's electoral result does not mean that the party is poised for further major gains in Quebec. No serious advance

will be made in independent labor political action until at least a substantial sector of the union movement enters the political arena through establishing a Quebec labor party, regardless of the role the meager NDP forces in Quebec will play in this process. The federal NDP's express com-

The NDP's Election Results

In English Canada

While many voters expressed their desire to get rid of the Clark government by voting Liberal, the NDP vote held firm in most regions, and increased significantly in the West.

More than 2,140,000 voters, 19.7% of the electorate, supported the NDP—the party's highest ever score, and almost 2 percentage points higher than in the May 1979 federal election. It now holds 32 seats, up six from last May.

The NDP vote rose by 2 percentage points in Manitoba and Saskatchewan, to 34% and 37.5%, respectively. In British Columbia it topped the polls with 38.4% of the total vote, electing 12 MPs. In Quebec, NDP candidates polled an average 9.2%, up from 5.1% in May.

In the Atlantic provinces, the NDP fell by 2 percentage points, and the party's two MPs there were defeated.

The most disappointing results were in Ontario, where despite an intensive campaign by the unions, the NDP vote remained steady at 22%, its average vote in English Canada. The party lost its three Northern Ontario MPs, including John Rodriguez (Nickel Belt); while their support remained firm, the Liberals outnumbered them with votes from defecting Tory supporters.

The NDP picked up two more seats in Southern Ontario; one was Ian Deans, elected in Hamilton, where Steelworkers Local 1005 played a key role in mobilizing support. The NDP vote rose in other Hamilton Area ridings.

In Windsor and some other industrial centers, however, the NDP vote failed to increase or dropped slightly.

In Quebec

The NDP registered its largest vote increase in Quebec, the one province where Broadbent scarcely campaigned at all. Almost a quarter million Québécois voted NDP—93,000 more than voted for the party in Quebec in May 1979.

In May the NDP ranked second in only two Quebec ridings, and fourth in 53 ridings. This time it ran second in 18 of the 50 ridings outside Montreal, and in 17 of the 24 ridings in the Montreal area. In all cases, it was far behind the winning Liberal.

The highest NDP votes were in working-class, francophone ridings, in Montreal, Quebec City, Lac Saint-Jean, Sherbrooke, and Hull. In the largely anglophone ridings in Montreal, the party ranked only third or fourth.

NDP candidates receiving the highest votes were usually trade unionists and, in many cases, supporters of the Parti Québécois on the provincial level. At least four NDP candidates came out publicly during the campaign in favor of a "yes" vote in the upcoming referendum on Quebec.

Here are some of the candidates who were most successful.

- In Saint-Jean, an industrial city just south of Montreal, Roger Roy, president of the United Electrical Workers local at the Westinghouse plant and vice-president of the local labor council, polled 15.2% of the vote—double the NDP vote in May 1979. His candidacy was supported by the labor council. He also received a financial donation from the Canadian Labor Congress.

- In Montreal-LaSalle, Gaston Coté, a railway worker in the CBRT, received 12.7%, double his vote in May.

- In Sainte-Thérèse, just north of Montreal, Normand Labrie doubled his May vote to 11.2%. Labrie is former president of the UAW local at General Motors, the region's biggest industry. The local donated money to Labrie's campaign.

- In the Quebec City riding of Louis-Hébert, Robert Caron got 15.4%. Caron is a militant in the Quebec Teachers Union (CEQ), which waged a militant strike against the PQ government during the election.

- In Champlain riding, René Matte, a teacher and former Créditiste MP well-known for his nationalist views, ran this time for the NDP. He received 22.8% of the vote.

All other parties experienced a decline in their Quebec vote from the previous election. The Liberal vote dropped in every Montreal riding but two. The Conservatives' Quebec vote dropped by 0.3% to 12.6%, just over 3% more than the NDP's. The Social Credit vote collapsed, from 16% in May to 5.4% on February 18.

mitment to defend the federal constitutional regime severely limits the party's attractiveness to Québécois.

However, the election result does confirm that a growing number of Québécois are searching for a way to express opposition to the capitalist parties. It reflects the growing interest in labor political action in Quebec unions.

Major Battles Ahead

The electoral results in English Canada understate, if anything, the NDP's actual

support among workers. Many who are sympathetic to the party still vote Liberal—or Tory—in federal elections, as a "lesser evil" means of stopping certain policies (for example, the Tories' promise of wage controls in 1974) or to throw out unpopular governments (Trudeau in 1979, Clark in 1980). This pattern is especially strong in Ontario, which has the bulk of the country's manufacturing industry, and one third of its population. Ontario's votes make and unmake governments in Ottawa.

The election of the Liberals, largely on the strength of vote shifts in Ontario, is a more accurate reflection of workers' hatred of the Clark government than it is of confidence that the Liberals will solve their burning problems.

All those problems remain. As Trudeau's Liberals move to implement the same big-business program that led to the rejection of Clark and the Tories, there is every reason to foresee a continuing rise in struggles by working people. □

Labor's Pro-NDP Election Effort

A Major Advance for Workers in Canada

By Art Young

[The following article has been slightly abridged from the March 3 issue of *Socialist Voice*.]

* * *

English-Canadian labor's large-scale campaign behind the NDP in the federal elections marked a giant step forward for working people in Canada.

The labor effort strengthened the unions, helped unify the labor movement, and mobilized many thousands of trade unionists in political action. It promoted political discussion on the job, and it helped prepare working people for the struggles ahead.

In a statement issued by the Canadian Labor Congress February 19, CLC president Dennis McDermott stated that the labor movement would continue its efforts to support the NDP.

While our parallel campaign did reach many trade unionists it is evident that we have been up against tradition and ingrown political misconceptions that no longer should have their place in our decision-making process.

In the past 12 months, the massive voter education campaign waged by the CLC and its affiliated organizations has gone some way toward bucking tradition and dispelling old myths. . . . But it is far from enough. . . .

We firmly believe that eventually the majority of Canadians will vote for the party that really deserves their support rather than trying to end up on the winning side. And we shall continue to work toward this objective.

The unions mobilized behind the NDP on a scale never seen before. Many tens of thousands of unionists took part, attending seminars to organize the effort, distributing literature, and discussing politics with fellow workers. The most active and committed unionists were the ones carrying the campaign, injecting new life and meaning into existing union structures.

Millions of pieces of literature were

distributed: in Toronto alone one million leaflets were passed out—in Chinese, Portuguese, Italian, and Greek, as well as English.

In the yards, mines, mills and offices, workers debated the issues: from the economy, unemployment, and the cost of gasoline, to Carter's threats of war and the Afghanistan conflict. Above all they debated why workers should support the New Democratic Party, confronting Liberal and Tory supporters and those who hold the view that the unions should stay out of politics.

Twenty-two of the 25 biggest affiliates of the CLC took an active part, with the staff of these unions and the local labor councils throwing themselves into the effort. Many labor publications put out special election issues explaining why workers should vote for the NDP.

The major industrial unions (in steel, auto, paper, rail, and other key industries) were the backbone of the campaign of the CLC. This reflected the growing role of industrial workers in resisting the austerity drive, their willingness to consider new forms of action, and their confidence in their strength.

For the first time the United Electrical Workers strongly supported the NDP. In a special issue of its paper *Comment* the Canadian Union of Postal Workers called for a vote for the NDP.

Circumventing the law preventing it from supporting any political party, the Public Service Alliance of Canada compared the positions of the three parties in its newspaper, concluding that PSAC members should vote NDP.

There was, however, a great deal of unevenness in the effort. A number of unions failed to carry an effective campaign for the NDP among their members. Many of the rail unions did virtually nothing. The International Woodworkers of America, long one of the NDP's

strongest supporters in the labor movement, failed to go beyond its traditional forms of support. It did not organize a shop-floor canvass.

The theme of the campaign was that traditional forms of collective bargaining are not enough; collective political action is required. The unions must get involved in politics. The NDP is labor's party.

Union publications explained that the bosses rule in the political sphere just as they rule on the job.

The *Journal* of the Canadian Paperworkers Union explained:

. . . no matter how well we do at the bargaining table, we will always be faced with a shrinking paycheque as long as increased energy costs, increased taxes, increased food costs and increased interest rates go unchecked. . . .

We have to make sure that we have a loud, clear voice speaking for us to counteract the voices of the oil lobby, the big banks and the food monopolies.

Think of it this way. Would you elect your mill or plant superintendent to act as shop steward? Of course you wouldn't. He has other interests.

Despite what they say to the contrary, so do Liberals and Conservatives. The evidence is in, the record is clear.

The other side of the equation is equally clear and it all adds up. Ed Broadbent and the New Democrats have carried the ball for Canadian workers, and on more than one occasion for the CPU in particular, through successive parliaments.

The CLC campaign concentrated on economic issues, showing how much Conservative and Liberal policies cost working people. The "cost of living calculator," distributed everywhere, was immensely popular.

The programmatic weaknesses of the CLC campaign were in the main the weaknesses of the NDP campaign itself.

While initiated by the leadership, this was anything but an action of the apparatus. It was a movement, a struggle, involv-

ing the best forces of the labor movement in English Canada.

Despite the absence of a similar effort in Quebec, this was the first time since the October 1976 strike against wage controls that the labor movement has engaged in a common struggle of this scope. It has had a big impact on many plants. And it began to change the character of the unions, making them stronger and more able to defend labor's interests in all spheres.

Moribund union structures—and some locals—have been reactivated. Workers are now more used to discussing the big political issues, and looking to their organizations, the unions and the NDP, to take action. And working people have increased confidence to struggle for their demands.

Many workers became angry after they filled out the "calculator." They realized that they had lost the equivalent of 50 cents or a dollar an hour over the last year.

The CLC campaign even got some response in Quebec.

In striking contrast to English Canada, the three main Quebec labor federations did absolutely nothing in the elections. Yet Quebec workers are more and more open to a labor alternative to the ruling parties. Many of them expressed this sentiment in the elections by voting for the NDP.

The NDP is so weak as to be almost nonexistent in Quebec and Ed Broadbent virtually ignored the province in his campaigning. Yet the party's share of the popular vote doubled and it came second in 35 Quebec ridings. It ran especially strongly in a number of francophone industrial regions. The results surprised everyone. They will help promote the struggle for a labor party in Quebec.

The main significance of the campaign goes far beyond the effort to win votes for the NDP.

In the last few years workers have suffered a series of setbacks. Workers want to fight back. In struggles like the eight-month strike against Inco in Sudbury, the recently concluded Quebec teachers' strike, and the current strike of the Bell operators, new moods of combativity and concepts of broad solidarity have been displayed.

An important step was taken by the unions together with the NDP last year when they began mass petitioning campaigns to defend the health care insurance plans and prevent the destruction of Petrocan. Involving door-to-door canvassing and shop-floor activity, the efforts were very successful, gathering a large number of signatures and training union activists in political activity.

The CLC's campaign for the NDP in last year's elections was an extension of these efforts. The campaign this year, while similar, was on a vastly different scale. It is the opening of a *new front* in labor's battle to defend working people.

New forces have been won to supporting the NDP. The unions have drawn closer to the party, identifying it as their political

tool. A new layer of unionists have become active in the NDP, injecting new life into the party. Pro-NDP forces in the unions have been identified and organized, while Liberal and Conservative backers have been further isolated.

These are all major gains.

Winning all unionists to the idea that their union should take part in politics is a big job—most still vote for the big business parties, and only a little over 10 percent of those who belong to the CLC are affiliated to the NDP. The labor campaign has laid the basis for a big push to affiliate the bulk of the union locals in English Canada to the NDP.

Carrying forward the momentum of this campaign cannot be left to the next federal elections four years away. It must become a regular part of trade union life. The experience of the CLC campaign shows how this can be done.

New election fights for the unions and the NDP are ahead, including an Ontario election expected next year. As well, in recent years labor and the NDP have taken important steps toward involvement in municipal elections in cities such as

Vancouver, Winnipeg, and Toronto.

More campaigns such as the petition drive to save medicare are also necessary; as the new Liberal government implements its austerity program there will be no lack of issues around which struggles will develop.

Labor solidarity is one theme. A key issue today is solidarity with jailed postal union leader Jean-Claude Parrot and with the Bell strikers. The full weight of the CLC should be thrown behind their struggles.

Quebec is another important issue. The unions, many of which are on record as defending Quebec's right to self-determination, should work to educate their members on why working people have no stake in the national oppression of Quebec. And they should challenge Broadbent's opposition to self-determination and his defense of the federal regime.

These are turbulent times. Many challenges lie ahead for the labor movement. The unions' campaign for the NDP has immensely strengthened the position of working people and helped prepare them for the coming battles. □

How Canadian Revolutionists Participated in Election

The stance of the Revolutionary Workers League (RWL), Canadian section of the Fourth International, on the federal elections was summed up by the headline over a statement by the RWL Political Committee in the December 24, 1979, issue of *Socialist Voice*:

"Oust the Clark government—defeat the Liberals: In English Canada, vote for the NDP; In Quebec, fight for labor candidates."

A major political theme of the RWL during the campaign was the need for united political action by workers in both English Canada and Quebec to kick out the Liberals and Conservatives and to replace them with a government of their own organizations—the NDP and the Quebec unions.

In English Canada, RWL members in the unions actively participated in the campaign effort by the Canadian Labor Congress to elect NDP candidates. And as part of its effort to make use of the elections to project a program to advance the interests of the working class, the RWL ran its own candidates in four parliamentary ridings (districts): Byron Nelson in Vancouver; Naomi Jolliffe in Toronto; and Walter Belyea and André Frappier in Quebec.

The candidates spoke at RWL election rallies in Toronto and Montreal in mid-February. At the Montreal meeting, according to the March 3 *Socialist Voice*, Jolliffe, an aircraft worker and member of the United Auto Workers union, "reported on the CLC-NDP campaign in English

Canada and the need for workers in both nations to join in political action to get rid of the Liberals and Conservatives."

At the same meeting, Frappier, a postal worker, stressed that, "The unions must fight politically as well as on the economic level. That's why I proposed to my union that they run candidates in Quebec, and that's why I'm running in these elections."

This same message was taken to English Canadian workers during the campaign by François Moreau, campaign manager for the two RWL candidates in Quebec. Moreau spoke to RWL election meetings in Vancouver, Winnipeg, and Edmonton.

Instead of supporting the capitalist Parti Québécois as the unions in Quebec currently do, Moreau explained, they should run their own candidates as a step toward the formation of a labor party based on these unions.

The RWL candidates campaigned against the Canadian government's support to Washington's war moves in Iran, Afghanistan, Indochina, and the Caribbean and Central America. At the Toronto rally, Jolliffe explained that NDP leader Ed Broadbent had weakened the NDP campaign by not countering Clark's and Trudeau's support for Carter's policies and instead adopting "prowar policies that are not in the working people's interests."

In addition to its own candidates, the RWL also called for a vote for three candidates of the Socialist Workers Group (SWG) in Quebec. The SWG called for a vote for the RWL candidates. □

WORLDWIDE CAMPAIGN FOR AID TO NICARAGUA



FSLN Leaders Tour U.S. Cities



Militant Olga Avilez (left) of Sandinista Workers Federation (CST); Justino Arceda of Nicaragua's Rural Workers Association (ATC).

Four leaders of Nicaragua's Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN) brought the message of their revolution to thousands of Americans in recent tours of a dozen U.S. cities.

Noel González spoke from the FSLN Foreign Relations Secretariat, and the three others represented Sandinista-led mass organizations: Sayda Hernández from the Nicaraguan Women's Association, Justino Arceda from the Rural Workers Association, and Olga Avilez from the Sandinista Workers Federation.

In New Orleans, Arceda and Avilez spoke to a meeting of 100 at Tulane Uni-

versity February 22. Some \$550 was raised. In New York City, Hernández addressed 300 people February 29.

In Minnesota's Twin Cities, Avilez and Arceda spoke to a meeting of 120 at the St. Paul Labor Temple February 29. Also bringing greetings were Sue Abderholden, president of the Twin Cities National Organization for Women, and Frank Guzman, a Chicano rights activist.

The two FSLN representatives were presented with a check for \$1,700 for the literacy campaign raised by students at the College of St. Benedict and St. Johns University. The money was collected during two weeks of campus fund raising.

Ninety people in Dallas, Texas, heard Arceda and Avilez March 1 at a meeting sponsored by the Metroplex Citizens for Aid to Nicaragua and the Mexican-American Students Association. About \$360 was raised.

Dallas Mayor Robert Folsom, Bishop Thomas Tschoepe, and Dallas County NOW President Cynthia Rutledge all sent messages of support to the meeting.

In Milwaukee, Wisconsin, more than 200 people turned out February 27 to hear Arceda and Avilez. The day before the two Sandinista leaders spoke at another meeting of 200 in Madison, Wisconsin. About \$1,250 was raised at the Milwaukee meeting. □

British Labour Party Sponsors Solidarity Meeting

The British Labour Party and the Nicaragua Co-ordinating Committee (NCC) are cosponsoring a "National Conference in Solidarity With the People of Nicaragua."

