

# Intercontinental Press

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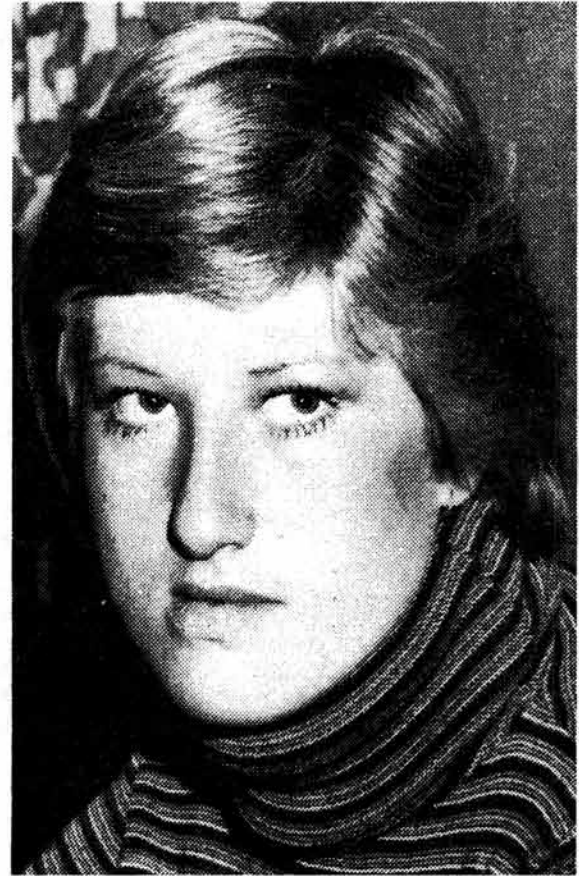
June 7, 1976

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## Spy Mission in

## Australian SWP



National Times

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## Cuban Troops Begin Leaving Angola

By David Frankel

Responding to the news that Cuban combat forces will begin to leave Angola, a "high official" in the State Department, presumably Kissinger, told reporters May 25, "... I was not too surprised. ... We have been bringing a lot of pressure, as you know."

After suggesting that his threats were responsible for the Cuban decision to begin withdrawing troops from Angola, Kissinger reminded the electorate that he is not soft on communism, despite the charges of Ronald Reagan. "A partial withdrawal [of Cuban troops] does not meet our requirements," he said.

It is certainly true that the State Department has been putting pressure on newly independent Angola. The Ford administration has refused to recognize the Angolan government, refused to provide it with any aid, and threatened to veto its admission to the United Nations.

But the other side of this policy is the promise of compensation for cooperation. The operations of the Gulf Oil Company in Angola's Cabinda oil fields have been a constant reminder of those rewards. Gulf provides Angola with 80 percent of its foreign exchange—compared with 40 percent before the civil war.

Kissinger applauded the announcement that Cuban forces would begin to withdraw from Angola as "a positive development." Robert Keatley reported in the May 26 *Wall Street Journal* that "reporters traveling with Mr. Kissinger were told the U.S. can begin reconsidering its relations with Angola after this latest development."

This course was advocated by the *New York Times* in a May 31 editorial that argued "it would be shortsighted if the United States were to bar Angola from United Nations membership until the last Cuban soldier departed from Luanda or even to delay indefinitely the opening of relations with Dr. Neto's Government."

The decision of Fidel Castro to begin withdrawing Cuban troops from Angola was communicated to Swedish Premier Olof Palme in a letter written May 21. According to Keatley, "the Castro letter was sent to Stockholm via Moscow even though Sweden has an embassy in Havana. Presumably the Russians at least acquiesced to the move and even may have helped bring it about."

Joseph C. Harsch suggested in the May 28 *Christian Science Monitor* that the announcement concerning Cuban troops

was intended by both Moscow and Havana as a gesture to help President Ford in his battle against Reagan in the Republican party primaries.

"The weight of this action in American politics is best appreciated by considering the results had they done the opposite," Harsch said. "Suppose that instead of announcing a phased reduction in Angola they had begun redeploying those combat troops from Angola to the frontiers of Rhodesia. Instantly that would have been seen on the American hustings as a collapse of Ford-Kissinger foreign policy. Mr. Reagan might well have become unbeatable overnight in the Republican race. Jimmy Carter might well have become the ultimate beneficiary."

Havana, which is totally dependent on Soviet supplies and transport for its troops in Angola, has publicly informed Washington that it has no intention of becoming deeply involved in Africa. On May 20, Cuban Deputy Prime Minister Carlos Rafael Rodriguez said in Tokyo that it was "inconceivable" that Cuban troops would be used to support the struggle of the Black

## Ford's 'Crusade' for Human Rights

As part of the campaign propaganda presenting Ford as a defender of human rights, Secretary of Commerce Elliot L. Richardson said May 27 that he had told South Korean President Park Chung Hee "directly" of Ford's concern over the issue of democratic rights there.

Richardson's visit to Seoul came less than three weeks after Treasury Secretary William Simon's trip to Chile, during which Simon hailed dictator Pinochet's token release of a few dozen of the thousands of political prisoners in the junta's jails.

While Simon claimed he had received "assurances" from Pinochet that conditions would be improved in Chile, Richardson was unable to obtain even such a fraudulent pledge. "I received no specific assurance of any improvement in the human-rights situation," Richardson said, "but I felt he [Park] gave me a respectful hearing."

Richardson made it clear, however, that he did not expect very much from Park: "South Korea occupies a threatened position and is placed on a footing different

majority against the racist regime in Rhodesia.

Rodriguez said that "internal liberalization or revolutionary struggles must be carried out by the forces within the country."

This was followed by Castro's letter to Palme, in which he said, "I do not wish to become the crusader of the 20th century." Castro said that he had no intention of sending Cuban troops to other countries in Africa or Latin America.

U.S. officials estimate that there are 13,000 to 15,000 Cuban troops in Angola. Although first reports said they would be withdrawn at a rate of about 200 a week, reporters aboard Kissinger's plane were later told that Castro's letter indicated that the rate would be faster and that the Cuban withdrawal would be completed in about a year.

Luis de Almeida, the Angolan director of information, said May 25 that "the situation is sufficiently under control that the Cuban troops can begin to withdraw." He insisted that the decision was "an act of sovereignty" and not a result of pressure from the United States.

If Luanda and Havana made the decision on their own accord, they were simply exercising their rights as sovereign powers.

What is objectionable is the pressure emanating from the State Department, which is clearly continuing. This constitutes imperialist intervention in direct violation of the right of these two small countries to determine their own affairs. □

from other democratic societies."

Just a week before Richardson visited Park's "democratic society," the Seoul regime sentenced to death Kim Chul Hyun, a student activist at a theological seminary. A few days after Richardson left Seoul, about fifty demonstrators, including five foreign missionaries, were arrested after staging a protest against the trial of eighteen prominent South Korean dissidents.

There are now reported to be more than 1,000 political prisoners in South Korea, although the U.S. embassy in Seoul puts the figure at "less than 100." Since Park seized power in 1961, the prison population in the country has tripled.

Despite the few indirect and mild criticisms of Park's ruthless repression that the Ford administration may feel compelled to make from time to time, Washington has in fact been the main prop of the Seoul dictatorship. About 40,000 American troops are stationed in South Korea, and the White House is seeking a \$490 million military aid package for Park for the next two years. □

# 100 Atom Bombs for South Africa

The South African regime has announced plans to build two huge nuclear reactors on the Atlantic coast near Cape Town. Together, the billion-watt reactors will produce each year enough plutonium to make 100 atomic bombs of the type that destroyed Nagasaki in 1945.

It is no accident that the Vorster regime has announced its nuclear plan at this time. This is Pretoria's answer to the rising class struggle in southern Africa.

At first, the apartheid regime had planned to buy the nuclear plants from a consortium including the American General Electric Company, Rijn-Schelde-Verolme of the Netherlands, and Brown Boveri of Switzerland. However, widespread opposition in the Netherlands forced the Social Democratic members of the Dutch cabinet to oppose the sale.

In the United States, Senator Richard Clark's African affairs subcommittee held hearings on the sale. Donald B. Easum, the Ford administration's ambassador to Nigeria, told the subcommittee May 21 that if the sale went through, "We will have some very difficult explaining to do" in Africa.

Clark himself argued that Blacks in Africa would view the sale "as a signal that the United States hasn't really changed its African policy at all and has no intention of doing so." He added that Blacks in the United States "are going to be very upset" by the nuclear deal.

Although the Ford administration said it would approve the transaction, South African negotiators decided to award the contract to the French group of Framatome, Althom, and Spie-Batignolles. But Thomas O'Toole reported in the May 30 *Washington Post* that "South Africa's award to France leaves up in the air the question of who will supply the nuclear fuel for the two plants."

He pointed out that "General Electric's request for an export license included the shipment of 1.4 million pounds of uranium fuel to South Africa for the first four years of operation for the two plants."

The willingness of the imperialist powers to help Pretoria bolster its nuclear capabilities is based on a fear of the African masses equal to that held by the apartheid regime. With the crumbling of the Portuguese colonial empire and the deepening struggle of the African masses against the Smith regime in Rhodesia, the apartheid state is the only reliable imperialist outpost left in southern Africa.

As far as the imperialist rulers are concerned, the risk of Vorster unleashing a nuclear holocaust is far preferable to the "danger" of the Black masses taking over in all of southern Africa. □

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## Hong Kong Rally Protests Jailing of Peking Demonstrators

By Ha Tin Lin

HONG KONG—One thousand persons attended a rally here May 16, protesting the suppression of the April 5 mass demonstration in Peking's Tien An Men Square.<sup>1</sup>

The rally took place as local Maoists celebrated the tenth anniversary of the Cultural Revolution and reaffirmed their total support for the dismissal of Teng Hsiao-ping and the appointment of Hua Kuo-feng as premier.

Ten years ago Mao and his faction issued the so-called May 16 Directive, officially launching the Cultural Revolution that led to open struggle among the bureaucratic factions.

Today a new crisis in the factional struggle has broken out, and the internal ferment in the Chinese Stalinist regime has become more evident.

The protest rally here was sponsored by four local groups: *Young Militant*, a newspaper published by an independent Trotskyist youth group; the Revolutionary Marxist League, an organization that has declared its adherence to Trotskyism; the Young Socialist Group, which works closely with the Trotskyists; and the Seventies Front, a neanarchist formation.

Three other groups or publications also announced their solidarity with the rally: the Chinese Human Rights Association, an organization composed mainly of former Red Guards; *Reawakening*, a monthly magazine published by a group of young radical Chinese living in Britain; and *October Review*, a Trotskyist monthly published here.

Plans for the rally included setting aside time for an open forum to discuss what actually happened at Tien An Men Square.

The Maoists have charged that the demonstration there was "an organized, premeditated and planned counterrevolutionary political incident."

The organizers of the rally, on the other hand, said in an April 25 statement<sup>2</sup> that the "one hundred thousand people gathered on April 5 at Tien An Men Square clearly pointed out with their mass action that the masses want to express their own opinions on the current events in China."

Invitations to take part in the discussion session of the rally were extended to leading local Maoists, including Young

Kwong, deputy chairman of the Maoist-dominated Federation of Trade Unions; and the presidents of the various Maoist-controlled student unions.

The Maoists' response to this challenge was predictable. At first they pretended to ignore it. But since the general pressure is high and their followers expected a reply, they could not remain silent for long and eventually resorted to their usual methods—slander, threats, and brutal attacks.

Within days after the April 5 incident, the Trotskyists of the *Young Militant* took action to defend demonstrators who had been victimized. A statement was issued calling for united actions to demand the release of the 300 persons reported to have been arrested in connection with the Tien An Men protest.

At about the same time, the Social Science Society and the Committee of Current Events of the Student Union of the University of Hong Kong organized a campus forum to discuss the issue. Maoist student leaders were invited to speak at the forum and debate the incident with a former Red Guard leader who is now a leading member of the Chinese Human Rights Association.

The invitations were rejected, however. As a result, discussion at the forum centered on refuting the Maoist charge that the April 5 protest was "counterrevolutionary." A few days prior to this forum the Maoist students held a meeting of their own and succeeded to a certain extent in persuading their followers to accept Peking's explanation for the suppression of the mass protest.

Another group, the College Student Union (CSU), currently led by liberal students, issued a statement in late April denouncing the dismissal of Teng Hsiao-ping and the appointment of Hua Kuo-feng by the Politburo of the Chinese CP as a violation of the constitution adopted by the [January 1975] Fourth People's Congress of China.

On May 4, the CSU held a protest in front of the Hong Kong offices of Hsinhua news agency.

The position taken by the CSU led to a heated tendency struggle at the April 24-25 delegated conference of the Maoist-dominated Federation of Student Unions, which claims a membership of 17,000 post-secondary students.

A motion by the liberal students to denounce Peking's action was defeated, and a resolution supporting Peking was

adopted by a vote of 43 to 4. But the Maoists were still not satisfied. They launched a vitriolic personal attack on the president of the CSU, who attended the conference as a member of the delegation from the University of Hong Kong. He was accused of being objectively "anti-China," "anticommunist," and a supporter of the "Russian-backed Trotskyists."

The hysterical attack reached such a level that the Maoists were able to prevent any student group from participating in united actions called outside the campuses in the name of the CSU.

For nearly three years the Maoists have conducted a similar slander campaign against the Trotskyists, accusing them of being "anti-China agents" so as to prevent them from gaining a hearing among the students. Although the Maoists never managed to completely isolate the Trotskyists, their attacks and threats have been partially successful in persuading many newly radicalized students to keep their distance from the Trotskyists. At present the tactic still works, but does not seem to have the same effectiveness.