The call for the conference explains that the NCC aims to "Publicise the situation in Nicaragua and build up active support in the British Labour movement and among the British People for the FSLN and the people of Nicaragua," and to "Channel material and financial support to Nicaragua. . . ."

The conference is scheduled for March 29 at the University of London Student Union, Malet Street, London WC1

Mexican Workers Contribute One Day's Wages

Workers in Mexico's Independent Union of the Metropolitan Autonomous University (SITUAM) have donated one day's pay in solidarity with the Nicaraguan revolution, according to *Bandera Socialista*, the weekly newspaper of the Revolutionary Workers Party (PRT). The contribution of the SITUAM workers represents more than \$30,000.

Other Mexican workers have also joined in the solidarity campaign. Auto workers in the Dina Renault factory in the city of Sahagún held an assembly and donated money. The PRT, the Mexican section of the Fourth International, has called on the Congress of Labor and other union bodies to follow the example of the SITUAM workers.

Sandinista Delegation in Belgium

The February 21 issue of the Belgian Trotskyist weekly, *La Gauche*, reports on a visit to Brussels of a delegation from the FSLN. The delegation met with officials from the Ministry of National Education and the heads of various Belgian universities to discuss aid for the Nicaragua Literacy Campaign.

Nicaragua solidarity committees also met with the delegation. Comandante Omar Cabezas thanked these activists for their support and emphasized the important role they were playing in helping to reconstruct Nicaragua.

Cuban Aid Arrives in Nicaragua



One of the heavy road-building machines donated by the Cuban government is shown being unloaded from Cuban cargo ship, which was also given to Nicaragua. Cuba has donated 22 fishing vessels as well as other aid to the Nicaraguan people.

La Prensa

How Managua Food Workers Countered Bosses' Sabotage

By Lorraine Thiebaud



The production line at El Caracol food processing plant.

Barricada

MANAGUA—Union members at El Caracol Industries, a food-processing factory here, took over their plant February 19 but kept up full production. They prohibited owners Magelda and Oscar Campos from entering the factory.

The workers called on the government to investigate charges by union members that the Campos family was trying to bankrupt the company by reducing production and decapitalizing.

The following day, Carlos Núñez, commander of the National Directorate of the FSLN, and Ernesto Castillo, attorney general of Nicaragua, went to El Caracol for a four-hour meeting to hear the workers present their evidence. Castillo then sealed the management's offices and formally intervened the El Caracol factory while an investigation takes place.

The workers are conscious of the importance to the Nicaraguan diet of the food items they produce, so they pledged that the factory would work at full capacity while under government intervention.

The El Caracol factory has been operating for forty-six years in Nicaragua. It employs about 130 people, including seventy women. Their average wage is \$1,150 cordobas (about \$115 a month).

When I visited El Caracol on February 27, the first thing I noticed were the many signs and banners covering the front walls of the plant. They bore revolutionary slogans and solidarity messages from sympathizing unions.

Warehouses Almost Empty

Eager to explain their struggle, the workers displayed storerooms and warehouses which have been kept almost empty of raw materials in recent months, well below the minimum required to keep up the productive pace. Ten delivery trucks had been

idled because the owners would not buy repair parts. Many of the machines in the factory now run only because the workers themselves have found ways to fix them.

Union leader Dennis Valdo explained that distribution routes had been trimmed by management from eight to five. During Somoza's regime, management allowed supermarkets eight days to meet their bills, but lately they have been required to pay on delivery.

One woman worker told me with outrage how vitamin supplements in foods widely consumed by children had been cut back; the owners had explained there was too little profit to justify the added expense.

Even though demand for El Caracol's products is greater than ever, and Nicaraguans confront high unemployment, work at the factory was cut to one shift. In September 1979, twenty-eight workers, primarily women, were fired because they were "unneeded." Meanwhile, the bosses imposed speedup, making working conditions more difficult and hazardous for those who remained.

Ties to Somoza

Workers charge that the Campos family retains its ties to elements of the Somoza regime. Women workers said that before the insurrection they had been forced to prepare parties given by the Campos family for Somoza and his friends. They said that Somoza's secret police had helped spy on workers and obstruct union organizing. On one occasion, thirty workers had been fired, and several others captured and tortured by Somoza's National Guard. Workers also displayed company check stubs and vouchers paid to a well-known Somozaist criminal.

Most of the Campos family left Nicaragua before the insurrection and now live in Miami. Only Magelda and Oscar stayed behind, apparently intent on decapitalizing their several factories and large landholdings in order to send as much money abroad as possible.

Immediately after the July 19 insurrec-

New Law Decreed Against Capitalist Looting

MANAGUA—The Government of National Reconstruction has adopted a tough decree against capitalist sabotage of this country's efforts at economic revival.

Decree Number 329, issued March 2, is aimed at all those "who by action or omission employ deceitful or fraudulent means to remove from the country the fixed or circulating assets of enterprises (that is, the capital of such enterprises)."

The decree cites specific examples of such punishable offenses:

"• Altering the information that must be provided to the competent authorities or officials

"• Altering the account books or documents related to the export or import of products

"• Failure to report to the Central Bank payments received in a foreign currency . . . even if this involves

transactions carried out prior to the adoption of exchange control laws

"• Failure to initiate the collection of overdue accounts abroad. . . ."

Violators of the new decree face the penalty of intervention of their enterprises (that is, putting them under state administration), plus fines of up to three times the value of the capital removed from Nicaragua. Individuals convicted under the decree may be jailed for one to three years.

In an interview with the Sandinista daily *Barricada* the day after the decree was announced, FSLN Commander Luis Carrión said that "although the Sandinista state is young and doesn't have the full institutional apparatus for applying the decree, it does have available the power of the revolutionary workers, who must remain vigilant in all the centers of production, as they already have been doing." □

tion, they received a \$400,000 government loan to help restart El Caracol, but none of the money has seen its way to the factory.

The workers at El Caracol have had their own union for six months. As their concern mounted over the factory being run into the ground, they decided to hold a general assembly to discuss the problem. It was there that they voted—121 to 10—to take over the factory. Exemplary workers were elected to head each of the six productive areas. The union previously had monthly meetings, but since the takeover it meets almost daily.

Union members have good reason to fear sabotage—workers at another Campos-owned factory notified them of a recent bombing. So the El Caracol workers take turns at nightly guard duty at the factory.

The workers invited me and other reporters back to attend their union meeting on March 1. Union President Oscar Martínez reaffirmed the commitment of the union members to the revolutionary process taking place in Nicaragua.

The union secretary then read the min-

utes of the last meeting, including an account of a lengthy discussion over whether or not to demand increased wages. The workers had decided not to ask for higher wages since, given the scarcity of consumer goods, this would simply lead to greater inflation that hits the lowest-paid workers and the unemployed most severely.

'We Are the Strongest Class'

Adonis Jirón Morales, responsible for overall production, then reviewed the accomplishments of the workers since the takeover. The stock of primary materials was much higher and production had been increased by 66 percent. All distribution trucks were now working. Seven of the twenty-eight workers previously fired had been rehired, and five more would begin in a few days. Preparations were being made to start a second shift to increase production and to help more unemployed workers find a job. Several workers were investigating the possibility of adding a new barley cereal product. Solutions to occupational

health problems faced by the workers were being sought—earplugs against machine noises and masks for those constantly exposed to dust. And the ten administration workers—who initially refused to participate in the takeover—had now agreed to cooperate fully with the union.

Orlando Espinosa, a representative of the Sandinista Workers Federation (CST) to which the El Caracol union is affiliated, expressed his satisfaction at working with a union leadership so politically mature, despite an average age of only twenty-three.

After the meeting, I asked Adonis Jirón Morales what outcome he hoped for from the factory takeover and intervention.

"We are willing to work in capitalist or state-owned factories to rebuild Nicaragua's material base for the future," he replied. "But if the capitalists won't make the factories run, we will.

"We are the strongest class in this country, and we must guard this revolution because this revolution is for the working class." □

'Workers Control Needed To Combat Capitalist Sabotage'

FSLN Hails Factory Takeover by El Caracol Union

[The El Caracol factory takeover received prominent coverage in the Sandinista daily *Barricada* and in *Poder Sandinista*, weekly organ of the FSLN National Secretariat of Propaganda and Political Education, both of which held it up as an example to other Nicaraguan workers.

[The following article appeared in the February 22 issue of *Poder Sandinista*. The translation is by *Intercontinental Press/Inprecor*.]

* * *

For many years capital has organized and determined the conditions of productive wage labor on the basis of its own particular interests. Its only aim has been to increase profits. Today enterprises are being decapitalized, and the intention is to keep the conditions of working people at a miserable level.

The workers of this country have been paying special attention in recent days to the problems of controlling the production and distribution of the goods they produce—a revolutionary measure for transferring to the people the largest portion of the material goods created in the productive process.

Situations are now arising that contradict and oppose the [1980] National [economic] Plan for producing to the benefit of the people. Certain sectors of industrialists have suddenly decided *not to reactivate*

production. What is more serious, they are *decapitalizing* and *sabotaging* the existing production units in the private sector. In other words, there is a full-scale effort to obstruct the development of our productive apparatus and disrupt the organization of production and distribution.

What Does Decapitalization Mean?

The basic elements of production are:

1. Production machinery, raw materials, construction equipment, auxiliary materials, transportation, financing, and so on.
2. Human beings who constitute the labor force that makes use of the material elements and organizes them to bring about the production of material goods.

The development of this material and technical base is linked to the main productive force of the society—the workers who are the true producers of social wealth.

Everyone knows that to produce material goods, enterprises employ and require a specific quantity of financial, material, and labor resources.

If such resources are removed from the country—as is the case with the flight of capital and equipment—and if on top of this there is destruction of necessary machinery and technical resources, then what we are witnessing are acts of decapitalization—destruction of sources of jobs and goods that endanger the social well-being of the Nicaraguan people.

If we have decided to boost production in this country so as to confront existing problems, generate jobs, and assure a constant rise in its productivity, we cannot permit such acts of decapitalization in private enterprise.

What Do the Workers Think?

The workers union at El Caracol Industries replies, "Establishing workers control of production in these industries is an important socioeconomic measure to support our plans to comply with reactivation goals."

Workers control must be carried out so as to prevent a halt in production or the destruction of enterprises by their owners or by other reactionary forces, as well as to assure the rational use of raw materials and other means of production and make certain that the administration and activity of these enterprises benefit the revolution.

Workers control is also needed to protect production units from sabotage and shutdown.

Decapitalization and Workers Control

If acts of sabotage take place during the coming months, thousands of workers could face unemployment, thus provoking the instability that the 1980 Economic Plan aims to avoid.

Pressure for jobs is intense at this moment. The reactivation plan is two

months behind schedule. Our economic situation will worsen if we workers do not put a halt to anti-patriotic activity.

We workers declare our determination to protect the production units, but we face silence from the state organs responsible for dealing with such problems.

"If the owners are preparing to abandon these enterprises, why permit such actions?" asked the workers of El Caracol Industries. "How long can such decapitalization go on? We workers of the revolutionary class will not permit them to hand us corpses of enterprises in a few months. We request and demand the intervention of

these production units.

Intervene to Guarantee Production

The mechanisms of decapitalization include the following:

1. Refusal to purchase necessary raw materials.
2. Failure to buy replacement parts for machinery and technical equipment.
3. Non-compliance with production norms.
4. Raising production costs so as to avoid taxes.
5. Flight of capital to foreign banks.

The experience at El Caracol Industries

is clear—the owners have been aiming to clear out and take huge profits. Will the revolutionary government permit such actions? Will the workers permit the destruction of their source of employment?

El Caracol Industries; Nicatex; Hurtado Cannery in Granada; Lacayo Supermarket, also in Granada—these mark the beginning of an anti-patriotic campaign that can only be halted by direct control over production by the workers and due attention by the state to such problems.

Can we reactivate our economy with historical characters like the antipatriotic businessmen? Obviously not. □

Despite Imperialist Economic Blockade

More Consumer Goods Available in Cuba

By Harry Ring

[Fifty people participated in a week-long tour of Cuba in February sponsored by the U.S. Socialist Workers Party. Among them was Harry Ring, staff writer for the socialist weekly *Militant*. The following is reprinted from the February 29 issue of that paper.]

* * *

My trip to Cuba with the SWP seminar was my third visit to the island. I was there for two weeks in 1960, and for three months in 1968.

While this visit was very brief, I was able to make some comparison between the economic situation in 1968 and today.

I found that while there are still serious problems resulting from the U.S. economic blockade, the legacy of colonial exploitation, and the world economic crisis, significant improvements have occurred.

In 1968 there was severe scarcity.

The economic blockade imposed by Washington in 1960 had taken a heavy toll. And, since decades of domination by U.S. corporations had distorted the island's economy, Cuba was still compelled to import a good part of its food as well as other consumer goods.

Today Cuba grows most of its own food and manufactures a large part of its consumer goods.

In 1968, there were two restrictions on foreign photographers. One was on taking pictures of military personnel or installations. The other was store windows.

The windows were so pitifully empty that hostile foreign journalists had been snapping pictures of them to show how the Cuban people were "starving."

Today there's no restriction on photographing shop windows, and there is merchandise to photograph.

In Cienfuegos, a city of 90,000, I walked into a small department store off the central plaza.

Available there were men's and women's clothing, dishware, glassware, cutlery, heavy aluminum pots and pans, cast iron paella pans, tin egg pans, pressure cookers, fluorescent light bulbs, phonograph records, and cassette players.

A bookstore in the area was busy and well stocked. It included political and nonpolitical books and a special section of children's books. (Outside of college towns, I can't think of a comparable U.S. city I've seen with as big or busy a bookstore.)

Books are impressively inexpensive.

The store had a supply of a nine-volume edition of the writings and speeches of Che Guevara. It sold for two pesos, seventy centavos (\$3.65).

Bookstores in Havana were similarly well stocked and equally busy.

In 1968, because of the paper shortage, even something as important as the works of Che would, of necessity, have been published only in a small edition.

In another big advance, a majority of Cubans—some 70 percent in Havana—now have television.

The large-screen black and white sets are made in the Soviet Union and assembled in Cuba. They cost about \$650.

That may sound high. But Cubans have full employment. Their rent is only six to ten percent of their income. Medical care is free, bus transportation a nickel, and all levels of Cuban education are totally free. So most Cubans can put together the price of a TV.

There are today serious complaints about consumer goods. But, in contrast to 1968, the complaints are about quality, not quantity. Cuba, for example, is now making its own shoes instead of importing them. Many are not as good as they should be.

Food rationing is still severe but measurably improved.

Eggs are unrationed and generally plentiful.

Fruits and vegetables and fish are unrationed and available in varying quantities.

Each child under seven receives a liter of milk a day, as do old people. For others, the supply of fresh milk varies, but each person is entitled to three large cans of evaporated milk a month. The total amount of milk is greater than in 1968.

The rice ration is now five pounds per person per month. In 1968, it was three pounds.

In 1968, two people were entitled to a quarter of a pound of butter a month. Now it's one pound.

The ration of beans is now approximately one and a quarter pounds a month (transposing from the nine-day ration amounts). In 1968, it was but half a pound a month.

The meat ration has increased. People can now choose between beef, pork, and chicken (with one pound of chicken as against twelve ounces of pork or beef).

The total monthly ration per person is approximately two and a half pounds of beef or pork, or about three and a quarter pounds of chicken.

In 1968, the total monthly ration of meat—with chicken virtually unavailable—was one pound per person per month.

The only item on which the ration has been reduced since 1968 is coffee, which is extremely scarce.

While the present food ration is still tight, it can be supplemented.

Children get breakfast, including meat, at school. Adults often have cafeterias at their workplaces for lunch.

And necessities are available at prices people can afford. On staples of food and clothing, the revolutionary government has held prices at the same level as twenty years ago.

People are expected to pay more for nonessentials. Rum, for example, costs about thirteen dollars a bottle.

Cigarettes are rationed at four packs a week, at twenty cents a pack. Additional packs can be bought at \$1.20.

Unlike all the rest of Latin America, there is no hunger in Cuba. □

The Elections for Iran's Parliament

Elections for Iran's national parliament are scheduled for March 14, with a second round to be held April 3. Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini has announced that the issue of the U.S. hostages and the extradition of the shah will be decided by this elected parliament.

Campaigning has begun, with a number of political parties fielding candidates. In addition, a number of workers have announced independent candidacies and are seeking support from the *shoras* (committees) in their factories and in their neighborhoods.

The Islamic Republican Party, which supports Khomeini, is running a number of candidates. Members of Iran's ruling Islamic Revolutionary Council are also supporting one or another candidate.

Among parties on the left, the Tudeh (Communist) Party, Revolutionary Workers Party (HKE), Mujahedeen, Fedayeen, and others have announced candidacies.

The HKE candidates are calling for the

election of an anti-imperialist parliament based on the Iranian working class, which they explain is the only force able to guarantee that the anti-imperialist struggle will continue and lead all the oppressed to victory.