After the fight had been suppressed on the campuses, it broke out in other areas. In response to a call by the *Young Militant*, three other groups expressed their support for a united action to demand the release of those arrested in connection with the Tien An Men protest. A rally was scheduled for May 16.

Since gatherings of any kind require a permit from the British colonialists, it was feared that the Maoists might pressure the government into banning the action. This concern was not unfounded.

Young Kwong openly declared that the Federation of Trade Unions would not tolerate "class enemies" using Hong Kong as a base for "sabotage" against the Peking regime. (In the terminology of the local Maoists, "class enemy" means members of the Kuomintang [KMT], Soviet "revisionists," and Trotskyists.)

*Wen Wei Po*, the leading Maoist daily here, published a series of attacks on the Trotskyists and the organizers of the rally, denouncing them as "a handful of national traitors, a KMT clique, and Russian revisionists." It described the May 16 rally as a "reactionary action" tolerated and backed by British imperialism and the local colonial government.

In reply to these attacks, the four groups published a joint statement explaining their view of the Tien An Men protest and

1. For an account of the demonstration, see *Intercontinental Press*, April 19, p. 628.

2. See *Intercontinental Press*, May 24, p. 859, for the text of this statement.





Hong Kong Standard

Part of crowd at May 16 Hong Kong rally called in defense of democratic rights of Chinese people.

the current factional struggle in China. Tens of thousands of copies of the statement were distributed on the campuses and in working-class districts. The *Young Militant* and the Seventies Front also circulated the statement at Maoist gatherings (the May Day celebration, the May 4 Movement celebration).

Press conferences, television interviews, and wall posters were also used to help publicize the rally and break through the Maoists' attempts to isolate the Trotskyists.

On May 12, the four groups held a small protest action in front of the Hsinhua offices. Since the rally was the first of its kind in twenty years, publicity for it attracted a great deal of attention, enabling the action to proceed as scheduled.

The Maoists still threatened to disrupt the rally, however, and about fifty of them attended the action. They took notes, collected statements and leaflets issued by various organizations, and took photos of the rally stewards.

Small groups of Maoists tried repeatedly to hold their own "counterrallies." They also occasionally shouted in an effort to disrupt speeches by representatives of the groups that organized the rally.

After a number of attempts at disruption had failed, owing to the preparations made by the participants to maintain order, the Maoist elements began to make "patriotic" speeches denouncing the Trotskyists. This

led to the detention of three Maoists by the colonial police, but they were released soon after.

Many leaflets and statements were circulated by the various tendencies and groups present at the rally. These included copies of a leaflet entitled, "In Defense of Chairman Mao! In Defense of the Party Central Committee!" which was distributed by some of the Maoists.

An indication of the interest in the views expressed by the various political tendencies was the fact that participants at the rally could be observed reading every leaflet they obtained.

The rally was a success. It is difficult to say, however, whether it is possible in Hong Kong to build an ongoing campaign in defense of the basic democratic rights of the workers and peasants of the Chinese workers state.

The Maoists, who are very strong and have a huge propaganda machine, will undoubtedly renew their slander campaign. The ability of the Trotskyists to counter these attacks will be of decisive importance in extending the opening provided by the Tien An Men protest.

Some groups have taken a sectarian attitude, claiming that to build a campaign solely around opposition to the suppression of the mass protest at Tien An Men would signify limiting the movement to a "narrow" and "low level" basis. They do not understand that analysis of events and

actions to advance the movement are not the same thing.

Since the differences among these groups are extensive, there is little hope of them reaching a common position for well-rounded "antibureaucratic" united actions. If their sectarian policy were to prevail, it would block the way toward building a genuine united action in defense of the democratic rights of the Chinese people, particularly the rights of those arrested in the Tien An Men incident. It would only narrow the opening that has already been gained.

The Tien An Men incident has in fact provided revolutionary Marxists with an excellent opportunity to explain concretely their program for political revolution to overturn the Stalinist bureaucracy ruling in China. But propaganda alone is not sufficient.

It is necessary to mobilize the masses, beginning from their present level of consciousness, to demand the immediate release of those arrested and to defend the democratic rights of the Chinese people.

An opening certainly exists, and an example of how to break through the isolation imposed by the Maoists has already been provided. The correct path is to continue preparing the way for mass participation, not to exclude the masses by proclaiming an abstract "antibureaucratic" program. □

### Ex-Agent Reveals Spy Mission in Australian SWP

By David Russell

In November 1975 Lisa Walter, a nineteen-year-old laboratory assistant, came into contact with the Australian Socialist Youth Alliance (SYA) in Adelaide. Walter became active and soon joined the socialist youth group. By March she was also a provisional member of the Socialist Workers party (SWP), which has the same Trotskyist politics as the SYA and which cooperates closely with it.

Then, on April 20, Walter walked into the SWP's Adelaide headquarters and informed the party leadership that she had been operating as an undercover agent for the Australian Security Intelligence Organisation (Asio).

Walter was the second Asio agent to surface in the SWP. In February 1975 Asio informer Max Wechsler, frustrated by his inability to find the slightest evidence of illegal activity on the part of the Australian Trotskyists, attempted to smear the SWP as a terrorist group in a sensational story carried by the gutter press.

Walter was told by her Asio contact, Keith Hancock, that the members of the SYA and SWP were moral and political "filth." Moreover, Hancock insisted that behind the façade of legal political activity the socialists were engaged in a sinister terrorist plot. But Walter found that the real situation was different.

"She was concerned that the SWP and SYA did not seem to be the political filth Hancock believed them to be," John Edwards reported in the May 24-29 issue of the *National Times*, a liberal weekly with a wide readership throughout Australia.

"I often questioned Keith," Walter recalled. "I asked him why he was wasting his time with this group which seemed so outwardly peaceful. He told me that it was only the front image I was seeing; behind that nice friendly image were terrible people; what I was seeing was just the front, it might take three years to get behind it."

Asio was interested in collecting information on activities that had nothing to do with the supposed terrorism of the SWP and SYA. Walter was asked to list the names of people at meetings, where they worked and lived, their automobile license numbers, and any personal gossip she heard about them. Asio also wanted information on the finances of the two groups, on the sales of *Direct Action*, (the weekly newspaper reflecting the views of the SWP), and on the participation of the SWP and SYA in movements defending the right of the Palestinian and East Timor peoples to self-determination, in the

women's liberation movement, and in the defense of Chilean political prisoners.

While feeding Walter lies about the "terrorist" character of the SWP and SYA, Asio provided her with a steady supply of "expense" money. At first Walter was given A\$20 (A\$1=US\$1.23) a month and a "Christmas bonus" of A\$60. In March Walter's "expense" payments went up to A\$40, and just before she quit they were raised again to A\$60.

However, the more Walter found out about the SWP and SYA, the more she agreed with their socialist politics. In an article in the May 27 issue of *Direct Action* Jim McIlroy asked her how her attitude to socialism and the Socialist Workers party changed. She replied:

It started way back when I read the Socialist Workers Federal election manifesto last year. The manifesto just seemed to formulate my own ideas. I agreed with it. I thought: "I agree with their basic policy that they show to the public. But I'm still trying to get behind the facade."

It was just a slow crackdown. I agreed more and more with events that came up like Timor where the party took a stand. I just agreed more and more with the party's policy. It became increasingly obvious that there no terrorist activities.

I was learning things from talks, gathered ideas from educationals, read *Direct Action*, started to read books. I read the *Transitional Program, Socialism and Feminism, and Socialism on Trial*. Later I even began to read *Co-Intelpro*.\*

Another factor in Walter's growing uneasiness with her role as a spy was the attitude of her family. Her parents, long-time supporters of the Labor party, were not enthusiastic about Asio's work, and both her brother and sister-in-law urged Walter to break with Asio. ("She and my brother read *Direct Action* and think it's really good.")

Finally, Walter decided to tell her story to the SWP leadership. The SWP contacted the *National Times*, and in cooperation with reporter John Edwards obtained photographs and a tape recording of Walter meeting her Asio contact.

Asio tried to intimidate Walter. It sent an agent to visit her parents and warned that if she stuck by her story she would have difficulty getting jobs in the future. Responding to Asio's threats, Walter said: "I hope my story will help to publicise what Asio does and cause people to take

\* *COINTELPRO: The FBI's Secret War on Political Freedom*, the book detailing the secret-police campaign against movements for social change in the United States.

action to prevent their operations in future."

After carefully considering the evidence, the SWP Political Committee accepted her account as truthful and decided to enroll her as a provisional member from the time of her break with Asio.

The exposure of Asio's infiltration and surveillance received widespread publicity in Australia. Daily newspapers such as the *Sydney Morning Herald* and Melbourne's *Sun, Age, and Herald* all carried stories on the case. The story was also featured on radio and television.

It is particularly important to note that Asio first used Walter to spy on the SWP and SYA when a Labor party government was in power. "Did the Whitlam Government authorise undercover spying against opponents in the trade unions and elsewhere?" asked Jim McIlroy in the May 27 issue of *Direct Action*.

When Malcolm Fraser's Liberal party came to power, Hancock told Walter not to worry because, "The ruling government doesn't affect us."

*National Times* reporter Edwards noted that the government spying was directed against persons who were "exercising their rights in a completely legal and proper way." Edwards said:

There is no more reason to collect files on these people [in the SWP and SYA] than there is to collect it on members of the Labor Party, and certainly during the fifties and sixties ASIO did collect files on Labor politicians and party members, an activity confirmed by the then Attorney-General, Senator Murphy, when Labor was in office.

Pointing to the fact that Asio's surveillance of the SWP and SYA was not affected when the change in government led to changes in Asio heads and the ministers responsible for the operation of the secret police, Edwards continued: "One can only conclude that no matter which Government is in power, no matter who is its permanent head, ASIO continues to collect files on left-wing groups. . . ." □

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## Poll Shows Italian Women Voters Moving Leftward

By Gerry Foley

With the June 20 elections in Italy only a few weeks away, the position of the main bourgeois party, the Christian Democrats, still seems to be deteriorating. In particular, the shift of women voters away from the Catholic party is striking.

According to a poll published in the May 30 issue of the Rome weekly magazine *L'Espresso*, the percentage of women supporting the Democrazia Cristiana (DC—Christian Democracy) has dropped from 39.4% in the June 1975 elections, in which the clericalist party already lost an important part of its traditional female support, to 32.5%. As against this, the *Espresso* poll showed that 31.5% of women voters intend to vote for the Communist party, 15.2% for the Socialist party, 1.2% for the Democrazia Proletaria (DP—Proletarian Democracy, a bloc of the small left parties that claim to stand to the left of the CP), and 1.2% for the Radical party, a small group of cultural rebels that pushed the campaigns for referendums on the right of divorce and abortion.

Thus, according to the poll, 49.1% of women voters already support the left parties, even excluding the 3.8% who say they will vote for the Democratic Socialist party, an anti-Communist split-off from the SP.

Among the women voters who continue to support the right, the poll showed a shift away from the DC toward the smaller bourgeois parliamentary parties, as well as a small but significant turn toward the neofascists, up from 6.0% last June to 8.1%.

About 38% of the women polled said they were dissatisfied with the position of women in Italian society. In the south, where the DC has kept the biggest lead over the left parties, this percentage was 81%. Of the 1,500 women interviewed, 73% agreed that Italian society is "male-chauvinist, traditionalist, archaic, and authoritarian."

It is ironic that this shift in the female vote, which is connected with the struggles for the right to divorce and abortion, has become a major factor in bringing the CP to the brink of the objective it has sought for nearly thirty years, inclusion in the government.

In the postwar period, the CP was opposed to female suffrage, on the grounds that women would vote as the priests told them. This did happen. Women became one of the main sources of electoral support for the Catholic party. But the CP

did not fight the social system and attitudes that caused this. That would have run counter to its policy of conciliation with the Italian bourgeoisie.

Nor did the CP support the movements for the right to divorce and abortion that gave impetus to the disintegration of the DC. This ran counter to its policy of "dialogue" with the Catholic church. The CP tried in every way possible to avoid "confrontations" on these issues. However, once these battles developed and weakened the hold of the church on Italian women, the "pragmatist" CP began to adapt to the women's movement and make a special appeal to female voters.

Even so, the SP seems to have gained proportionately more. The *Espresso* poll shows the SP gaining 2.8% among women, as opposed to 3.5% for the CP, but since the SP is about one-third the size of the CP, this is a correspondingly greater gain for the SP.

For its own ends, the SP opposed the CP's maneuvers to avoid a confrontation on divorce and abortion. The SP had subordinated itself to the DC in the center-left cabinets. Eventually it had to move away from the main bourgeois party in order to maintain its base in the working class. Furthermore, for tactical reasons, it was anxious to keep the CP from making an accommodation with the DC over its head.

In general, the smaller left parties that claim to stand to the left of the CP failed to recognize the potential of the women's movement or contribute anything to it.

On December 6, in fact, one of the largest of these groups, Lotta Continua (LC—The Struggle Continues), clashed violently with a women's march for abortion. The organizers had voted to limit the action to women. The LC leadership thought this was a "feminist attempt to divide the working class." They sent a delegation of about a thousand persons, mostly men, to break into the march. Fighting developed with the women monitors.

As a result of this incident, a special women's caucus was formed in the LC, called the "Collectivo 6 Dicembre." On May 9, twelve members of this group were expelled. This move was rescinded by the national leadership. But LC's reputation in the women's movement has suffered from such events.

It is notable that, according to the *Espresso* poll, as many women intend to vote for the Radical party, which is

identified mainly with the abortion and divorce referendum campaigns, as for the bloc of all the parties that claim to stand to the left of the CP.