In the now twice-weekly issues of the HKE newspaper, *Kargar*, interviews with several of the independent worker's candidates are being featured. The HKE has participated in and helped to build the anti-imperialist demonstrations in solidarity with the Muslim Students Following the Imam's Line.

The Iranian Socialist Workers Party (HKS) is calling for a workers and socialist united front in the elections and has offered to help workers committees presenting independent candidates in the elections.

Candidates of the Mujahedeen have been holding campaign rallies throughout Iran, many of which have attracted thousands of supporters. In several cities these

rallies have been attacked by *hezbollah*—"followers of the party of god." These are the same forces that attacked meetings, offices, and headquarters of leftist political groups last summer.

Following these attacks, President Abolhassan Bani-Sadr criticized the *hezbollah* for breaking "order and discipline."

In an interview in the Paris daily *Le Monde* in early February, Bani-Sadr had indicated interest in a "dialogue" with Mujahedeen leader Massoud Rajavi. Rajavi had been ruled off the ballot in the presidential elections because he had not voted for Iran's new constitution.

Representatives of the Kurdish Democratic Party in Iran are asking that they be allowed to field their own candidates from the province of Kurdistan.

Reprinted on the following pages are election statements issued by the Iranian Revolutionary Workers Party (HKE) and the Iranian Socialist Workers Party (HKS), two wings of the Iranian section of the Fourth International. □

Program of Iranian HKE

Working Class Will Carry Forward the Anti-Imperialist Struggle

By Janice Lynn

The Iranian Revolutionary Workers Party (HKE) is fielding eight candidates in five cities throughout Iran in the upcoming parliamentary elections.

The three candidates from Tehran are HKE leaders Shohreh Amin, Babak Zahraie, and Mahmoud Sayrafiezadeh, who was the HKE candidate for president of Iran in January.

In oil-producing Khuzestan province in southern Iran, Hamid Shahrabi is the HKE candidate from the city of Abadan and Mustafa Gorgzadeh from Ahwaz. Both candidates were recently released from prison following an international defense effort by supporters of the Iranian revolution who pointed out that the HKE prisoners were innocent of any crime. As a result of this defense campaign, these two anti-shah and anti-imperialist fighters are known and respected in Khuzestan.

In Gilan province in the north, Jalil Vatandoust is the HKE candidate from the port city of Bandar-e Enzeli. Hadi Adib-Moradi, another one of the former HKE

prisoners, and Hooshang Sepehri, whose four brothers died fighting against the shah, are running from the city of Rasht.

The HKE campaign centers around three major planks aimed at strengthening the struggle against U.S. imperialism:

1. Solidarity with the Muslim Students Following the Imam's Line who have played a leading role in the current anti-imperialist upsurge. They stress the need for further mass mobilizations to defend the students and call on the students to continue their exposure of U.S. spy documents in the embassy.

2. Unity of the factory *shoras* (committees) in their common struggles and the formation of united *shoras* in the cities and rural villages. This, says the HKE, will aid in mobilizing all the toilers to advance the fight against imperialist exploitation and oppression.

3. Support for building "the army of 20 million" to defend the country from U.S. imperialist threats. The HKE calls for arming and mobilizing the population

through the workers and peasants *shoras*.

The HKE calls for workers' representatives to be elected to the parliament. Only the Iranian working class, the socialists explain, has the power to consistently carry forward the anti-imperialist struggle. They are urging workers to run independent campaigns based on their factory and neighborhood *shoras*.

The HKE explains that the gains of the first year of the Iranian revolution have raised the question of how to take decisive and fundamental measures to remove the imperialist yoke once and for all.

They propose a series of measures to accomplish this:

- Abolishing economic dependence on imperialism by nationalization and expropriation, without compensation, of all capital, banks, and industries that are the property of the imperialists, placing them under control of the workers *shoras*.

- Implementation of a government monopoly of foreign trade.

- Exposing and abolishing all military

pacts signed with Washington or other capitalist powers under the shah's regime.

- Expropriating and reopening privately owned companies that have shut down so as to create jobs for unemployed workers, and placing these enterprises under control of shoras.

- Implementation of public works projects, such as building schools, hospitals, nurseries, parks, libraries, and, above all, housing to create productive jobs for all Iranians.

- Reviving agriculture by granting peasants' demands for land, and implementation of a revolutionary agrarian program that would distribute the land of the big landowners and capitalists, under control of the rural shoras.

- For a thirty-five hour workweek with no reduction in pay to provide jobs.

- For an immediate national plan to eliminate illiteracy, provide health care for all, unemployment insurance, and complete retirement benefits.

- Releasing all facts about the imperialist blockade and the capitalist sabotage of production by opening the capitalists' books to inspection by the shoras.

Rights for Nationalities and Women

To unite all of Iran's nationalities in the struggle against imperialism, the HKE calls for granting full national rights to the oppressed Kurdish, Azerbaijani, Baluchi, Arab, and Turkoman nationalities. It calls for the withdrawal of all troops from the regions of these nationalities.

The HKE also points to the massive participation by women in the movement to overthrow the shah and their important role in the current anti-imperialist strug-

gles. In order to broaden their participation in these decisive anti-imperialist battles, all obstacles should be removed by establishing equal rights for women. This includes equal pay for equal work, free day care centers, equal rights in marriage and divorce, and the right to make their own decisions about contraception and abortion.

The HKE calls for the creation of a government that is committed to the interests of workers and peasants. The role of the shoras in the urban and rural areas is decisive in this regard, says the HKE. To ensure the success of the anti-imperialist struggle and guarantee the gains of the revolution, a workers and peasants government—a government of the majority—based on delegates elected by the shoras is needed.

Provincial Campaigns

The HKE candidates in Khuzestan Province, Shahrabi and Gorgzadeh, are proposing several measures to solve the problems caused by the recent massive flooding there. They call for all the resources of the capitalists and big landlords to be put at the disposal of the victims of the flood. Another major part of their program calls for recognizing the national rights of the Arab nationality in Khuzestan in order to strengthen the popular base of the "army of 20 million."

In Bandar-e Enzeli, HKE candidate Jalil Vatandoust is campaigning in support of the fishermen's struggles and for the creation of fishermen's shoras.

Vatandoust points to the positive example set by the thirty-seven shoras that have united in Gilan province and by the

creation of a coordinating committee for nineteen neighborhood shoras in Bandar-Enzeli. These neighborhood shoras developed out of struggles over land and housing questions, uniting against the landlords' exploitation. Vatandoust explains that the neighborhood shoras can deal with problems ranging from helping needy families to controlling the municipal government and electing the mayor.

In Rasht, HKE candidates Adib-Moradi and Sepehri are solidarizing with the workers in the big clothing and carpet factories and the smaller fiber factories. These workers organized themselves into shoras during bitter fights against the owners' attempts to lower their living standards and sabotage the economy. Rug workers have been conducting a sit-in protesting the suspension of three members of their shoras. The HKE candidates have spoken out in support of this struggle.

Unemployment is also a big issue in Rasht. A sit-in of 5,000 unemployed workers had resulted in a promise by the governor to provide 500 new jobs. But, nothing happened. The HKE candidates are calling for a major public works program to provide jobs and a thirty-five hour workweek with no reduction in pay. This would also make it possible, say the HKE candidates, for the workers to have more time to participate in defense of the revolution and its gains.

In Tehran, the HKE candidates report a good reception to their campaign, especially among the workers who have been participating in demonstrations in solidarity with the Muslim Students Following the Imam's Line. □

Statement of Iranian HKS

Forward to Building a Workers and Socialist United Front

[The Iranian Revolutionary Workers Party (HKE) and the Iranian Socialist Workers Party (HKS) are both part of the Iranian section of the Fourth International. The accompanying article describes the position of the HKE on the March 14 parliamentary elections in Iran. The following is a statement on those elections issued February 2 by the executive committee of the HKS.]

* * *

The Islamic Revolutionary Council has announced that all political parties, organizations and groups, holding any kind of ideology, can participate in the election of the parliament. We welcome this position, if it is not merely words, and state that we are prepared to participate in these elections.

Our demand from the Islamic Revolutionary Council, and the demand of all the responsible and committed revolutionary forces, is that it must remain loyal to its words and that it must clearly and unconditionally guarantee all the necessary conditions for the free election campaigns of different candidates so that there remain no hesitations and no suspicions in this regard for anyone or any group.

We will not recognize any limitations on the election campaigns. By our participation in the elections, we will fight against any limitations officially announced or unofficially imposed on the elections. Restriction of political freedoms in the election of the first parliament of the revolutionary period will severely damage the prestige of the Iranian revolution. The Islamic Revolu-

tionary Council bears the direct responsibility for any undemocratic measures or any sabotage throughout the election campaigns.

We clearly state that our participation in these elections in no way implies that we support the new constitution or the manner in which it was drafted and ratified. The constitution must defend the interests of the toiling and oppressed masses and must be drafted and ratified by the direct participation of their representatives in a democratic and revolutionary constituent assembly. We will continue our struggle for the convening of such an assembly.

It is clear that we do not accept the kind of government specified in the new consti-

tution. In order to resolve the devastating crisis imposed on our country by capitalism and imperialism, political power must be centralized in the hands of the workers and toilers of the cities and rural areas. The establishment of a workers and peasants government, based on the independent soviets of toilers, is the immediate and central task of the Iranian revolution. We will continue our struggle to realize this task.

To prevent the participation of political forces in the elections upon the pretext that they have not accepted the "constitution" is an undemocratic measure taken against the aims of the revolution and against the interests of the toiling and oppressed masses of the society. Besides, such a decision is illegal. Even in the new constitution itself, consideration is given for the possibility of its alteration.

By participation in the elections we aim to help to organize the independent front of workers and toilers and to present the only real and revolutionary solution, i.e. the socialist and anti-imperialist solution for resolving the present crisis of society and taking forward the Iranian revolution.

The only road to the victory of the revolution is through the unity of workers and toilers in independent nationwide soviets, through the struggle for the complete expropriation of capitalism and imperialism, and through the establishment of workers' control of social production. The demands of all the oppressed in society can only be realized by such a militant unity.

Without fighting against the capitalist exploiting and oppressive system, there is no way to attain the basic tasks of the revolution: civil and political freedoms, establishment of a democratic regime, the abolishing of landlordism combined with an agrarian reform based on the interests of poor peasants, emancipation of the nationalities of Iran from the yoke of any kind of national oppression and the realization of their right to self-determination, full and equal rights for women, and the realization of other basic demands of the oppressed masses of Iran.

By our participation in the elections and by presenting and explaining the *action program of the toilers*, which contains our

program for the struggle and for solving the present crisis in the society, we will do our best to forge the militant unity of workers and toilers and to mobilize their independent nationwide action.

In order to make this struggle as effective as possible, the unity of all forces representing workers and toilers is indispensable. We invite all the individuals, groups, and parties that understand the importance of developing the independent struggle of the toiling classes and the importance of strengthening their organized ranks to participate in the elections by building a *workers and socialist united front*, i.e. the anti-imperialist and anticapitalist front, and thereby help to further the cause of developing the struggle of the toilers and the oppressed of Iran.

The central role in building such a workers and socialist united front must be played by the working class itself. The Iranian working class, by organizing factory committees in most of the production units, has established the first foundation stones of workers' power. The struggle for uniting these factory committees on a national scale will clear the way for establishing workers' power in the country as a whole. The direct intervention of these workers committees in the elections of the parliament is an important step towards their unity and towards their intervention in determining the politics of the country. We hereby announce that we are prepared to give any help to the workers committees who wish to present their independent candidates in the elections. □

Families of Hostages Denounce Carter's Policies

By Janice Lynn

President Carter's refusal even to acknowledge the U.S. government's role in backing the tyrannical regime of the shah of Iran has come under fire by families of several of the Americans being held in the U.S. embassy in Tehran.

In a March 4 televised appearance in Washington, the family of hostage John E. Graves called on Carter to apologize to Iran for American actions there. This public denunciation of U.S. policy in Iran was something the Graves family had been considering from the beginning. But the State Department had strongly discouraged any public statements by the hostages' families.

Graves's wife Bonnie told reporters, "We have to stop meddling in other people's affairs. We can't continue in our neo-colonialist approach.

"We are now urging people to pressure their Congressmen for a total re-examination of our foreign policy," she continued.

Graves's 28-year-old daughter, Lizette, added, "We're going to have to admit to what past administrations did in Iran and say we're sorry and we won't do it again."

The Graves family cited embassy documents released by the militants in Tehran that warned of the dangers of admitting the shah into the United States. They said the Carter administration had violated all the hostages' rights when it allowed the shah in anyway.

On the question of the shah's return to Iran, the Graves family said the U.S. government had its priorities mixed in putting the shah ahead of its own citizens' safety.

The day after the Graves's television appearance, other families of the American hostages also began to speak out.

The parents of army warrant officer Joseph Hall said from their home in Little Falls, Minnesota, that they favored a trial for the deposed shah and his return to Iran if he is found guilty.

Mrs. Hall said she had learned a lot about Iranian politics since her son was taken hostage. "I've never had a great deal of hatred in my heart for anybody," she said, "but I'm developing some from what I hear about the Shah."

Barbara Timm, mother of marine Sgt. Kevin Hermening said she was asking Carter to make a national apology to the Iranian people. She said she had written a letter to *The Milwaukee Sentinel* that said in part, "If we have wronged a nation we must humble ourselves to at least apologize."

On January 21, Toni Sickmann, mother of Sgt. Rodney (Rocky) Sickmann, one of the marines being held at the U.S. embassy, had told the *St. Louis Globe-Democrat* she was "urging an immediate trial for the deposed Shah of Iran."

"I am bitter, but I'm not so much bitter at the students," she said. "They want to see some justice done. There's been a lot of injustice done in [Iran], and there's been a lot of people in this country involved in it."

She placed the oil companies at the top of the list of those trying to block a just solution of the embassy crisis.

As these families are well aware, Carter is no more concerned about the Americans in the embassy than he is about the Iranian people. There is a simple—and just—way to free the hostages: send back the shah. □

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Pol Pot Cronies Admit 'Errors' and 'Forgive' U.S. War Crimes

By Fred Feldman

Khmer Rouge units are making no headway in their battle to topple the Heng Samrin regime in Kampuchea. But the top leaders evidently still manage to enjoy life.

This emerged from a recent series of articles in the *New York Times* by correspondent Henry Kamm. Kamm visited the main base camp of Pol Pot's forces in northern Kampuchea at the end of February.

Since being driven from Pnompenh in January 1979, the Khmer Rouge have held thousands of Kampuchean captives, submitting them to forced labor and stealing food supposedly provided for them by international relief agencies.

But the "spartan" lifestyle that the Khmer Rouge commanders impose on ordinary Kampuchean is not for the leaders themselves.

"The camp, recently built, is the latest in jungle luxury," wrote Kamm in the March 4 *New York Times*.

"The knowledge of the hunger of Cambodia, so painfully visible anywhere else on the border, was crowded out by ample supplies of food brought from Bangkok. The meals were French, except for the prime minister's banquet, which featured an infinite variety of Cambodian, Chinese and Western dishes. The best Thai beer, American soft drinks, Johnnie Walker Black Label Scotch, bottled water, soda and ice brought from Bangkok hundreds of miles away."

But haute cuisine could not hide the desperate political and military straits of the Khmer Rouge.

Kamm described them as holding only widely separated enclaves along the border, completely dependent on the Thai regime for lines of supply and communication.

"A visitor's impression was that Mr. Khieu Samphan is the nominal political leader of a guerrilla movement that is headed by former Prime Minister Pol Pot as military Commander in Chief and that governs no significant parts of the population or territory," Kamm stated on March 2.

Pol Pot and his aides want a massive increase in aid from Washington and its allies as their only chance of presenting a serious challenge to Heng Samrin. But the revulsion of working people all over the world against the crimes of the Khmer Rouge regime has been an insuperable obstacle to a more open and active stand by Washington.

Khmer Rouge diplomacy now centers on

cosmetic measures aimed at removing this obstacle.

The latest ploy, for which Kamm was invited into the jungle, was a public criticism of some past Khmer Rouge policies by Deputy Prime Minister Ieng Sary.

"Mr. Ieng Sary," Kamm wrote February 29, "said Cambodia should have allowed



IENG SARY: Desperate to reverse Khmer Rouge's sagging fortunes.

families to live together rather than separate them into work brigades, allowed schools to function normally and not imposed collectivization or abolish private property or the use of currency. It should also have permitted freedom of worship, he said."

Ieng Sary denied mass extermination, but admitted "abuses," attempting to shift the blame to local commanders. "Each region constituted a small kingdom. They ran their own affairs," he said of Pol Pot's four years in power.

While claiming that he personally was opposed to the expulsion of the urban population that took place in April 1975, Ieng Sary tried to defend it. "He said the decision, which was fatal to countless city dwellers, was made out of fear that Vietnam would have infiltrated the cities, killed Cambodia's leaders and 'taken us quickly, as they did Laos.'"

This statement is noteworthy from two standpoints. First, it is further confirmation that fear and hatred of the Vietnam-

ese revolution was, from the outset, a major factor behind the reactionary and repressive course charted by the Khmer Rouge when it took power in 1975.