The shift in the women's vote is, of course, only one factor in the leftward tide. Italy has been hard hit by the economic crisis. A series of scandals has discredited the DC. But the rise of a mass women's movement in a country where the main bourgeois party is linked to the church tends to reflect other trends as well.

It is interesting, for example, that of the women interviewed in the *Espresso* poll, the largest number, 31%, cited discrimination in employment as the reason for their dissatisfaction. Some 23.9% cited discrimination against women in the society, and 19%, the inferior status of women in the family.

### 'Two-Party System' for Italy?

In response to the decline of the DC, sections of the bourgeoisie have experimented with forming a "bloc of lay parties" that could begin to take over from the DC. Obviously, the bourgeoisie needs some sort of bourgeois "two-party system," since one bourgeois party continually in power inevitably becomes hopelessly discredited. The bloc of lay parties was supposed to be prepared by having key industrialists become candidates for the smaller bourgeois parties and the anti-Communist Democratic Socialists.

However, according to the May 16 issue of *L'Espresso*, the capitalists were given the cold shoulder by the Democratic Socialists, who were afraid of becoming totally discredited among workers. The SP was more amenable, since having big industrialists on its slate would increase its ability to serve as an intermediary between the CP and the DC. However, the capitalists are opposed to the SP's demand for including the CP in the government.

According to a study cited in the May 24 issue of *Bandiera Rossa*, the weekly newspaper of the Italian section of the Fourth International, 80% of the members of employers associations are personally involved in the campaign. With the DC faltering and the workers parties on the verge of getting a majority, the capitalists are apparently no longer willing to leave the business of politics to stooges.

However, the capitalists themselves have failed to come up with any new alternative and apparently succeeded only in creating new divisions. A notable



episode was the offer by Giovanni Agnelli, the boss of the Fiat automobile trust, to run as a candidate for the Partito Repubblicano Italiano (PRI—Italian Republican party).

According to Renzo di Rienzo, writing in the May 16 *Espresso*, the PRI leader Ugo La Malfa was anxious to have Agnelli on his slate so that the industrialist could serve as a guarantee to Washington in a "government of national unity" that would include the CP. La Malfa also saw the PRI as playing an "intermediary" role between the CP and the DC. So, he had a use for Agnelli, even though a certain expense might be involved.

The PRI union leader, Raffaele Vanni, complained, according to di Rienzo: "What are the workers going to think I am? What kind of dialectical acrobatics can we use to explain to them that we have managed to reconcile the interests of big industry with those of the metalworkers?"

However, Giovanni Agnelli's maneuver with the PRI ended, at least apparently, when it came to light that his younger brother Umberto was already included on the DC slate.

Nonetheless, it is not certain that the elder Agnelli brother has abandoned the project of a lay party bloc. He spoke in favor of it in Turin on May 20. Moreover, about the same time, Mario Corbino, president of the small industrialists association and described in the May 30 *Espresso* as a "superloyal supporter" of Giovanni Agnelli, carried out a poll of small capitalists, with the help of the Italian employers confederation, Confindustria. The poll showed that 60.4% of the small capitalists supported the lay parties, with the PRI being most popular.

On the local level, according to the poll, the small capitalists favored the DC. Salvatore Gatti, the *Espresso* writer, interpreted this as an indication of the ties between the small industrialists and the DC patronage machine.

This affection of the small capitalists for the DC pork barrel contradicts statements by "modern" small capitalists such as Eugenio Bontempo, an SP candidate in Naples, that the "productive" capitalists reject the DC as the party of "parasitism."

In the present political situation, there was opposition even in the DC to having an Agnelli as a candidate. Carlo Donat-Cattin, leader of the Forze Nuove faction, protested publicly and strongly that such a candidacy would mean further loss of popular support.

On the other hand, the attempt to give the DC a more attractive face for the working masses has been notably unsuccessful. This operation began last July with the ouster of the old rightist Amintore Fanfani from the chairmanship of the DC. The present chairman, Benigno Zaccagnini, confirmed in his position in March, was supposed to be a more liberal replacement. However, the renovation of the DC seems

to have been as hesitant as the "lay alliance" gambit.

"It is all too obvious," *Bandiera Rossa* commented in its May 24 issue, "and [CP General Secretary] Berlinguer himself has had unwillingly to recognize it, that behind the more reassuring image of Zaccagnini, the uninviting smirk of Fanfani is reemerging more and more. The promised 'renewal' of the parliamentary party has not occurred (the old bosses from Gava to Rumor, from Colombo to Andreotti, continue to play the leading roles). This inability to make any substantive change has assumed farcical aspects, with some personalities being shifted from the lower house to the upper house and vice versa."

#### Stalinists to the Rescue

Apparently, none of the capitalists' attempts to halt the decline of the bourgeois parties is doing very well. Fortunately for them, they have a still rather unappreciated friend who is willing to help them out of their difficulties, the Communist party. The CP has done this once already in a big way, serving in a government of "national unity" immediately after World War II. After the crisis passed, it was rudely pushed out of the government, and driven into relative isolation by a furious anti-Communist campaign.

But now the CP leadership has made clear that it is willing to repeat the performance in return for nothing more than it expected in 1945, a modest place in the government.

On May 13, Berlinguer proposed a "government of all democratic parties," an "emergency government" to get the country through the crisis. His offer was interpreted in the capitalist press as a retreat from the proposal of a "historic compromise," that is, a deal between the CP and the DC to share governmental power and make some reforms.

Actually, Berlinguer's "emergency government" proposal dovetails with the CP's perspective of a coalition on the model of the one established during the postwar crisis. This was explained clearly in the CP's election almanac, which went to press in December 1975 and is being sold massively at a heavily subsidized price. In an article on the constitution, Antonio Tatò wrote:

"In 1943, fascism was making us pay the last and highest price for its dictatorship, the loss of our independence and national unity, the worsening of the economic and social breakdown. But it was precisely then that the rebirth of Italy began, the combined efforts of the best part of the country, of the great majority of men and women of all ages and professions, grouped around the democratic and anti-fascist parties, seeking a way out of the vicious circle.

"The Communists were at the head of this united struggle, against the old ruling

classes that were incapable of leading the nation. It fell to the working class to defend, along with its own aspirations, those of the country as a whole, to play for the first time the role of national leadership. United with us in the armed struggle and the political struggle, along with the SP comrades and the partito d'Azione [a liberal bourgeois party from which La Malfa came] were the Catholics. New levies came from the youth, and there were also the old 'populists' of Luigi Sturzo's party [which became a component of the DC].

"It was a dramatic, key moment. Obviously we had to abandon polemics and join ranks in the struggle. But it cannot be thought that this collaboration among Communists, the SP, the lay parties, and Catholics, which continued for two years after the war, was merely the result of momentary pressures.

"There were deeper reasons that led to this unprecedented unity, reasons felt intensely, if still unconsciously, by the men and women who abandoned their ideological prejudices to fight together. The unity of the entire SP and CP workers movement with the Catholics brought together all the best and new that the country could produce, it provided the only effective answer, the only positive and modern answer to the problems."

Although he was appealing to backward nationalist sentiments, Tatò was willing to give the United States, which presumably threatens the independence of Italy, its share of the credit:

"The international situation was conducive to this result, since it was marked by a great rapprochement between the USSR and the nation that more than any other in the West could stand on a democratic tradition—the United States of America. These two states were 'abnormal' in the sense that they were free of the burden of the heritage of the old Anglo-French consortiums, whose policy led to disastrous forms of colonialism and tolerance for European fascism."

As the symbol of this "unity," Tatò pointed to the Italian constitution, signed by the CP leader Terracini, as well as the cold warrior Alcide De Gasperi. "We did not want a working-class constitution," Tatò explained.

Although a "government of national unity" had been implied before, Berlinguer's May 13 proposal reportedly prompted some uneasiness in the SP leadership. This was indicative of the jockeying between the two big workers parties to be the bourgeoisie's main intermediary with the working class.

It was the SP that first proposed an "emergency government" as an alternative to a deal between the CP and DC over its head. But then, reportedly, it occurred to them that a "great coalition" gave the CP more room for maneuver both with the bourgeois parties and with them.

At the same time, the CP leaders have been accusing the SP of trying to play a "centrist role." Although the SP leadership denies this, the fact that they continually talk about their party being the "center" of Italian politics does suggest such an ambition.

However, the SP seems firm on one point: The May 30 *Espresso* quoted Claudio Signorile, "right-hand man" of SP leader Riccardo Lombardi, as saying: "We may study other solutions [besides an "emergency government"] provided they don't exclude the CP from the government." This statement is reminiscent of the Portuguese SP leader Soares's insistence that the CP be included in the first provisional government.

In countries with large CPs, SP leaders have learned that they are the main losers when they let the CP escape the responsibility for class-collaborationist governments. The Italian SP has experienced this. It lost heavily because of its alliance with the DC in a series of center-left cabinets.

Since the SP is much smaller than the CP but still big enough to be necessary for a left majority, as well as being more acceptable to the bourgeoisie than the Stalinist party, it can hope to play a pivotal role in any popular-front coalition, and possibly outmaneuver the CP.

However, if the Stalinists fear the SP may outmaneuver them and make the biggest gains from a left coalition, as the French SP has, there is presumably one kind of "centrist" maneuver by the SP that they favor. SP leader Antonio Giolitti went to Washington in early May, apparently to convince U.S. officials of the need for bringing the CP into the government.

Giolitti found Washington more cautious about opposing the CP in the government, the May 12 issue of the Rome daily *la Repubblica* reported, although it still thought a coalition with the CP would be a "mistake." Giolitti said that he argued: "The choice is not between a CP out of the government and a CP with a small share in it, but between a CP with a small share and a CP getting all the power."

This probably reflected the self-interested view of the SP, that if the CP is not brought into the government along with it, the Stalinists will monopolize the working-class vote.

On the other hand, the maneuvers of the reformist parties tend to get the DC off the hook even before the elections: for example, the DC paper *Il Popolo* responded to Berlinguer's offer of a national coalition this way: "If the DC has been the cause of all the misfortunes afflicting Italy, why seek an alliance with it? And if the center-left was, as the CP says, an unwieldy conglomeration, how can it think that this coalition will gain greater solidity by adding other heterogeneous forces?"

Since neither of the big workers parties offers a clear or consistent alternative, it is

not surprising that the poll of women voters in the May 30 *Espresso* showed that 21% had no confidence in any of the governmental formulas presented by the traditional parties.

Apparently, a very large part of the Italian electorate is skeptical about all the



BERLINGUER: Offers to help the capitalists out of their difficulties.

traditional parties. There have also been signs that a large proportion of the workers are dissatisfied with the reformist leaders, particularly during the fall labor contract negotiations. The smaller left parties hope to tap this discontent.

#### 'Democrazia Proletaria'

In mid-May, the largest groups that claim to stand to the left of the CP formed an electoral bloc under the name *Democrazia Proletaria*, which was used in the 1975 elections by a bloc of the PdUP and *Avanguardia Operaia*.<sup>\*</sup> These groups reportedly continue to dominate the front, despite the addition of *Lotta Continua*, and a number of smaller formations, including the Italian section of the *Fourth International*.

In its May 24 issue, *Bandiera Rossa* commented: "PdUP and AO have been trying to take advantage of their position as founding partners, demanding the right to run the campaign for themselves alone. They have decided on the composition of the slates without much regard for how representative they are or for including all interested forces."

*Lotta Continua* has been given only 15% of the 626 candidates on the DP slates and

<sup>\*</sup>Partito d'Unità Proletaria (Party of Proletarian Unity), a fusion between left Social Democrats and a left-centrist split-off from the CP. Workers Vanguard, a Maoist centrist group.

none of the top spots, an important consideration when proportional representation is involved.

There is a political dividing line between the PdUP and AO on the one hand and LC, the May 23 *Espresso* explained. PdUP is prepared to enter a CP-SP government. LC is not. Their attitudes on the unions also differ. LC regards the unions, in the words of its leader, Adriano Sofri, as "mere auxiliaries of the parties, especially the CP," which after a left government is formed will become "transmission belts for this government."

This dislike of "transmission belts," however, did not keep LC from being a fervent supporter of the MFA-People's Power plan in Portugal.

The PdUP has significant influence in the unions. It dominates the leadership of the *Federazione dei Lavoratori Metalmeccanici* (FLM—Metalworkers Federation). Its practice is very similar to that of the CP. In fact, the contract signed by the FLM in early May was hailed by the CP paper *Rinascita* as pointing the way toward "codetermination," the institutionalization of class collaborationism in the factories in which "workers representatives" are supposed to share in management decisions.

In its May 17 issue *Bandiera Rossa* denounced the FLM contract as one "signed in the spirit of 'industrial relations' for social peace." Furthermore, it said, LC failed to offer an alternative. "The far left played a completely negative role."

One of the biggest problems with the *Democrazia Proletaria* bloc, according to the May 24 *Bandiera Rossa*, is that it was not formed on a political program: "This is unquestionably a severe limitation, which the reformists have sought, and will seek, to exploit."

In fact, in the CP paper *L'Unità*, the editor, Luca Pavolini, called the DP "an incredible electoralist combination." CP representatives attacked the parties in the bloc as being not antiparlamentarists but "ultraelectoralists," seeking only seats in parliament.

It remains to be seen whether the DP will be able to produce a common electoral program.

Clearly there is a crying need for a workers party that can offer the dissatisfied working masses a perspective for a successful struggle for socialism. The decline of the bourgeois parties is so precipitous that apparently even the reformists fear they will have difficulty in achieving a stable class-collaborationist formula.