Second, the reference to Laos was evidently intended to win sympathy from Washington and other imperialist capitals by reminding them how much better off they were with the Pol Pot regime than with the government that took power in Laos in December 1975. Unlike the Khmer Rouge, the Pathet Lao sought to retain the support it had won among workers, peasants, and the urban poor. The result has been a deepening social revolution and the forging of a tight alliance with Vietnam against Washington's pressure.

Having sought absolution over a few "errors," the Khmer Rouge commanders got down to appeals for more help from the capitalist West.

Kamm reported in the March 1 *New York Times*:

"Sounding deeply pessimistic, Mr. Ieng Sary said that no single group could succeed in driving Vietnam from Cambodia. 'We alone also cannot succeed. We need international support. Not necessarily with armed forces, but economic, political and diplomatic pressure can do it.'"

Khieu Samphan thanked the U.S. government for helping the Khmer Rouge keep Kampuchea's seat in the United Nations. "Your interests and ours coincide."

"Our main concern," he emphasized, "is to fight to drive all the Vietnamese forces out of Cambodia and defend our nation, our people and our race."

Khieu Samphan also gave Kamm a taste of the racist program that is used to hold the Khmer Rouge units together. He and the other Khmer Rouge leaders "never used the words 'Vietnam' or 'Vietnamese' but always the racially contemptuous 'Yoon.'"

Khieu Samphan asked that the crimes of the Pol Pot regime be forgotten. "If we talk about the past we will never, never finish. Everybody has a past."

In return, he said, the Khmer Rouge leaders stood ready to forget the U.S. war in Kampuchea.

In the name of forgiveness, Pol Pot calls on the U.S. imperialists who devastated Kampuchea during the war to unite with the wing of the Khmer Rouge that committed barbaric atrocities in its wake in order to smash those who fought against both.

It can be safely predicted that such appeals will win Pol Pot no new friends among the working people of the world. □

AROUND THE WORLD

Petr Uhl in Czech Maximum Security Prison

Petr Uhl, a leading Czechoslovakian civil rights activist sentenced to five years in prison last October, is now in the infamous Mirov prison fortress. He is being held in solitary confinement.

Uhl is a leader of the Czechoslovakian civil rights movement Charter 77 and its subgroup, the Committee for the Defense of the Unjustly Persecuted (VONS). Simply for forming VONS, Uhl and five other Charter 77 activists were convicted of committing subversive acts against the Czechoslovak state and its international interests.

The sentences against the Charter 77 members have provoked widespread revulsion among workers in Western Europe; the Italian, British, and French Communist parties have joined the protest.

Among the evidence against the Charter 77 activists was their dissemination of documents showing that Czechoslovak courts had repeatedly acted as instruments of police repression. The Czech government, contending its courts are ruled by law alone, cited these documents of evidence of slanderous subversion.

Since the trial, however, the defendants' charges about the nature of the Czechoslovak courts have been irrefutably confirmed with photographic evidence. By chance, one of the defendants, Vaclav Benda, lived in an apartment across the street from the court house where they were tried. A photograph of the courthouse taken from Benda's window shows the apartment was being filmed by a videotape camera. And the cable from the videotape camera leads to the window of the office of the presiding judge!

Mirov fortress, where Uhl is being forced to serve out his sentence, is well-known for its inhumane conditions. Letters and postcards expressing solidarity with Uhl can be sent to him at the following address:

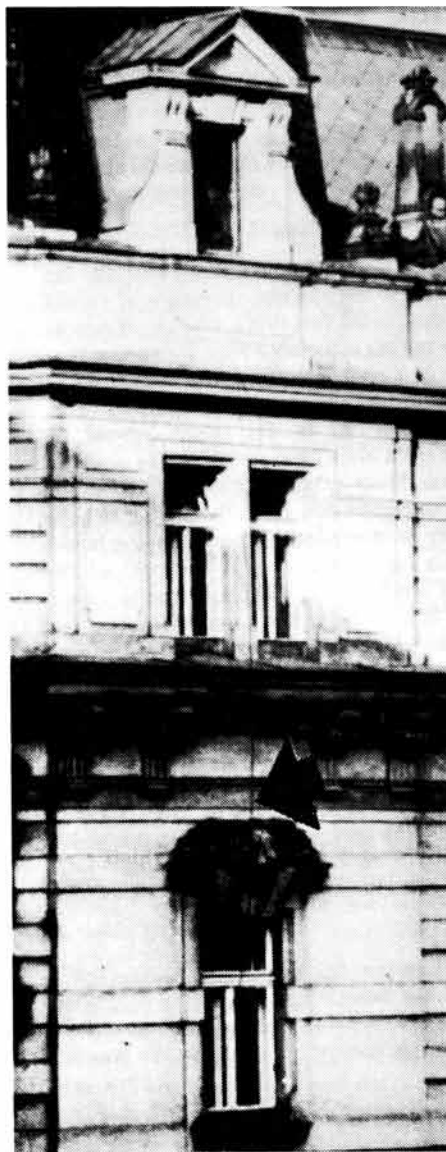
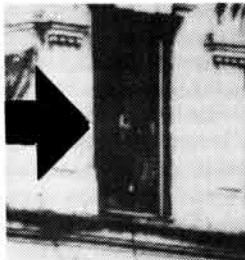
Petr Uhl 8 10 1941
PS 1/7, 789 53 NVS MS Mirov
Czechoslovakia

Dutch Police Attack Squatters

In response to a severe housing shortage in Amsterdam, a group of squatters occupied a municipal apartment building in the Dutch capital on February 29. Most of them were students and workers.

The Dutch government quickly sent riot police against the squatters, leading to clashes in which twenty-five persons were injured. Two days later, one thousand police, equipped with bulldozers, armored

Photo taken from Vaclav Benda's flat shows videotape camera in top window, with wire leading down to judge's office.



cars, and six Centurion tanks again attacked the squatters and tore down the barricades that had been erected.



Hugo Blanco Files Presidential Candidacy

On February 27 Hugo Blanco filed his candidacy for president of Peru in the May 18 elections. The slate's two vice-presidential candidates are Ricardo Napurí and Enrique Fernández Chacón.

Blanco is a leader of the Revolutionary Workers Party (PRT), the Peruvian section of the Fourth International. Napurí is a leader of the Revolutionary Marxist Workers Party (POMR), while Fernández heads Peru's Socialist Workers Party (PST).

The PRT is also running a slate of candidates in the congressional elections that will take place the same day.

Although in January the Peruvian left had coalesced around two electoral fronts—the Revolutionary Left Alliance (ARI) running Blanco, and Left Unity (UI) running Genaro Ledesma—both fronts broke up in the period just prior to the final filing date for the elections. A subsequent *IP/I* article will report this development in more detail.

Blanco's PRT ticket is centering its campaign on the need "for a workers government, without bosses or generals."

Blanco will be on a speaking tour of seven European countries from March 12 through March 21 to talk about his campaign.

Eight More Turkomans Found Murdered in Iran

The bodies of eight more members of the oppressed Turkoman nationality were discovered February 25 near the Turkoman city of Gonbad-e Kavus. This followed the murder of four Turkoman leaders discovered several days earlier.

Iranian president Abolhassan Bani-Sadr has called for an investigation of the murders.

The four Turkoman leaders were also members of the Fedayeen, a left-wing organization that participated in the armed struggle against the shah.

The March 1 Paris daily *Le Monde* reports a demonstration of some 20,000 in Tabriz February 28 protesting the assassinations. Organized by the Fedayeen, the demonstration was attacked by right-wingers; twelve people were reported injured.

The murders followed a week of clashes in early February between local Turkomans in northeastern Iran and Pasdaran, a militia loyal to the central government. The Turkomans were protesting the con-

tinued presence of landlords in Gonbad-Kavus.

U.S. Tries to Export Toxic Wastes

U.S. companies are having a difficult time finding ways to dispose of the millions of gallons of highly toxic chemical wastes generated each year by American industry. Since the scandal over the dumping of wastes in Love Canal in New York, it has been much harder to dispose of the wastes within U.S. borders.

As a result, waste disposal companies have been approaching West African and Caribbean countries with offers to pay several hundred dollars for each 55-gallon barrel they are allowed to dump in those countries. One Colorado company has offered to pay \$25 million to the West African nation of Sierra Leone for the right to dump toxic wastes there.

News of the offer touched off demonstrations in Sierra Leone and other West African countries. A newspaper in Lagos, Nigeria, called the offer "nauseating" and accused Sierra Leone's President Shiaka Stevens of being willing to poison his people. President Stevens was eventually forced to decide against the proposal.

The idea of foisting off toxic wastes on other countries is simply an extension of basic U.S. export policy.

U.S. companies regularly export products that have been banned for sale in the United States because they are too hazardous. Pesticides such as DDT, kepone, aldrin, dieldrin, eptachlor, and chlordane—all banned for use in the United States—are produced in huge quantities for sale abroad.

In 1978, when the U.S. government banned sales of a type of pacifier than can cause babies to suffocate, the manufacturers then exported 120,000 of the pacifiers to Australia.

Winstrol, a synthetic male hormone banned in the U.S. when it was found to stunt growth, was exported to Brazil where it was sold as an appetite stimulant for children!

Depo-Provera, an injectable birth control drug, was banned from use in the U.S. because it is suspected of causing cancer and birth defects, and suppresses the production of mothers' milk. Now its manufacturer, The Upjohn Company, exports it.

Edward Cohen of the White House's consumer affairs office agreed that there might be a moral problem with these sales. "Perhaps we have an ethical responsibility not to dump on unsuspecting nations products that we won't use here," he acknowledged.

"On the other hand," he added, "we can't be the world's nanny."

In a display of cynicism that ought to win some sort of prize, the February 27 *Washington Post* ran an editorial about the export of dangerous substances to unsuspecting customers in which it raised what it sees as a moral dilemma. The editorial asked: "Does the United States

have a moral responsibility to prevent the export of a substance it knows—or thinks—is dangerous? Or does the making of such judgments constitute unacceptable intrusions on the sovereignty of other nations?" The concern of the *Washington Post's* editors for national sovereignty is simply touching.

British Athletes Oppose Olympic Boycott

Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher is one of the most enthusiastic boosters of a boycott of the summer Olympic Games in Moscow. But her view is not shared by most British athletes likely to qualify for the Olympic team.

In a March 4 poll of its members by the International Athletes Club, 78 of 108 British athletes considered Olympic contenders agreed to sign a letter reaffirming their intention to compete in Moscow. Even among those who did not sign, there was not a single voice raised in support of a boycott.

The club also announced it was preparing to raise the money needed to send the team in the event the Thatcher government convinces the British Olympic committee to submit.

On March 3, ten British athletes, all winners of gold medals in previous Olympic competitions, released an "open letter to the world" in which they stated that politicians were "dangerously misguided" in pushing for the boycott.

Judge in El Salvador Orders Release of BPR, LP-28 Leaders

On March 3 a special magistrate in El Salvador ordered the release of three leftist leaders who had been arrested on February 25. The three are Juan Chacón, general secretary of the Revolutionary People's Bloc (BPR), and Carlos Argueta and José Canenguez, leaders of the February 28 People's Leagues (LP-28). The judge ruled on grounds of insufficient evidence.

The arrests of the BPR and LP-28 leaders had sparked protests both in El Salvador and abroad. Police had initially refused to acknowledge that the three were even being held.

The same day that Chacón, Argueta, and Canenguez were released, however, the bodies of fourteen young people were discovered in the capital city of San Salvador and the nearby town of Ilophago. All had been shot in the head or back and at least one of the youths had also been strangled.

Since the beginning of 1980, more than 600 people have been killed in El Salvador as the police and army try to crush the growing revolutionary wave in the country.

Spanish Rightists Sentenced for Murder of Five Left-wing Lawyers

Five rightists were sentenced to prison by a Madrid court on March 4 for a 1977

attack on a leftist law office in which five lawyers were killed and four others were gravely wounded. The attack is known as the Atocha massacre, after the street where it took place.

José Fernández Cerra and Carlos García Juliá, the gunmen who carried out the attack, were each sentenced to 193 years in prison for the five murders. Francisco Albadalejo, a former Francoist union official who helped plan the attack, received a 73-year sentence.

The court also sentenced Leocadio Jiménez Caravaca, who supplied the guns, to four years, and Gloria Huerquedas to one year for helping the assailants. A sixth participant, Fernando Lerdo de Tejada, remains at large after escaping from prison last year.

Since the murder sentences are to be served concurrently, the maximum time any of the rightists would spend in jail is 30 years.

The trial took place against the backdrop of mounting terrorist attacks against left-wing and Basque activists. In recent weeks members of the Francoist Fuerza Nueva (New Force) organization, which has one representative in the Spanish parliament, have murdered three activists in Spain.

During the trial, rightists demonstrated in the courtroom for the release of the murderers.

Steps are also being taken, however, to build a broad antifascist movement in Spain to confront the growing rightist attacks.

New Information on Chile Miners Settlement

Since we reported the end of the strike by nearly 11,000 workers at Chile's El Teniente copper mine in our February 25 issue, more information has become available on the terms of their settlement.

The strikers voted to return to work and accept a 9 percent wage increase, an offer they had turned down previously. The strikers had been demanding a 33 percent pay hike.

The miners did succeed, however, in winning other significant benefits. Among these are improved health and housing benefits, a quarterly cost-of-living adjustment, vacation and holiday bonuses, and increased production bonuses.

The fact that the El Teniente workers were able to win even these concessions, well short of their initial demands, from the government-owned mining company is a victory for the Chilean working class. A new labor law promulgated by the ruling military junta last July contains such blatantly antilabor provisions that since then only five of some 400 legal strikes have resulted in any gains for the striking workers.

The ruling junta was forced to let the El Teniente strike take place despite the fact that by law strikes are prohibited in the copper, coal, and maritime industries.

Yemen: Key to the Arabian Peninsula

By David Frankel

[First of three parts]

During the 1950s the Arab world and Iran were swept by an upsurge of the colonial revolution. The Egyptian monarchy was overthrown in 1952-53, and the continuing radicalization in Egypt was symbolized by the nationalization of the Suez Canal in 1956. The shah of Iran almost lost his throne in 1953. The Iraqi monarchy was destroyed in 1958. And the Algerian masses, after a war of liberation that lasted eight years, finally threw off the yoke of French rule in 1962.

Today, U.S. policymakers are clearly afraid that the Iranian revolution, the tenacity of the Palestinian freedom fighters, and the struggle in Afghanistan will usher in a new period of revolutionary upsurge in the Middle East. Above all, they fear for the future of the Saudi Arabian monarchy.

Right after the overthrow of the shah, in February and March 1979, Washington used the pretext of an uprising in North Yemen and a revival of the ongoing conflict between North and South Yemen to signal its intentions in the area. President Carter ordered a carrier task force to the Arabian Sea and rushed American advisers to North Yemen. Bypassing Congress, he began delivery of some \$390 million in sophisticated weaponry earmarked for North Yemen. (See *IP/I*, March 19, 1979, p. 260.)

In their propaganda around this incident, the imperialists identified the threat of revolution in the Arabian Peninsula with the regime in the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen (South Yemen). Washington was particularly upset by the presence of Soviet and Cuban advisers in the PDRY.

When Saudi Arabia was rocked by an uprising last November, articles in the capitalist media charged that the rebels had been trained in South Yemen, although not a shred of proof was offered for this claim.

There is, of course, nothing unusual about bourgeois propagandists trying to depict the threat of popular rebellion in terms of the machinations of one or another regime. However, Washington's mounting concern over this part of the world greatly increases the likelihood that Yemen will become a point of confrontation between imperialism and the colonial revolution. So it's especially important that revolutionists become acquainted with events in this strategically located country.

The majority of the people in the Ara-

bian Peninsula live in Yemen—at least 7 million in the North and nearly 2 million in the South. About 1.5 million Yemeni workers help keep the Saudi Arabian economy running.

Thus, what happens in Yemen is central to the politics of the whole Arabian Peninsula, and social revolution there is seen by both the Saudi regime and its imperialist backers as a deadly threat. In this regard, they are already alarmed by the fact that over the past decade the masses in the PDRY have won substantial social gains and that the regime there has taken extensive anti-imperialist and anticapitalist measures.

Overthrow of the Imamate

At one time all Yemen was ruled by an Imam who combined the functions of a political and religious leader. But South Yemen broke away from the Imamate in 1728, and power there passed into the hands of various local sultans. In 1839 the British conquered the port of Aden and incorporated it into their empire. Gradually, the British extended their domination over all of South Yemen.

While developing Aden as a naval base on the route to India, the British sought to perpetuate the economic backwardness and tribal divisions in the hinterland, playing off tribal groups against one another and using tribal rulers as a counterweight against the aspirations of the workers in Aden.

This policy was complemented by the continuation of the Imamate in the North. In order to maintain their rule, the Imams systematically prevented any modernization of the country. Under the Imamate, not a single modern factory was allowed to operate. No money at all was spent on education by the state. In 1962 there were only fifteen doctors—all foreigners—and 600 hospital beds in the whole country. These, naturally, were reserved for the ruling elite.