For example, in the May 15 issue of *Le Monde*, the head of the largest union federation, Luciano Lama, was quoted as saying: "If the left gets over 50% of the vote, it will not be able to avoid its responsibilities." □



### At First Press Conference of Liga Comunista

By Joanna Rossi

MADRID, May 19—Reporters from eight newspapers and magazines came to the first public—although still formally illegal—press conference of the Liga Comunista (LC—Communist League), a sympathizing organization of the Fourth International in Spain. Xavier Araéz outlined the LC's political positions and answered reporters' questions.

In response to a foreign reporter, Araéz said that Spanish political life had entered a new phase since the death of Franco. The existence of certain limited freedoms, he explained, was one of the consequences of the crisis of the decaying Francoist regime, which, under the pressure of broad mass mobilizations and widespread strikes, had been forced to tolerate the de facto exercise of some democratic rights, although in a completely arbitrary and dangerously unpredictable way.

All political organizations, with the exception of Franco's Movimiento Nacional (National Movement) and a small number of conservative "political associations" that do not threaten the regime, are still illegal. Despite this, many organizations are now making public appearances and declarations. The congress of the Unión General de Trabajadores (UGT—General Workers Union, closely related to the Spanish Socialist party) held in Madrid in mid-April is one example.

Liberal parties are openly negotiating with sectors of the government to work out their roles in some possible future government. Spanish newspapers and magazines carry most statements released by political parties, primarily those in the widely discussed democratic opposition, the Coordinación Democrática (CD—Democratic Coalition).

There is also wide interest in groups standing to the left of the CD. Within the last two weeks, for example, *Mundo Diario*, a widely circulated Barcelona daily, published a lengthy article on them, and *Guadiana*, a Madrid newsmagazine, published several of the left groups' criticisms of the Coordinación Democrática program.

Within this framework, Araéz said, the LC press conference was not strictly clandestine: "It's not completely underground or secret. We openly contacted the press; they knew about it well in advance, and several of their reporters are here.

"We could not have done this before, and although it could be dangerous, we think we must use every small concession the dictatorship has been forced to yield. We're going to take advantage of the new

situation to make the positions of Trotskyism known to the broadest masses of the Spanish people."

The danger Araéz referred to is very real. Although the press conference proceeded without incident, members and supporters of the LC are still being arrested on suspicion of political activity or for having radical literature in their possession.

Even though the UGT was allowed to hold its April conference, on May 6 police broke up a press conference of the UGT, USO,\* and workers commissions at which representatives of the Italian trade unions were present.

On May 16, four Spanish journalists, covering a "holiday-political" gathering of 7,000 persons in a park outside Madrid, were beaten and arrested, and the gathering was forcibly dispersed. Today it was announced that the Madrid newspaper association has formally requested permission for a public demonstration to protest this.

In opening the press conference, Araéz gave a brief history of the LC. He said that the group's founders had moved toward Trotskyism during the radicalization of the late 1960s, forming a Trotskyist grouping at the beginning of 1971. A split in the organization at the end of 1973 produced two different public groups, the LC and Liga Comunista Revolucionaria (LCR—Revolutionary Communist League, now the LCR-ETA VI), both of which are

\*Unión Sindical Obrera (Workers Trade Union).

### Four Uruguayan Exiles Murdered in Buenos Aires

The bullet-riddled bodies of two former Uruguayan legislators, Zelmar Michelini and Héctor Gutiérrez Ruiz, were found in a parked car in Buenos Aires May 21. The bodies of two other Uruguayans, Carmen Barredo de Schroeder and her husband, were discovered in the same car.

Michelini, a former senator from the bourgeois Colorado party, and Gutiérrez Ruiz, former president of the Uruguayan Chamber of Deputies and member of the bourgeois National party, were kidnapped from their homes May 18 by heavily armed, unidentified groups of men.

The two legislators had lived in exile in Argentina since 1973, when Uruguayan President Juan María Bordaberry dissolved the parliament and the powerful

sympathizing organizations of the Fourth International.

Araéz scored the fraudulent nature of the Spanish regime's proposed reforms. He spoke of the "false face" they are putting forward in attempting to "pretty up" and popularize the monarchy. "The reformist plans [to maintain the regime through the monarchy] are transparent maneuvers to anyone who has eyes to see. They are nothing more than a demagogic way to continue the Francoist dictatorial regime."

He said there was still another maneuver in the offing, should the monarchy fail to win the hearts and minds of the people; that is, the formation of a Popular Front-type government that would accept the participation of the reformist workers parties in a final attempt to maintain the status quo. This corresponds to the hopes of those parties within the Coordinación Democrática.

Calling this formation a "major obstacle" to the masses, Araéz explained how the parties in the CD had been used to call off mass mobilizations. "Before the Communist party talked about strikes; now they just want to sit quietly beside the government and negotiate. Nothing will be won that way.

"These parties say, 'We can negotiate' freedom for political prisoners and the return of Spanish political exiles. This is the 'amnesty' they stand for."

Araéz said that all the workers parties ought to leave the CD and other formations of collaboration with the bourgeoisie, and form a working-class united front that would join workers, youth, peasants, and oppressed nationalities in the struggle to provide their own solutions to the crisis of the regime. He explained that through actions such as demonstrations and general strikes, the masses could topple the regime and install their own government, one that would put an end to repression and oppression and lay the foundations for ending capitalist exploitation. □

trade-union federation, the Convención Nacional de Trabajadores (National Workers Congress).

Michelini was international news editor at the Buenos Aires daily *La Opinión* at the time of his death. Gutiérrez Ruiz was a businessman.

These murders highlight the danger faced by the 10,000 political exiles and the 500,000 Uruguayans living in Argentina. Michelini and Gutiérrez Ruiz were not leftists, nor were they known to be involved in Argentine politics.

Ten other murdered Uruguayans have been found in recent weeks in the coastal waters connecting Argentina and Uruguay. All ten had been severely tortured.



## Canadian Labor Movement Threatens General Strike

By David Russell

Under pressure from an increasingly militant rank and file, the Canadian Labour Congress (CLC) is moving toward a direct confrontation with the Liberal government of Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau. Since his election victory last September, Trudeau has imposed wage controls, ordered cutbacks in government services, and attacked the right to strike. (See *Intercontinental Press*, November 3, 1975, p. 1486.)

On May 17, the 2,400 delegates at the CLC's convention voted almost unanimously to authorize the CLC executive to call "a general work stoppage, or stoppages, if and when necessary" in order to back the CLC campaign against wage controls.

Although no date for such an action was set, Wilfred List, the labor writer for the *Toronto Globe and Mail*, said that sentiment by delegates for a strike "was so overwhelmingly in favor that the congress would need some compelling reason not to do so."

The vote for a one-day general strike comes after months of more limited strikes and demonstrations protesting Trudeau's attack on the working class. Thirty thousand workers demonstrated against wage controls at the seat of the Canadian government in Ottawa March 22 in an action called by the CLC. (See *Intercontinental Press*, April 12, p. 598.)