For the masses of poor peasants and sharecroppers in North Yemen, the Imamate meant not only backwardness, illiteracy, and disease, but also hunger. Eighty percent of the poor peasant's crops were taken by various feudal levies.

Not surprisingly, such conditions led to rebellion. Isolated peasant uprisings were common.

The decisive blow to the Imamate came in September 1962, however. A group of young army officers influenced by the Arab nationalist ideas fanned by the revolution in Egypt seized control of Sanaa,

North Yemen's capital, and proclaimed the Yemen Arab Republic.

Cheering crowds welcomed the overthrow of the Imamate in the main cities of Taiz, Sanaa, and Hodeida. There were also peasant uprisings in rural areas.

A number of needed reforms—the abolition of slavery, the establishment of a national currency, and execution of some of the criminals of the old regime—were carried out by the new republican government. But except for confiscating the land and property of the Imam and his family, the republicans did nothing to touch the oppressive social relations in the countryside or to carry out a land reform.

The republican leadership, which included rich merchant landowners and some dissident tribal leaders, suppressed left-wing forces that tried to push forward radical social measures.

As a result the Imam, with help from Saudi Arabia and Britain, was able to rally a royalist army based on the mountain tribes. The republic, meanwhile, received aid from Nasser's regime in Egypt. What followed was a civil war that lasted eight years and cost up to 200,000 lives. At the height of the war, as many as 80,000 Egyptian troops were stationed in North Yemen.

Because the republican leadership had no social program capable of inspiring and mobilizing the peasant masses, the war turned into a stalemate. Eventually, Nasser and the Saudi monarchy struck a deal. The republican government, dominated by the merchants and bourgeoisies in the towns, was left intact. But this weak central government had to coexist with the continued domination of the tribal sheikhs in the mountains.

The Saudi regime was able to continue playing off the mountain tribes against each other and against the Sanaa government, thus maintaining its dominance. And the aspirations of the masses for fundamental social change were effectively frustrated.

However, the struggle in North Yemen was not fought in vain. Although its full potential was not realized, it did eliminate the Imamate once and for all. And it also had an important effect on events in the South.

Workers Struggle in Aden

During the upsurge of the colonial revolution that followed World War II, the British considered Aden as perhaps their most stable colony. When the Iranian government under Mossadegh nationalized the British Petroleum refinery at Abadan in 1951, BP built a replacement at Aden. A British government White Paper issued in 1962 envisioned Aden, along with Singapore and the United Kingdom itself, as one of the three key points in Britain's international military network. Aden was turned into the largest Royal Air Force base outside of the British Isles.

But time had just about run out for the British Empire.

Trouble for the British arose from the very steps they took to consolidate their colonial rule. Construction of the refinery and expansion of the military base in Aden led to a big expansion in the working class. The migration of tens of thousands of peasants seeking work in Aden coincided with the fall of the Egyptian monarchy and the opening of the war in Algeria.

In 1953 Yemeni workers at the British base formed a trade union, and by December 1956 there were twenty-one unions with a membership of more than 20,000. After Britain, France, and Israel attacked Egypt in October 1956, following Nasser's nationalization of the Suez Canal, Yemeni trade unionists struck in solidarity with Egypt.

From the beginning, the trade unions in Aden combined economic and political demands—especially the demand for independence. Lord Lloyd, the British colonial minister, visited Aden in May 1956 and felt it necessary to admonish the Yemenis. As Lloyd put it:

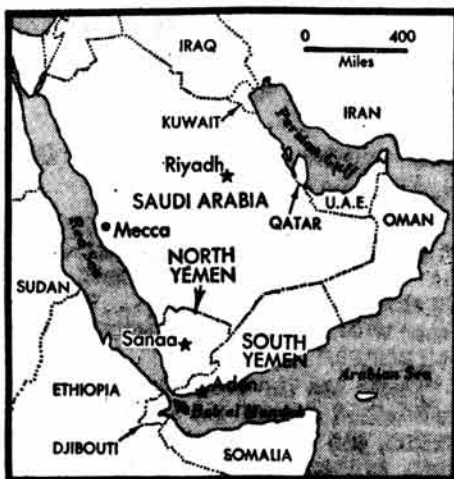
There has been much speculation recently about the political future of the Colony of Aden. Such speculation, if unrelated to practical possibilities, is harmful to the commercial interests of the Colony. . . . I should like you to understand that for the foreseeable future it would not be reasonable or sensible, or indeed in the interests of the Colony's inhabitants, for them to aspire to any aim beyond that of a considerable degree of internal self-government. (Quoted by Fred Halliday, in *Arabia Without Sultans* [Penguin Books, 1974], p. 170.)

An indication of what the British ruling class viewed as "a considerable degree of internal self-government" was conveyed in the Adeni election held in 1959. This election was the first step in a British plan to establish a federation between Aden and the British-dominated sheikhdoms in the interior of South Yemen (the so-called South Arabian Federation). The British hoped this federation would help bring to heel the nationalist working class in Aden.

Restrictions on voting established by the colonial regime meant that only 21,500 out of a population of 180,000 were allowed to vote. The nationalists boycotted these phony elections, with the result that less than 6,000 people took part.

Meanwhile, a new wave of nationalist strikes was shaking the colony. A strike by refinery workers paralyzed the port for more than a month, since ships had to go elsewhere to get fuel. In 1960 another strike by the BP workers halted activities in the port for ten more weeks.

These strikes were a matter of considerable economic as well as political concern to the British rulers. By 1964 Aden—which was the main refueling point for ships using the Suez Canal—had the fourth-largest bunkering [oil storage and refuel-



ing] trade in the world after London, Liverpool, and New York.

Repression by the colonial government finally stopped the strike wave. But in July 1962, as the British moved toward setting up their planned South Arabian Federation, the colonial regime was confronted with a general strike. In September 1962, demonstrations by tens of thousands of Adeni workers denounced the imperialist plan.

Despite the protests, the blueprint for a British-ruled federation was pushed through on September 26, 1962. On that very same night, however, the Imamate was overthrown in North Yemen. The problems were just beginning for Her Majesty's government.

Formation of the NLF

Establishment of an independent republic in the North served as a beacon for every forward-looking force in Yemen. The effect in the South was immediate, as indicated by the mass meeting in Aden September 28. The rally hailed the formation of the Yemen Arab Republic and called for the unification of the North and South.

About one-third of Aden's population was from the North, and thousands of political exiles began returning home. Meanwhile, British attacks on the nationalist movement led to a new general strike.

The British arrested trade-union leaders on frame-up charges; banned opposition papers, banners, and even pictures of Egyptian President Gamal Abdel Nasser; and passed new repressive laws, such as one making it a crime to assert that the South Arabian Federation was part of any other state (i.e., of a united Yemen). At the same time the imperialists tried to crush the mass movement in the South, they funneled arms, money, and supplies to the royalist forces in the North.

It was natural for many nationalist militants in the South to come to North Yemen following the formation of the republic. There, many of them joined in the

first battles against the royalists. They also began to meet together on the problems they faced in the South. In June 1963 they announced the establishment of the National Liberation Front (NLF).

The most important force in the formation of the NLF was the South Yemeni branch of the Arab Nationalist Movement (ANM). The ANM was a pan-Arab movement with branches throughout the Middle East. It was heavily influenced by Nasserism in the 1950s, but it broke with Nasserism in the late 1960s. Among the leaders of the ANM in the 1950s were George Habbash, who later formed the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, and Nayef Hawatmeh, who was to lead the Democratic Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine.

Other currents that participated in the formation of the NLF were local groupings based in the various sultanates. Under the British, South Yemen was split into dozens of statelets, each named after the dominant tribal group. Thus, among the components of the NLF were groups such as the Yafai Reform Front, the Mahra Youth Organization, and the Formation of the Tribes.

Finally, there were assorted groups such as the Secret Organization of Free Officers and Soldiers (ex-Yemeni mercenaries in the Saudi army), the Adeni Revolutionary Vanguard, and the Revolutionary Organization of the Youth of Occupied South Yemen.

Two things set the NLF off from previous liberation organizations in South Yemen. First was the fact that earlier organizations had been localized either in Aden or in one or another of the smaller towns. The NLF was the first group to have a base both in Aden and in the countryside.

A statement broadcast over North Yemen radio in July 1963 announced the formation of the NLF and explained this difference between it and other groups. It said:

Our aspiration in the occupied Yemeni South has now entered a phase which demands a fundamental change in the methods of the struggle to win complete independence and to overcome imperialism. The weakest point is the lack of coordination in the struggle in the Yemeni South as a whole. The major reason for this is the lack of a common command for national action in Aden and the Amirates. Another reason lies in the circumstance that the majority of the political organizations limit their activity to Aden. (Halliday, *Arabia Without Sultans*, p. 192.)

The second decisive difference between the NLF and other groups involved in the anti-imperialist struggle in South Yemen was its commitment to armed struggle.

"We thought of armed struggle after we realized that the political struggle against the British imperialist occupation of our country had failed," Abdul Fatah Ismail said in an interview in the July-August

1969 issue of the Cuban magazine, *Tricontinental*. Ismail, the general secretary of the NLF, continued: "The decision to launch armed struggle against the occupation was what distinguished us from the other parties, which continued to concentrate on political struggle and negotiations with the British."

On this basis, the NLF launched its insurrection against British colonial rule, beginning with a rebellion in the Radfan mountains initiated on October 14, 1963.

Said Nasr, a member of the ANM who later joined the NLF, described his view of the importance of the NLF's commitment to armed struggle in a 1972 interview with Joe Stork of the Middle East Research and Information Project (MERIP).

We [in the ANM] had political study groups and had much debate about what to do, since the old methods of strikes and demonstrations had reached the limits of their usefulness. We looked to Algeria and Cuba. The ANM line as it came down from Beirut was definitely not for armed struggle, but we were far enough away to be independent, and selected our own reading list.

With the revolution in the North in 1962 we knew the time had come for decisive action. The British were moving ahead with their scheme to create a puppet federal government. The question was, would we sit around forever, or would we begin the struggle?

After Radfan broke out those of us in the province who were part of the ANM went to Ta'iz [in North Yemen]. . . . We were trained in an isolated camp. There were two kinds of training: tribesmen were trained to be a liberation army fighting in the mountains and border areas; youths from towns like us were trained to work as fedayeen with explosives, and we learned how to do commando actions. (MERIP Reports #15, March 1973. Page 6.)

In May 1964 the NLF declared its political positions as follows:

1. The sultans and ministers in the South do not represent the people and do not have the right to speak in its name. They are agents of imperialism and traitors to the just Southern cause.

2. The people of the South therefore recognize none of the treaties agreed to by them with England, and will not be bound by them.

3. The National Liberation Front for Occupied South Yemen, which is now waging armed struggle against the English occupation troops in Radfan, adh-Dhali and Haushabi, which represents all the forces of the struggling people of the South and which has always believed in armed struggle as the solution to the problems of the South, presents the following demands of the people: (a) guarantee of the right to self-determination; (b) complete evacuation of the South through the liquidation of all land, sea and air bases and the liberation of the country.

4. The Liberation Front states as spokesman of the people that it will never abandon these aims and that it will continue its struggle until victory. (Halliday, *Arabia Without Sultans*, p. 193.)

In this, the NLF proved as good as its word. □

[Next: *The struggle for independence and the defeat of British imperialism.*]

Ben Kies Dies in South Africa

By Ernest Harsch

Ben M. Kies, a fighter against the South African regime's racist policies for more than four decades, died in Cape Town on December 19.

Kies spent his last hours as he spent his entire adult life—actively opposing the white supremacist system and defending those struggling for a just and nonracist society. At the time of his death, he was in court, serving as the legal representative for four activists accused under the apartheid regime's draconian Terrorism Act.

The son of a factory worker, Kies was born in Cape Town in 1917. Classified as a Coloured (a person of mixed ancestry), he learned at an early age what it is like to be a "non-European" in South Africa and to face racist discrimination in all spheres of life.

The period in which Kies grew up was a turbulent one in South African politics, and Cape Town—a traditional center of radical activism—was no exception. Many political groups and trade unions had offices in the city and antigovernment demonstrations and rallies were common.

During the early 1930s, several Trotskyist groups were formed in South Africa in opposition to the class-collaborationist policies of the Communist Party. Their main base was in Cape Town. Public lectures and debates organized by the Trotskyists drew large audiences. By the time he was barely twenty years old, Kies had been won to Trotskyism and joined the Workers Party of South Africa (WPSA), one of the two main Trotskyist groups.

In the meantime, Kies went to the University of Cape Town, where he earned Bachelor of Arts and Master of Arts degrees. He became a school teacher and taught at Trafalgar High School. Kies's abilities as an educator also found an outlet through the New Era Fellowship, a study club that discussed Marxist ideas and sought to teach young activists the basics of class politics.

In 1939, Kies represented the WPSA and the New Era Fellowship at a conference of the Non-European United Front, which marked one of the first significant attempts in South Africa to unite all three sectors of the Black population—African, Coloured, and Indian—in a common struggle against racist oppression. Kies and the other Trotskyists, however, were soon driven out of the front by its Communist Party-dominated leadership.

During the early 1940s, the Coloured population of the Western Cape rose up in a series of mass demonstrations and boycotts to oppose new segregationist measures against them, particularly the establishment of a Coloured Affairs Department (CAD). Kies was a central leader of the main group waging that struggle, the Anti-

CAD. He was also instrumental in winning the Teachers' League of South Africa to a perspective of active opposition to segregation. For twenty years he served as editor of the league's official organ, the *Educational Journal*.

In 1943 the Anti-CAD united with other Black organizations to form the Non-European Unity Movement, of which Kies was a top leader, along with I.B. Tabata and other figures. (The WPSA itself had gone underground by that time and was soon to disappear entirely as an organized force.)

In the late 1940s, Kies went abroad to spend a year of travel and study. He visited Yugoslavia to observe the socialist revolution unfolding there and to help in the country's reconstruction efforts.

Upon his return to South Africa, he published, *The Contribution of the Non-European Peoples to World Civilisation*, one of his more influential writings.

Kies's prominent role as an opponent of white supremacy made him a target of government repression. In 1948, he and nine others were charged with "incitement to public violence" and creating "racial hostility" for their part in organizing a campaign against new segregationist measures on the railways. In 1956 he was fired from his teaching post as a result of his political views. He was also banned, a form of legal restriction that bars virtually all political activity.

Unable to teach, Kies then trained as a legal advocate, becoming the first Coloured in South Africa to qualify as a barrister. In that capacity, he took up numerous political cases over the next twenty years, winning a reputation as an able defender of those persecuted by the apartheid regime for their political beliefs.

Despite sectarian criticisms of the Black Consciousness movement—the most influential Black nationalist current in South Africa today—Kies nevertheless defended supporters of the movement from government repression.

The last years of Kies's life were particularly active, coming in the wake of the massive Black rebellions of 1976 and the regime's unprecedented police crackdown. Scores of political activists charged under Pretoria's repressive laws sought him out for legal assistance.

Kies's death did not pass unnoticed in the South African press. An obituary in the December 20 issue of the liberal *Cape Times* felt obliged to describe him as a "man of determination and great intellectual brilliance" who was "an indefatigable defender of the poor and the weak. . . ."

Among opponents of apartheid, his loss will be sorely felt. □

International Capitalist Recession on Horizon in 1980

By Winfried Wolf

In May 1979 we made an analysis of the current economic situation that has since been confirmed. At that time we wrote that "there are very strong reasons to believe that a new international recession is on the horizon. It may emerge toward the end of 1979 in some countries and in 1980 in others. In the meantime the policies of the various imperialist countries, especially the United States, could be decisive at a time when they again find themselves on the horns of a dilemma. If they try to stop inflation . . . they will plunge headlong into recession. If they allow the economy to roll along or even pick up steam . . . inflation will get stronger and attempts to apply the brakes will become even more risky." [IP/I, June 25, 1979, p. 631.]

In fact the economic recession began in the United States in the middle of 1979. In Britain and Italy it started late in the second half of 1979. In France it is expected before the end of the first half of 1980. The same holds true for West Germany. There is now only one question mark regarding the big imperialist countries—the perspectives for the Japanese economy.

It is projected that the Japanese economy will experience a drop in growth rate in the second half of 1979 and the first half of 1980. But opinion is still divided on whether that country will be pulled into the whirlpool of the international recession of 1980.

The projected scenario for late 1979 and early 1980 bears a striking resemblance to the first half of 1974, which was the beginning of the most serious economic crisis in the imperialist world since 1929-32.

In the first half of 1974 all the major imperialist countries except France and Italy were heading toward a simultaneous recession. During the second half of 1974 the international economic crisis broke out, with declines in production in all the imperialist countries, including France and Italy. The tendencies toward crisis were thus generalized throughout those countries and were mutually reinforcing.

The 1979-80 scenario resembles the beginning of 1974 in yet another specific respect. The rise in oil prices (and the general increase in raw material prices), which undoubtedly had some negative effects on the economies of the imperialist countries, both in 1973-74 and in 1979-80, is being presented by the bourgeois mass media as the "number one factor in the crisis," as "the oil crisis" or the "energy crisis." The purpose is to divert attention in a classically demagogic way from the

tendencies toward crisis and the internal contradictions within the capitalist mode of production itself.

Through this the ruling class tries to divert the critical consciousness of the masses that has been awakened by the capitalist crisis toward a "foreign enemy."

This demagogic attempt to confuse the masses has gone the furthest in the United States, where it has been strengthened by the taking of hostages at the American embassy in Tehran. The American people, divided since the Vietnam war, Watergate, and the 1974-75 economic crisis, seem, at least superficially, to be united again by a nationalist wave.

In place of a discussion on the beginning of a new economic crisis and its social consequences, "national attention has been fixed on the conflagration in Iran. . . . President Jimmy Carter . . . as fire chief to the nation is the figure to whom all heads must turn. The storm-tossed presidency is back in business and with it the battered, abused president." [The Economist, December 22, 1979, p. 22.]

Underlying Features of the World Economic Situation

In order to understand the specific features of the world economic situation we must first place them in a broader and more meaningful context. Since the end of the 1960s, the international capitalist system has been in a new global social crisis. The basis of this crisis is the cyclical industrial crises that tend to reinforce each other and whose consequences affect all of society. The economic crises tend to become political crises or to reach their sharpest expression in them.

This means, in the first place, that the working class and the masses of the colonial and semicolonial countries face a gigantic attack on their standard of living and on social benefits, along with a growth in unemployment. This can already be seen as the 1976-1978/79 economic upturn draws to an end, even before the outbreak of the 1980 recession.

In nearly all the imperialist and semicolonial countries, the 1976-78 economic upturn did not lead to any significant rise in real wages (in contrast to what happened in the upturn that preceded the 1974-75 crisis). In fact, real wages often even declined during the upturn.

Furthermore, the number of unemployed—even before the new economic crisis has broken out—is already as high as it was during the depth of the last economic crisis.

In this period of increasing tendencies

toward new cyclical crises, general economic analyses become more important than short-term economic projections. In making their forecasts, the bourgeois institutions of different states and of supranational groupings like the European Economic Community (EEC) and the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD, which includes all the imperialist countries) have at their disposal the most sophisticated statistical and technical methods. But these institutions, in contrast to Marxist analysts,¹ were unable to predict the 1974-75 recession, draw an overall economic balance sheet, and determine on the basis of that balance sheet the probability of a new international recession.

The Projections . . .

On the eve of the recession that has just begun, the OECD was obliged to sharply revise downward its analyses and projections, some of which were only several weeks old, using the obvious excuse of the new "oil crisis." As the December 20, 1979, London *Financial Times* stated, the OECD was obliged to revise its already very somber predictions for 1980, which were contained in its semiannual "Economic Perspectives," on the very day the report was published. Following the increase in oil prices no economic growth whatsoever was expected in the OECD countries as a whole.

. . . And the Reality

The relationship between the reality, meaning the revised projections concerning actual economic growth, and the original forecasts is presented in Table I.

In its May 1979 analysis, the OECD had predicted a 2% growth for the OECD countries as a whole. Then in its December 1979 report it had already lowered this projection to 1.25%. In mid-December yet another downward revision lowered the prediction to 0.3% for 1980. But even this prediction will have to be corrected.

The December 1979 OECD report projects a 3% drop in the American gross national product in the first half of 1980, with an end to the recession in the second

1. In *Crise de 1974-79* Ernest Mandel wrote: "It is however necessary to place the economic evolution of the 1970s—from the inflationary boom of 1972-73 through the generalized recession of 1974-75 and the moderate upturn of 1976-77, toward a possible new recession in 1979—in a broader historic context" (Paris: Flammarion, 1978).

half of the year as the growth rate climbs to 0.25% of the GNP.

Similarly for Britain the report projects a drop of 2.8% in the first half of the year, and then a slackening in the recession in the second half, with a drop of only 0.5% in the GNP. The report forecasts that the West German GNP will grow by 2% in 1980.

All these projections seem higher than what the results will end up being.

The difference between the original OECD analyses and its more pessimistic, but more realistic, corrections does not involve whether or not there will be an international recession in 1980. Even the most "optimistic" projection by the OECD saw the growth rate of the imperialist countries as a whole falling from 3.9% in 1978 to 3.5% in 1979 and to 0.3%, practically zero, in 1980.

But if we examine *industrial production* in the OECD countries, which reflects the trends of the business cycle much more clearly than the gross national product does, we already see an absolute decline in the volume of material production. If the most "pessimistic" corrections to the OECD's figures turn out to be correct, the 1980 international recession will mark a serious new economic crisis.

In "purely economic" terms, such a crisis would be comparable to the one in 1974-75. But in the social field it would be much more severe than the previous one.

Unemployment Already Growing

A rise in unemployment—even before the recession—can be seen from the job figures. In nearly all the imperialist countries the unemployment rate at the end of 1979, at a time when the new recession has barely begun, is higher than it was in 1975 at the height of the earlier crisis. This can be seen in the figures in Table II. Although differences in the way various countries determine their unemployment rate makes it difficult to compare rates between countries, within each country the same method was used for both 1975 and 1979,

which makes that comparison highly significant.

The only reason that the total number of unemployed in the imperialist countries is still below the 17.5 million mark reached at the height of the 1974-75 crisis is because in the United States for the time being

Table II
Unemployment Rate

Country	1975	1979
	Annual Average	Month Shown
U.S.A.	8.4%	5.8% (Nov.)
Japan	1.9	2.2% (Oct.)
Britain	3.6	5.6% (Dec.)
France	3.8	5.8% (Nov.)
W. Germany	4.1	3.5% (Nov.)
Netherlands	4.7	5.0% (Nov.)
Belgium	4.5	7.3% (Oct.)
Italy	5.9	8.7% (Oct.)
Denmark	5.0	8.8% (1978)
Sweden	1.6	1.8% (Nov.)
Austria	2.0	2.1% (Oct.)
Finland	2.2	5.9% (Sept.)
Australia	5.0	5.4% (Nov.)
Canada	7.2	7.3% (Nov.)

Sources: OECD, *Economic Outlook*, Institut für Weltwirtschaftsforschung, Hamburg, 3(1979); *Financial Times*, December 24, 1979; *Wirtschaftswoche*, December 17, 1979; OECD, *Economic Outlook*, 18(1975).

there are still 2.5 million fewer unemployed than in 1974-75.

But for the Common Market countries the present figure of 6.1 million unemployed is far higher than the 1975 total of 4.5 million (*Blick durch die Wirtschaft*, September 15, 1976; *Hannoversche Allgemeine Zeitung*, December 20, 1979).

This means that the 1974-75 crisis reestablished an industrial reserve army of labor that has been largely maintained during the whole 1976-1978/79 recovery. This "army" was able to exercise its "classic" function: "The industrial reserve

army, during the periods of stagnation and average prosperity, weighs down the active army of workers; during the periods of over-production and feverish activity, it puts a curb on their pretensions." (Karl Marx, *Capital*, Vol. 1. [New York: New Left Books, 1976], p. 792.)

Run-Away Inflation

"Acceptance" of high levels of unemployment has in no way resulted in a "stable currency," as many bourgeois economists had claimed it would. In fact, the inflation rate again began to rise in 1978. In 1979 it reached a level that was only slightly lower than the highest level of 1974 (see Table III).

We should note three specific aspects of this inflationary development. First of all, the rate of economic expansion during the 1976-1978/79 recovery was considerably lower than during the "boom" that preceded the 1974-75 crisis. This means that the higher price levels of 1979 are more the result of long-term tendencies toward increasing private and public indebtedness than of a high level of economic activity.

Secondly, most imperialist countries began applying so-called "stabilization" policies very early in the 1976-1978/79 recovery phase. This meant high interest rates and credit restrictions, in contrast to what took place during the preceding expansion phase. Therefore, with very few exceptions (such as Italy), the present inflation does not stem from inflationary budgetary policies.

Finally, the current inflationary phase exposes more clearly than ever the demagogic and phony character of the so-called "wage-price spiral," according to which higher wages cause higher prices.

In recent years in most of the imperialist countries the rise in nominal wages barely equalled the rise in the cost of living. In some countries there was even a decline in real wages. Only in rare cases were there improvements in real wages, in which workers shared in the considerable growth in productivity. It is therefore impossible to maintain that the increase in the inflation rate is caused by the "excessive" growth of wages.

United States Sets the Pace

The recession began in the United States during the second quarter of 1979. Its specific starting point was determined by the administration's economic policies (which obviously flowed from the previous expansion).

Since the end of 1978 this economic policy was oriented toward "stabilization." The Federal Reserve Bank's rediscount rate—the rate at which it lends money to banks—steadily rose from 7.4% in 1978 to 12% in October 1979, which was designed to stop the growth of private demand. The growth rate of government budgets was slowed, and budgetary deficits were reduced.

This reduction in demand was combined

Table I
Change in Gross National Product from Previous Year
(Percent Increase or Decrease in Real Terms)

Country	1978	1979 OECD Projections		1980 OECD Projections	
	Real	May	December	May 1979	Dec. 1979
U.S.A.	4.0%	2.5%	2.0%	1.5%	-1.25%
Japan	5.6	6.0	5.5	4.5	4.5
W. Ger.	3.4	4.0	4.5	2.5	2.0 ¹
France	3.0	3.5	3.0	3.0	2.0
Britain	3.0	2.5	0.5	2.0	-2.0
Italy	2.0	4.5	4.0	2.0	2.0
All OECD	3.9	3.5	3.0	2.0	0.3 ²

1. Another projection from a West German bourgeois source puts it at 1.5%.

2. In the event the lower figure from West Germany turns out to be correct, this figure would be -0.2%.

Source: OECD

Table III
Rate of Increase in Cost of Living
(Percentage Increase from Previous Year)

Country	1974	1978	1979	1979
			Annual Average	End of Year
U.S.A.	11.4%	7.7%	11.5 %	12% (Oct.)
Canada	10.5	9.0	9.5	9.5 (Nov.)
Japan	24.4	3.8	4.0	4.0 (Oct.)
W. Germany	7.0	2.6	4.5	5.5 (Nov.) ¹
France	13.7	9.3	10.5	11.5 (Oct.)
Britain	15.1 ²	8.3	13.0	17.5 (Nov.)
Italy	19.1	11.9	14.5	17.0 (Oct.)
Netherlands	10.0	4.2	4.5	4.5 (Nov.)
Sweden	9.9	10.3	7.0	8.5 (Oct.)

1. In November 1979 the West German cost of living index began using a different selection of goods and services to calculate the changes in the cost of living. This new selection resulted in an immediate drop of 0.5% in the inflation rate. Even the bourgeois economists expected the opposite result and called this manipulation by the Federal Statistical Office "disturbing."

2. The highest point reached by inflation in Britain was 21.5% in 1975.

Sources: OECD, *Economic Outlook*, December 1979; OECD, *Main Economic Indicators*, May 1979; *Economist*, December 22, 1979; *Wirtschaftswoche*, December 17, 1979.

with a decline in real individual income. The small rise in nominal income was lower than the rise in the rate of inflation. Private consumption still rose in 1978 and 1979, primarily through the growth in the number of wage earners. But it did not rise in the same proportion as the GNP. This finally led to a turn in the business cycle in mid-1979.

But what we have is a *contradictory turn* in the cycle, rather than a straight line toward the crisis. There have been many commentaries devoted to the theme of the "hesitating decline," calling it "astonishing" and "unforeseen." In fact, the Carter administration's plans run the risk of being thwarted by the uneven fluctuations of the second half of 1979. The administra-

tion had hoped to "manipulate" the economy in such a way as to come out of the recession before the decisive months of the 1980 presidential campaign. That goal may very well not be achieved.

In our view, the "hesitating decline" is not at all surprising. If one begins from the concept, which is inherent to the Marxist theory of crises, that the *decisive* motor force of the industrial cycle is not overall demand, but rather the *fluctuations in profit and in the rate of profit*, then the contradictory picture becomes quite understandable.

In fact, the profits of American companies grew an average of 10% a year in both 1978 and 1979 (net profits, based on the figures reported by the companies them-

selves). The rise in gross profits (before taxes) even reached 39% for the two years taken together.

The rise in profits scarcely slowed in 1979. This was expressed toward the end of 1979 in a rather high level of corporate investment. Since there is a growing tendency for corporations to finance these investments internally, the restrictive credit policy had a more limited effect than was expected.

As a result, contrary to the Carter administration's plans, the low point of the economic crisis will most likely come toward the middle of 1980. The OECD projects a decline of 3.5% in the gross national product during the first half of 1980, followed by stagnation during the second half. The unemployment rate was expected to go from 5.9% to 7.2% in 1980. There is some doubt, however, that these projections can be achieved.

There is a danger that 1980 will see the reverse of what took place in 1979. Given the growth in excess productive capacity, there is a risk that industrial profits could fall absolutely, bringing with it a decline in investment. The demand for consumer goods, which is already being deliberately restrained, will fall even further with an increase of 1.5 million to 2 million more unemployed (total unemployment is projected to reach 7.5 to 8 million people).

The *international* recession will lead to a pronounced slowdown in international trade, if not an absolute decline, which will make it highly unlikely that a recovery could be fueled by a growth in American exports.

The only possibility for preventing the American recession from lasting throughout 1980 would be a precipitous return to deficit spending, to the growth of budget deficits and the public debt, with the risk



Hundreds of Detroit autoworkers line up to file for unemployment benefits.

of an immediate rise in the inflation rate.

But the consequences of such a policy on the international position of the dollar would be very serious, at a time when the United States already has a double-digit inflation rate. It is not at all certain that the American bourgeoisie would allow Carter to get involved in such an adventure for solely electoral ends.

By late 1979 the signs of the recession could be seen. According to the December 31, 1979, *Business Week*, production in the automobile industry had declined 15% compared to the level at the end of 1978. New housing starts had dropped 30%, and production of furniture, household appliances, steel, and nonelectrical machinery had also dropped.

Regardless of how the American recession evolves in 1980, one central fact must be noted: American imperialism was no more successful in this last cycle than in the previous one in stopping the decline in its ability to compete with its principal rivals. In 1978 productivity rose only 0.1% in the United States, and in 1979 it seems to have actually fallen in absolute terms (Table IV).

The results of this growing productivity gap on the ability of the U.S. manufacturing industry to compete can be seen by looking at Table V.

Table V
Labor Unit-Costs in
Manufacturing Industries

(Percent rise over previous year)

Country	Average		
	1967-77	1978	1979
Japan	8.1%	-1.9%	-2.0%
W. Germany	5.2	2.8	1.75
U.S.A	4.4	6.4	7.5
France	7.7	7.3	9.5
Britain	11.5	13.1	14.0
Italy	12.8	12.0	12.0

Source: OECD, *Economic Outlook*, December 1979.

Table IV
Productivity Growth Rate for the Whole Economy

(Percent change from previous year)

Country	Average	Average	1978	1979	Proj. 1980
	1963-73	1973-80			
U.S.A	1.9%	-0.1	0.1	-0.5	-1.5
Japan	8.7	3.4	4.3	4.5	3.5
W. Germany	4.6	3.1	2.9	3.5	2.5
France	4.6	2.6	3.1	3.0	2.0
Britain	3.0	0	2.2	-0.75	-1.75
Italy	5.4	1.6	2.0	3.5	1.5

Source: OECD, *Economic Outlook*, December 1979.

What has happened is that inter-imperialist competition has sharpened and the competitive position of the European and Japanese capitalists has improved. David Rockefeller summarized the situation in a dramatic way. "The world markets for modern industrial goods," he noted, "are increasingly dominated by our competitors. . . . We are increasingly living off the results of the basic research of the 1960s and its technological application at the beginning of the 1970s. This reservoir is gradually drying up. . . ."²

Is Japan the Last Pillar?

Leaving aside exceptional cases like Austria, which only involve small countries, Japan was the only imperialist country that experienced what could really be called a new boom in the course of the 1976-1978/79 recovery. In three years—1977, 1978, and 1979—the Japanese GNP rose in real terms by 5.5%. In 1977 and 1978 the boom was pushed ahead primarily by the policy of economic expansion (the budgetary deficit totalled 40% of government expenditures). In 1979 the main motor forces were a growth of family income, a fall in the exchange rate of the yen, an expansion of exports, and, to a lesser extent, a growth in corporate profits.

In 1980 it is anticipated that real Japanese economic growth will still be somewhere on the order of 3% to 4%, even though industrial production itself might tend to stagnate.

In the context of the world economic situation, the Japanese economy is to some extent a counterpole to the U.S. economy. If left to itself in a "neutral" world market (meaning neither a rise nor fall in the real volume of world trade), the Japanese recession could be delayed until 1981.

The most important reason why the Japanese economy experienced this rather remarkable boom in 1977-79 compared to its main competitors (even if it was more moderate than Japan's past booms) is that several of the motor forces behind the long-term expansion of Japanese imperialism are still operating, even though they have been weakened.

For example, although the level of Japanese wages is rising, wages remain below those of its main competitors. This is

especially true of the employer's indirect wage costs. In 1978 and 1979 nominal wages in manufacturing in Japan rose 5.9% and 7.8% respectively. In West Germany the corresponding raises were 5.1% and 6%, and in the United States they were 8.6% and 8.8%.

The growth in productivity in Japan remains so rapid that the percentage of wage costs in total costs even fell in 1978-79. Japan was the only imperialist country where this drop took place.

This relatively slow rise in wages might seem to contradict the statement made earlier about the role of increased domestic spending in 1979. But this increase is largely explained by the rise in overtime work, the payment of summer bonuses, and the decline in the rate of saving.

The special evolution of the relationship between real wages, wage costs, and labor productivity in Japan is not explained solely by the success of research and technological innovation in that country. It stems from the specific structure of Japanese industry, which is made up of an ultra-modern sector and an archaic sector, with a real "dual-labor market." The existence of the archaic sector continues to exert pressure on the union movement and on wages, although this dualism is gradually declining.

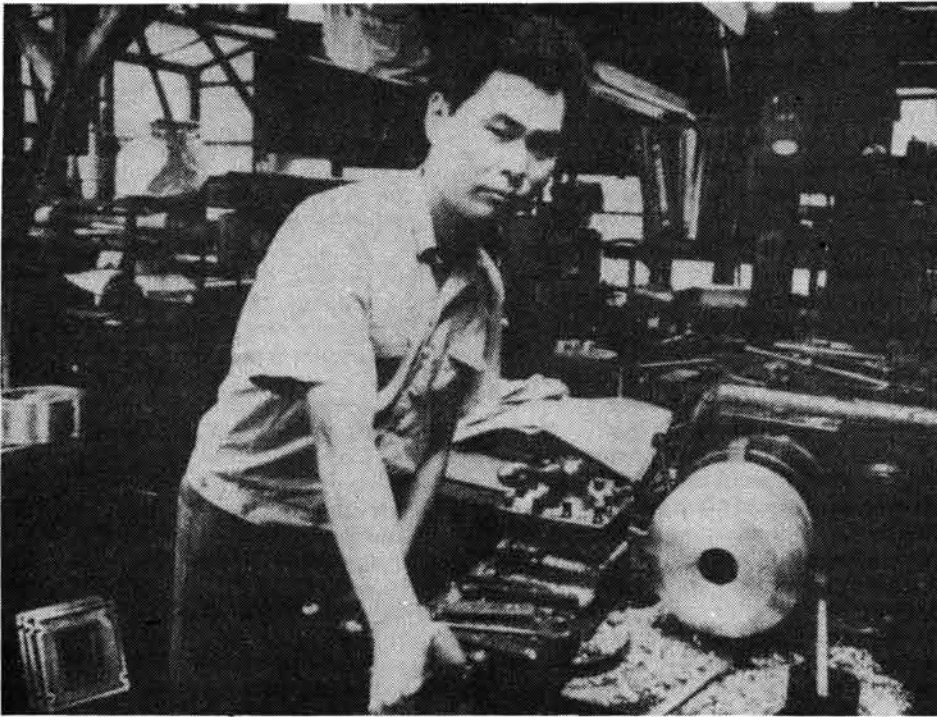
Another special feature that continues to influence the Japanese economy is the state's ability to intervene massively to help increase the competitiveness of Japanese industry. The state's intervention is made possible by a variety of factors, among them the enormous surplus in the balance of payments in 1977 and 1978, the traditionally lower share of public expenditures in the gross national product, and the very low rate of inflation of the yen.

A concrete example of this state intervention can be seen in the shipbuilding industry. The industry practically doubled its share of world construction between 1956 and 1968, reaching 50% in the latter year. But then it began to decline, falling to 42% in 1977 and 40% in 1978. In August 1979 the Japanese government encouraged the establishment of a crisis cartel of shipbuilders. Some 34% of the total productive capacity of seven shipyards is to be eliminated. Investments to rationalize production are aimed at regaining the lost share of the world market.

This entire operation involves enormous state subsidies on a scale that is inconceivable in the other imperialist countries. It goes far beyond the bail-outs of Chrysler in the United States and British Leyland in Britain.

However, it is nonetheless true that Japanese imperialism suffers internal contradictions of its own, in addition to those of the international capitalist economy. The inflation rate is again rising as a

² *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, October 25, 1979.



Machinist in small Tokyo factory.

result of the enormous budget deficits. The balance of payments will show big deficits in 1979 and 1980 (\$7.5 billion in 1979, and a projected \$9 billion in 1980).

The government has had to begin applying a policy of restricting credit. The rediscount rate rose from 4.25% in May 1979 to 6.25% in December, passing the West German rate. The budget proposed from 1980 projects a rise in expenditures of only 4% in real terms, the lowest increase since 1958.

It is true that the nearly 50% rise in the value of the yen between 1975 and the end of 1978 left a margin for subsequent declines in its value that might make a new Japanese export offensive possible. Already the yen has declined about 25% since the beginning of 1978, and about 10% since the beginning of 1979.³ Japan's competitors are very nervous about such an export offensive and threaten to react with protectionist measures.

But if world trade stagnates or even declines in 1980, a Japanese export offensive would only allow the country to maintain the present volume of exports rather than raise it. Given the accumulated deficit in the balance of payments, this would lead to a new increase in inflationary pressure, bringing with it new restrictive fiscal measures and ending in a recession.

There are two possible variants in this scenario. The first is that the Japanese recession will develop only after the inter-

national recession, meaning in 1981, thereby moderating the international recession and once again improving the position of Japanese imperialism with regard to its competitors.

The second possible variant is that the delay in the American recession and its extension internationally would deepen the internal tendencies toward crisis in Japan (accelerated inflation, restrictive credit policy, initial fall in profits, growing difficulties in certain export markets), which would in turn precipitate the Japanese recession before the end of 1980. If this happens it will deepen and prolong the international recession and make a recovery in late 1980 and early 1981 much more difficult.

Western Europe Faces New Internal Tensions

The third big imperialist bloc—the European Economic Community (Common Market) and the other capitalist countries in Europe that are tied to it—is faced with new internal tensions on the eve of the international recession. The economic respite granted to the imperialist countries of the EEC following the 1974-75 crisis was not used to consolidate or homogenize the alliance. Political unification of the EEC remains a very long-term perspective.

The European Monetary System that was established in March 1979 to stimulate coordination of economic policies of the various countries by forcing them to maintain the exchange rates of their currencies within strict limits, is proving to be artificial and unworkable. There has been no progress toward a common economic policy.

Today, all signs appear to indicate that the most important countries of Western Europe will go through a recession in 1980. But the specific economic evolution of each of these countries continues to be determined primarily by national factors. There is no industrial cycle for all of Western Europe as a whole.

From an economic point of view, imperialist West Germany remains the most relatively stable country within this bloc. Following the 1974-75 economic crisis, West Germany went through an economic recovery that was just as pronounced, although not as linear or massive, as the Japanese boom. The recovery was checked in 1977 by restrictive budgetary measures and by the fact that household demand rose only very slightly. In 1978 and 1979, however, higher growth rates were again seen.

As in the United States, the main economic brake in West Germany in 1979 seemed to be the lag in mass consumption. The growth in wages was much slower than the growth in national income in both 1978 and 1979. In 1979 there may even turn out to have been a decline in real wages.

The steelworkers strike in early 1979 resulted in a defeat for the union. The wage increases in nearly all branches of industry were lower than in 1978, while the inflation rate went from 2% to 6% in the course of the year.

Corporate profits and investment activity remained at a high level and could have led to continued economic growth in 1980 if they had not run up against the weakening of consumer demand.

In the autumn of 1978 the Bundesbank, which is independent of the Bonn government, began a course of "stabilization," which it stepped up further in 1979, because of the resurgence of inflation. This has resulted in a decline in the growth of industrial production.

In 1980 an additional factor, the international recession, will further slow down the West German economy by tending to depress West German exports. In 1979 exports were largely responsible for the growth of the economy as a whole, with exports rising 7% while the gross national product rose 4.5%. The fact that some 60% of German exports go to Western Europe, where nearly all its clients will be hit by the recession, cannot help but have an effect.

The only aid for the economy during 1980 would be an increase in deficit spending by the government. This would, however, run up against the resistance of the Bundesbank. The fact that the parliamentary elections will take place in the autumn of 1980 makes such a reversal of economic policy quite likely. But the best it could do is moderate the recession (with the number of unemployed increasing from 800,000 at the end of 1979 to around a

3. *Far Eastern Economic Review*, December 14, 1979; *Monatsberichte der Deutschen Bundesbank*, September 1979.

million in 1980), not prevent it.⁴

The French economy experienced only a modest revival: about 3% growth in the GNP in 1977, 1978, and 1979. All the economic indicators point to France also falling into the recession in 1980. The "Barre Plan" instituted by Premier Raymond Barre combined encouragement of capitalist profits, investments, and exports with austerity measures against the working class.

But the results were rather modest. The bourgeoisie felt that profits did not increase enough. The inflation rate did not decline. In fact it hit a double-digit rate again in the second quarter of 1979. The government itself made a significant contribution to this inflation rate by "freeing" prices and rents. The impact of this move was greater than the rise in oil prices.

The only success achieved by Barre's policy for French imperialism was the increase in exports, which achieved an average growth rate of 6% in 1977-79. At the same time there was a constant increase in unemployment—one good increase deserves another—which reached 1.4 million in November 1979.

Given the approaching recession, the French government decided to adopt a more expansionary budgetary policy for 1980. The projected deficit for 1980 (\$7.5 billion) is more than double what was originally planned. This could lead to an explosive social situation in 1980, with an inflation rate rising to 15% or even higher while the number of jobless will surpass 1.5 million, perhaps even reaching 2 million.⁵

Margaret Thatcher's new cabinet in Britain has deliberately pushed toward recession. Its economic policy has been characterized by the most cynical ruling class objectives. The increase in indirect taxes, which was the counterpart to the reduction in direct taxes (favoring the middle classes and the bourgeoisie), has led to a more than 17% rise in the cost of living. This resulted in a reduction of consumer income and real wages.

The 1980-81 budget, like the preceding 1979-80 budget, is based on opposition to any stimulation of demand, which once again means a reduction in consumer spending. This is being done in a recession year. The rise in the rediscount rate—which stood at 17% in December 1979—is supposed to lead to a reduction in the rate of growth of the money supply. But it will have an additional deflationary effect—it will deepen the recession. The capitalist industrialists are drawing their conclusions from the interest rate by sharply

reducing their investments, which will be an additional recessionary factor.

According to the January 4, 1980, *London Times*, British industry, having become conscious of the fact that a deep recession was imminent, was obliged to lower its investment plans for this year and next. That was indicated by the figures published by the Ministry of Industry. The volume of these investments will decline 6% to 10% in the area of manufacturing. It is expected that investments this year will be 18% below the high point reached in 1970.

What is true for the "big" economic policy is also true for the "small." Brutal reorganization plans are aimed at reducing the deficits in the nationalized sector of the British economy, at the cost of eliminating tens of thousands of jobs in the British Leyland auto plants and in the steel industry.

There is certain to be resistance by the working class and the unions to this policy of "monetary stabilization" and "rationalization" at the expense of the workers. This resistance will be heightened by the government's plans to restrict trade-union rights and the right to strike. There will be very sharp struggles in early 1980.

But the economic context in which these struggles unfold is not favorable for the workers. The number of unemployed reached 1 million by the end of 1979 and could go as high as 2 million in 1980. Given the fact that the rate of inflation should rise to 20% in the spring of 1980, the struggle against the reduction in purchasing power and massive lay-offs will run up against tremendous resistance from the employers and the government.⁶

From a capitalist point of view the situation in the nationalized industries is quite catastrophic. The projected "rationalization" plans closely correspond to the logic of the capitalist economy. This can lead to a situation like that at British Leyland, where a segment of the affected workers show their "understanding" about the need for the "rationalization" measures. The absence of clear anticapitalist policies and alternatives from the unions and the Labour Party heighten the disarray and confusion in sectors of the proletariat, facilitating the bourgeoisie's maneuvers to divide the workers.

The limited economic recovery that the Italian economy went through in 1977-79 came to an end in late 1979 as a result of heightened inflation, a decline in profits, and what was seen as a more than uncertain political situation. Until the end of 1979 overall demand remained rather strong. This was due to a number of factors: large-scale indexing of wages,

even though there is always a delay in wages catching up to the inflationary explosion of prices; a rather expensive budgetary policy; and very limited credit restrictions.

Despite the fact that the 17% inflation rate is close to the British record, the Italian government was unable to follow the Thatcher cabinet's example of imposing a reorganization plan based on austerity. Its Italian counterpart, the Pandolfi Plan, remained largely on paper.

Given the recession expected in 1980, the Cossiga government responded with a planned record budget deficit for 1980 of \$55 billion and massive aid for industry, especially for the export sectors. All this means that inflation will continue to climb and the competitive position of Italian imperialism will again decline unless there is a massive devaluation of the lire. But such a massive devaluation of the lire would deeply shake the European Monetary System.⁷

This European Monetary System (as well as the stability of the Common Market itself) will be sorely tested in the course of the 1980 recession. In an analysis of the European Monetary System in the March 26, 1979, *Intercontinental Press/Interprecor*, we wrote that the system of fixed exchange rates threatened to "transform the EEC into an inflationary community." We emphasized the fact that inflation rates were very different in the different countries belonging to the EMS and that the "projected rise in inflation rates can create multiple problems, especially if Italian inflation again becomes uncontrollable." Since then this hypothesis has been shown to be correct. It applies to British inflation as well, even though the British pound remains outside the EMS.

In early 1980 the tensions that will result from Italian inflation will be so strong that we can expect to see a major revision of the exchange rates (with a devaluation of the Italian lire). But this will jeopardize the EMS as a whole since it is neither able to guarantee fixed exchange rates nor moderate the inflation rate in the countries that are hardest hit by inflation.

The weakening of the EMS will call into question the only tangible progress the Common Market countries had made since the last crisis toward stronger economic integration. And should the EEC countries all go into recession in 1980, we will see the institutions of the EEC itself thrown into a deep political crisis. The Thatcher cabinet's refusal to pay the projected British contribution to the EEC budget is only the beginning. It is very possible that those countries that are hardest hit by the recession (Italy, Britain, and perhaps even France) will be driven to take protectionist measures during 1980. And while it is

4. For the data on West Germany, see especially *Monatsberichte der Deutschen Bundesbank*, November 1979.

5. For the data on the French economy see: *Wirtschaftswoche*, October 15, 1979; *Weltkonjunkturdienst*, March 1979.

6. For the data on the British economy see: *The Economist*, December 22, 1979; *Financial Times*, December 24, 1979; *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, December 10, 1979; *Le Monde*, November 14, 1979.

7. For the data on the Italian economy see: *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, October 3, 1979; *Weltkonjunkturdienst*, March 1979.

likely that there will be a massive new EEC credit arrangement for Italy, that will undoubtedly be accompanied by new pressure for a "stabilization" program—that is, for greater "austerity."

While we do not have the space to deal with the perspectives of the smaller EEC countries in detail, it is worthwhile to trace these in the sketchiest way. The Dutch economy saw an initial decline in GNP in mid-1979, and a recession is expected in 1980. In Denmark, after years of an inflationary policy and huge foreign indebtedness, which reached \$14 billion at the end of 1979, the workers were given an austerity program as a Christmas present, although the program is relatively mild.

Belgium, along with Denmark, has the highest unemployment rate in the EEC. With the aid of a heavy international loan, Belgium is trying to avoid devaluing its currency.

Effects of the Rise in Raw Material Prices on the Imperialist Countries . . .

It seems that a norm has developed wherein the high point of the business cycle (and the beginning of its downturn) is associated with two related phenomena.

The first is the effort by the raw-materials exporting countries (particularly though not solely the OPEC countries) and the multinational companies that domi-

nate raw materials to thoroughly exploit the law of supply and demand in their favor—that is, to impose major price increases.

The second phenomenon is that in the imperialist countries these price increases have been used to launch a big propaganda campaign to convince people that the increase in oil prices and those of raw materials in general are responsible for the new recession, nationally and internationally.

The propaganda campaign has a very practical aim in the day-to-day class struggle. It aims to convince the working class and the unions that they don't have the right to be compensated (through an increase in nominal wages) for the portion of the higher cost of living caused by higher prices for oil and other raw materials. "Everybody" has to pay the higher bill for oil imports.

In reality, the capitalists are at present able to pass on the higher energy costs to consumers. Thus in the final analysis the "oil bill" is paid by wage earners alone. Furthermore, if we look at the medium-term tendency of raw material prices, the 1979 hike seems quite restrained. In fact, the prices of industrial products rose considerably more than raw material prices during the whole 1975-78 period (Table VI).

This favorable balance for the imperial-

Table VI
Change in Prices in World Trade

Year	Raw Materials	Industrial Products
1976	106	100
1977	117	109
1978	119	125
4th Qtr.		
1978	122	132

Source: *Die Weltkonjunktur*, no. 3 (1979).

ist countries in their trade with the raw-materials exporting countries (basically the semicolonial countries) was further enhanced in some cases by changes in the exchange rates. Because the majority of raw-material imports are paid for in dollars, the rise in the value of the deutsche mark and the yen against the dollar further reduced the import bill for West Germany, Switzerland, and Japan (and to a lesser extent Holland, Belgium, France, and Austria). Thus in 1978 the cost of imports in West Germany fell 3.5%, reflecting a net improvement in the terms of trade (the prices of exports remained stable during the same year).

This is the background of the rise in prices in oil and raw materials in general. In dollar terms, the prices of raw materials rose 34% from December 1978 to December 1979 (including the price of oil, which rose about 50%). But taking into account the changes in the exchange rates and the difference in the pace of price rises for industrial goods and raw materials since 1975, the rise in the prices of imports for the imperialist countries was only on the order of 15% to 25%. Even in 1979, while West Germany, France, and Great Britain had to pay 9.5%, 11%, and 7.25% more for their imports respectively, they were able to increase their export prices 6%, 8.5%, and 12%.

Finally, we should bear in mind that the international recession will not permit new increases in raw material prices in 1980. The prices of raw materials other than oil have, in fact, already stopped rising in mid-1979, and the failure of the December 1979 OPEC conference leads us to believe that 1980 will not be marked by new rises in oil prices.

Meanwhile, the decline in the purchasing power of the imperialist currencies that these raw-materials exporting countries receive for their products (especially the decline of the dollar) is likely to set a new record in 1980.

In terms of costs, the rise in prices for raw materials and oil thus has had only a secondary effect on the economies of the imperialist countries. The rise in raw-materials prices does not explain the economic crises of the 1970s (in West Germany total imports of raw materials represent only 2.5% of the gross national product). But the rise in raw materials prices will lead to new deficits in the

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balance of trade and the balance of payments of the imperialist countries and to new imbalances in world trade.

The OECD predicts that the imperialist countries as a whole will have a cumulative balance-of-payments deficit of some \$30 billion in 1979. Of course this covers over the big differences from country to country—surplus for Italy, balance for West Germany and France, big deficits for Japan, Canada, Britain, and the United States. The OECD predicts a similar deficit for 1980.

Experience has shown, however, that the OPEC countries keep most of the surplus of their balance of payments (which declined to \$7 billion in 1978 and then reached \$65 billion in 1979) in banks in the imperialist countries or use them for future purchases of industrial goods exported by those countries.

... And on the Semicolonial Countries

For the semicolonial countries that are not oil-exporters, the new rise in oil prices, in contrast, is a real economic catastrophe. Already in 1974 and 1975 these countries had run up a cumulative deficit of \$60 billion in their balance of payments. In 1979 alone this deficit will reach the record level of \$47 billion. The OECD projects a deficit of \$60 billion for 1980—higher in a single year than the combined deficits of 1974 and 1975).

Taken as a whole, moreover, these countries have never seen a reversal of the tendency toward deficits in their balance of payments. The cumulative deficit for the period 1974-79 reaches the enormous sum of \$200 billion.

As a result of this structural (and growing) deficit in the balance of payments of the non-oil-exporting semicolonial countries, there has been growing recourse to loans to finance their imports. These loans, moreover, have come more from the private imperialist banks than from international public institutions. The result has been a soaring level of indebtedness reaching such proportions that it is unlikely that it can continue at the present pace. There is, in addition, a serious threat that some of these countries will be unable to pay the interest on this debt, which absorbs a growing share of their current foreign exchange income (revenues from

their exports). This prospect seriously worries bankers in the imperialist countries.

This fact leads us to two major conclusions. The "recycling" of petrodollars by the private imperialist banking system has reached the limit of its possibilities. The share of the so-called "third world" countries in world trade is no longer rising, but is rather in the process of declining. The non-oil-exporting semicolonial countries had a 14.1% share of world trade in 1976. This share fell to 13.3% in 1978 and to less than 12% in 1979 (Deutsche Bundesbank, *Monatsberichte*, no. 11, 1979).

Even the OPEC countries have stopped taking a growing share of the exports of the imperialist countries, as can be seen in Table VII.

There are a number of reasons for the reversal of this trend. Among them are the effects of the Iranian revolution; the fact that a number of OPEC countries such as Iran, Algeria, Nigeria, Venezuela, and Libya already have a current deficit in their balance of payments; the fact that the ability of the countries with a surplus—such as Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, and the Gulf emirates—to absorb manufactured industrial goods is limited for obvious structural reasons.

But the result is that in contrast to what took place in the 1974-75 recession, the semicolonial countries will be unable to serve as a substitute market for the exports of the imperialist countries. Since the same can be said for the bulk of the bureaucratized workers states, this is an important factor that could contribute to deepening the 1980 crisis.

The Basic Elements of the Imperialist Economy in 1980

There are a number of factors that will determine the evolution of the international capitalist economy in 1980.

1. An international recession that will encompass nearly all the imperialist countries and the majority of semicolonial countries seems inevitable for 1980.

A coming-together of the business cycles in the various imperialist countries clearly developed in 1978-79, with the beginning of a downturn in 1979. This is similar to what happened in 1973-74, which led to the 1974-75 recession. The fact that Japanese industry continued to expand in 1979 is not

enough to prevent an international recession in 1980. Furthermore there is the possibility that Japan itself may be dragged into the recession in 1980. We should recall that although French and Italian industry were able to avoid the recession during the first half of 1974, this did not keep them from going into recession in the second half.

2. If the economic policies of the main imperialist countries allow the recession to run its "natural course," meaning if there is no sudden shift from a "stabilization" policy to an inflationary "expansionist" policy, the deepest point in the new international recession should come toward the middle of 1980, or in the second half of the year.

3. The relatively long duration of the decline in production (which is comparable to that of 1974-75) is primarily the result of a specific feature of the evolution of the business cycle in 1979. In most imperialist countries the crisis was not directly unleashed by a decline in profits. In 1979 total profits even reached a record level over previous years (the growth rate of investments is generally running higher than the growth in the GNP).

In nearly all cases the immediate cause of the 1980 recession is insufficient demand for consumer goods, which is the result of a decline (or stagnation) in real wages, a drop in jobs, or a combination of the two.

The relative stagnation of consumer demand cannot be entirely made up for by the growth in demand for capital goods by factories. This process is deeply influenced, particularly in capitalist Europe and Japan, by the massive introduction of the most modern technology. These technologies, which are designed to "economize on labor," increase productivity, productive capacity, and current production. But at the same time they reduce the number of jobs and consumer demand (under the combined influence of employers and governmental "austerity policies" and of monopoly price policies).

The insufficient consumer demand has been further exacerbated by a policy of "stabilization" and credit restrictions which has generally been applied earlier in the industrial cycle than was the case in the previous cycle.

In this situation, profits will begin to seriously decline only in the course of 1980,⁸ under the impact of the growing excess capacity, the higher interest rates, the rise in raw material prices, and the like. This will deepen the recession or cause a longer period of stagnation.

4. Most of the imperialist countries were able to achieve real growth in their production in 1979 largely as a result of the

8. In Britain it is expected that profits will fall 30% in 1980 (*Financial Times*, December 24, 1979). In the United States they are expected to fall 5% (*Business Week*, December 31, 1979).

Table VII
Exports From OECD Countries to OPEC Countries

(Percentage of their total exports)

Country	1972-73	1974-75	1976-77	1978	1979
U.S.A.	5.3	8.8	10.9	11.6	8.7
W. Germany	3.3	6.4	8.7	8.6	6.0
Japan	7.1	13.1	14.5	14.6	11.8
France	4.7	7.8	8.6	8.2	7.1
Britain	6.0	9.3	11.8	12.1	8.2
Italy	5.4	9.5	12.3	12.6	10.7

Source: OECD, *Economic Outlook*, December 1979.



British steel strike mass picketing at Sheerness, Kent.

increase in their exports. This possibility will no longer exist in 1980. The volume of world trade will show either reduced growth or even an absolute decline.

The shrinkage of the world market will be caused, in particular, by the recession in the imperialist countries themselves. These countries remain each other's principal customers. A growth in exports to the OPEC countries and the bureaucratized workers states can no longer make up for this shrinkage. The Chinese market remains "geographically broad but limited in value."⁹

5. It is possible that the economic policy in 1980 may shift toward inflationary pump-priming in some of the major imperialist countries, or the so-called "stabilization" policy might at least be abandoned. The fact that 1980 is an election year in the United States and West Germany could become a factor in this. So could growing resistance by the workers movement to the austerity policies, for example in France, Britain, Italy, or Spain.

It is also possible that the working class in some of the main imperialist countries may try to win back in 1980 what it lost in

real wages and social benefits, despite conditions that seem at first glance unfavorable for such struggles.

If either of these two possibilities were to occur, it would moderate the recession in the immediate period. But it would only lead to the crisis manifesting itself on other levels or being delayed. For example, if the inflation rate did not diminish during the recession, that would sharply reduce the possibilities for a pump-priming policy in 1981-82 and would therefore slow the pace of economic recovery after the recession.

Similarly, a rise in real wages would weigh on the profit rate and would make a sharper recovery after 1980 less likely.

6. In any event, 1980 will see a new massive attack on the international working class and on the oppressed masses of the semicolonial countries. Unless there is heightened resistance in the imperialist centers, real wages will decline.

Unemployment will surpass 20 million people, perhaps going as high as 25 million (the highest since 1938). This means that in the course of a decade the absolute number of unemployed in the imperialist countries will have doubled since unemployment in the 1970-71 recession reached 11 million in those countries.

Even if the 1980 recession does not go as deep as the one in 1974-75, which is not at all certain, it will go further than the previous recession in undermining the chance of survival of a number of the least profitable monopolies.

Spectacular bankruptcies and government subsidies on a broad scale will occur. The case of Chrysler, the third largest U.S. automaker, is typical in this regard. By

September its 1979 losses had already hit \$721 million. Even the promised government credit of \$1.5 billion, along with bank credit of the same scope, will not guarantee its survival.

The second largest West German electrical appliance manufacturer, AEG-Telefunken, was temporarily saved by help from the banks and by "rationalization" measures that will result in a decline of 13,000 workers in 1980. We have already mentioned British Leyland, British Steel, and the Japanese shipyards.

In the semicolonial countries impoverishment will increase under the impact of the credit restrictions applied by international finance capital and the international institutions they control and by the rise in oil prices.

A catastrophic new famine could result, particularly given the fact that these countries would have to restrict imports of fertilizers and oil, which in turn would lead to declines in production, while reserve stocks of food will be reduced as a result of the limitation of grain production in North America in the wake of the ban on American grain exports to the Soviet Union.

This whole evolution, together with the growing dangers to the environment and the threats posed to the survival of humanity, particularly through the increased and irresponsible pursuit of nuclear power, show even more clearly that the capitalist system is outmoded and must be replaced. New revolutionary developments comparable to those in Iran and Nicaragua in 1979 could take place. A new rise in workers struggles against the austerity policies is possible.

Nonetheless, the European bourgeoisies have gained some political ground in recent years (election victories in France, Britain, Portugal, the "controlled transition" from Franco in Spain, etc.). The bourgeoisie is trying to use the rising unemployment to weaken the position of the working class and to wrest even more concessions from the reformist leaders.

A victory by Franz-Josef Strauss in the coming West German federal elections would undoubtedly strengthen the camp of the bourgeois reactionaries in Europe.

The crisis in the strategies of the reformist leaders, including the "left currents" within the Socialist and Communist parties, has been clearly revealed under the effects of the economic crisis. The policies of the reformist leaderships have deepened the disorientation of the working masses, who have been struck by the governmental austerity programs.

Only the development of a revolutionary Marxist alternative, through building an international and revolutionary parties and through initiatives toward the traditional mass organizations, corresponds to the needs imposed by the new historic crisis of capitalist society—a crisis that began in 1968 and will be further deepened by the 1980 recession. □

9. This is the main conclusion to be drawn from the work of a symposium on East-West trade that took place in Vienna in September 1979. The main reason for the limited expansion of exports to Eastern Europe is the growing indebtedness of these countries to the imperialist countries, which results in impossible interest payments.

If these exports had continued to grow at the pace of recent years, the small countries of Eastern Europe would have built up some \$300 billion in debts to the West by 1980 (*Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, October 2, 1979).

French Imperialism Steps Up Military Role in Africa, Mideast

By Will Reissner

Over the past several years, French imperialism has been playing an increasingly active and aggressive military role in propping up neocolonial regimes in Africa and the Middle East.

The most recent French military intervention came January 27, when an armed assault by Tunisian dissidents took place in the southern Tunisian town of Gafsa. French military transports and helicopters airlifted Tunisian troops into the area. Meanwhile, a French naval force steamed off the coast, ready to intervene in support of the Tunisian regime if necessary.

But the military intervention in Tunisia was only the latest of many by the regime of President Giscard d'Estaing.

Last November, for example, when Saudi troops encountered difficulties in dislodging several hundred rebels who had occupied the Grand Mosque in Mecca, French counterinsurgency experts were called in to take command of the Saudi assault force. The French team from the National Police Intervention Group (GIGN) provided the Saudi troops with new equipment, training, and tactics. GIGN supervised the bloody operations during which hundreds were killed and wounded.

In September 1979, French troops invaded the Central African Empire to overthrow their former stooge Bokassa I, who had become a political liability.

In May 1978 the Foreign Legion fought in Shaba province in Zaïre, helping put down a challenge to president Mobutu. When Mobutu faced a similar threat in 1977, he was saved by Moroccan troops airlifted to Zaïre in French military transports.

In Chad the French garrison was sharply increased in April 1978 when French troops began taking part in anti-guerrilla operations.

In the Western Sahara, French air force jets flew bombing and napalming missions in December 1977 against Polisario guerrillas fighting for their independence from Mauritania and Morocco.

There are also French troops now stationed in Djibouti, in the strategic Horn of Africa.

Vincent Kermel pointed out in the February 7-13 issue of the French Trotskyist weekly *Rouge*, that French imperialism can intervene militarily abroad due to the "absence of a powerful anti-imperialist movement" in France. The French government is not subject to the "restraints that are still imposed upon the United States,

for example the 'trauma' of its defeat in Vietnam."

"Each military adventure by French imperialism," Kermel writes, "expands its room for maneuver and its ambitions a little more."

The importance of building a strong movement against imperialist military interventions in France was stressed by a January 30 statement by the Political Bureau of the Revolutionary Communist League (LCR), the French section of the

Fourth International, which was issued in response to the Tunisian events. The statement "demands the withdrawal of French troops and of the entire French military presence (advisers, CRS [state security police] colonels, etc.) from Tunisia and from the rest of Africa. The LCR calls on all forces in the French workers movement to mobilize against Giscard's neocolonial policy and will use all the means at its disposal to denounce this imperialist policy." □

Tunisian Revolutionists Appeal to French Workers

[The following declaration was issued by the Tunisian Revolutionary Marxist Group, a sympathizing section of the Fourth International, on January 31, 1980.]

* * *

In the two years since the January 26, 1978 general strike,¹ nothing has been resolved for the Tunisian government, which faces rising opposition.

The Bourguibaist² regime once again had to drown in blood an armed revolt in Gafsa. More than one hundred people were killed, and hundreds were wounded.

Although this armed action cannot solve the problems of the Tunisian working class, it must be understood as an act of despair against the one-party dictatorship. The Tunisian government blames foreign interference.³ But the foreign interference in Tunisia today is actually the presence of the French armed forces.

French imperialism shows it is faithful to its commitments and is there to deal with any situation that might arise. Already before the January 26,

1978 general strike, [French Defense] Minister Yvon Bourges had expressed their intentions.

Today they are intervening against a rather isolated action, but in the future it will be against the revolt of the working class. We Tunisian revolutionary Marxists must denounce this intervention. We will not be a second Shaba or Mecca.⁴ We are now struggling to put a halt to this armed imperialist presence.

The French armies will not frighten the Tunisian working class, which will continue its fight against both imperialism and its own bourgeoisie.

We do not acknowledge that the Bourguiba regime, which can only survive through repression, has any right whatsoever to call upon any armed forces to keep itself in power longer.

A regime that implicitly supports the Camp David accords, that calls on foreign troops to rescue it, that imprisons political and trade-union activists, cannot teach us any lessons in nationalism.

We issue an appeal to all French workers organizations to denounce this imperialist threat and to deepen the struggle for immediate withdrawal of all aid:

- French troops out of Tunisia!
- Long live the solidarity of the French and Tunisian working classes against French imperialism and the Tunisian bourgeoisie!
- Long live proletarian internationalism!

4. See the accompanying article.

1. See *IP/I* February 13, 1978, page 164 and February 20, 1978, page 223.

2. Habib Bourguiba came to power in 1956 when Tunisia gained its independence from France. He has ruled ever since, and in 1975 had himself named president-for-life.—*IP/I*

3. Tunisian authorities claim the Gafsa attackers were armed and trained in Libya.—*IP/I*