While 30,000 workers rallied outside the parliament, a statement by the CLC was presented to the government. It called Trudeau's wage-control program "unparalleled in its callous and brutal treatment of all who must toil for a living," and warned Trudeau that:

This government has demonstrated by its actions over the past six months that it cares nothing for working men and women or their organizations. By persisting, your government has placed itself on a collision course with the labour movement of this country. We do not welcome this, but we do not intend to back down either.

In Québec that same day, 120,000 public employees walked off their jobs in a one-day strike called in solidarity with the Ottawa protest. All Montréal schools were shut down, hospitals were reduced to emergency staffs, and the public workers were joined by trade unionists in the auto and construction industries. In Québec City, a demonstration of 5,000 was held, and protests took place in eleven other Québec cities.

The Québec working class has been in the center of the struggle against the government offensive. Public employees organized in the Common Front—numbering more than 175,000—have been locked in combat with the Québec government over their right to strike and their right to a decent contract.

One-day strikes by public employees in Québec again brought out more than 120,000 workers on March 25 and April 5. Québec Premier Robert Bourassa responded by pushing Bill 23 through the Québec National Assembly. This measure, which makes strikes by teachers illegal, followed an earlier law aimed at hospital workers.

On April 13, immediately after Bill 23 went into effect, more than 145,000 public employees, including 90,000 teachers, went out on strike. Another one-day strike on April 30 involved 160,000 to 200,000 workers. (There are about 250,000 public employees in all of Québec.)

Labor militancy has been growing in the rest of Canada as well. For example, after the provincial government in British Columbia proposed legislation May 4 banning all work stoppages on the government-owned rail network, the head of the British Columbia Federation of Labour announced that a general strike "was considered as an option" by the federation staff.

"Six months ago a general strike didn't have much credibility," labor leader George Johnston said. But now, he added, the climate is changing, with the anti-strike bill acting "as a catalyst."

In Ontario, more than 15,000 workers demonstrated April 28 against government cutbacks in a protest called by the Ontario Federation of Labour.

The decision of the CLC convention to authorize a one-day general strike thus came as a result of considerable pressure from across Canada. Jean-Claude Parrot, vice-president of the Canadian Union of Postal Workers, expressed the sentiment of many when he told a labor rally in Ottawa:

... time is important and the rank and file of this movement wants action now.

I think the Canadian Labour Congress will be providing the bold leadership we need when it organizes a one-day general strike all across Canada in protest against the Trudeau wage controls.

An editorial in the April 12 issue of *Labor Challenge*, a revolutionary-socialist fortnightly published in Toronto, also

pointed out the need for a general strike. But *Labor Challenge* added:

In its fight against wage controls the CLC has a second major task. Its preparation for a one-day general strike must be combined with a campaign to build the NDP [New Democratic party] as labor's alternative to the Trudeau regime. Not in decades have the class lines been so sharply drawn in Canadian politics. Never since the NDP's formation has it been so clear that labor needs a political party independent of the employers.

The challenge facing the NDP was outlined by George Addison in the April 26 *Labor Challenge*:

As the only force in the legislature opposing the cuts, the NDP has become a rallying point for all victims and opponents of the government's attacks. In the recent period, the NDP has been looked to as a voice for communities fighting hospital closures, miners striking against occupational hazards, small farmers concerned about the big-business takeover of prime farmland, people opposed to the 45 percent rise in medical insurance premiums, tenants facing rent increases despite the cumbersome Tory "rent review" program, welfare recipients, and other victims of the cutbacks.

But the NDP leadership appears to be doing little to utilize this favorable situation to win new support for the party. . . .

Rather than building a mass movement that is involved in the day-to-day struggles of working people, the NDP leadership acts as if the party is little more than an electoral machine, to be mobilized only at election time to knock on doors for handpicked candidates.

The CLC convention's vote for a general strike provides an excellent opportunity for the labor movement to make its strength felt, and for the labor party to take its rightful place in the fight for the interests of the Canadian working class. As the editors of *Labor Challenge* said May 24:

The task now is to get this protest under way. A date for the strike must be set. Organizing bodies must be set up. A schedule must be worked out for an educational campaign, including mass rallies and demonstrations across the country, to build support for the general strike. . . .

Quebec labor federations have made clear their support for a general strike. The Canadian Labour Congress must move immediately to organize the general strike jointly with the Quebec federations.

The CLC must bring the New Democratic Party into the general strike protest, and urge it to play a prominent role in building and carrying out the action. . . .

It's time to set the date, and begin the preparations. □



Joanna Rossi

Part of audience of 1,500 at meeting for Camejo May 28 at Madrid University.

## Tour by SWP Presidential Candidate Featured in Spanish Press

# Thousands Hear Camejo in Barcelona, Madrid, and Valencia

By Joanna Rossi

BARCELONA—Peter Camejo, Socialist Workers party candidate for president of the United States, concluded a nine-day tour of three Spanish cities May 29. The trip received extensive coverage in newspapers and magazines.

During his visit Camejo addressed six public meetings in Barcelona, Valencia, and Madrid, speaking to a combined total of 4,000 workers and students.

Camejo also met with Antonio García Duarte, organization secretary of the Unión General de Trabajadores (General Workers Union, politically close to the Spanish Socialist party); Marcelino Camacho, the best-known leader of the workers commissions (identified politically with the Communist party line); and other leaders of Spain's illegal trade-union organizations.

A public meeting, held May 27 in the

Barrio Pilar, a large working-class neighborhood in Madrid, was a high point of the tour. Camejo had been invited to speak on the topic "The Political Situation in the United States and Its Impact on World Politics" by the Santa María del Val club, an organization of young workers.

The meeting room was packed with more than 500 young workers, some students, and a number of older persons.

It was an enthusiastic crowd, hungry for revolutionary ideas. They applauded and laughed as Camejo spoke in Spanish, punctuating his talk with jokes at the expense of bourgeois politicians, the FBI and CIA, and other capitalist institutions and figures.

Camejo described the campaign his party is waging in the United States. He talked about the deteriorating economic situation, about cutbacks in social ser-

vices, the impact of Watergate, and harassment by the FBI and CIA. He outlined how the American people are fighting back, pointing to the women's liberation movement, the Black struggle in face of the new racist offensive, the Chicano movement, the growing dissatisfaction among American workers.

One of the points he stressed—and this touched on a topic under sharp debate within the Spanish left—is the need for the working class and its parties to remain independent from bourgeois parties and programs. Camejo explained that in the United States, as in the rest of the world, the Communist party and Social Democracy do not hold this view, traditionally supporting and seeking blocs with the "liberal" bourgeoisie.

He explained the disastrous consequences of such politics, taking up the defeat

of Allende's government in Chile as an example. He mentioned the danger in Italy, where today the Communist party is attempting to work its way into a multi-class bloc.

He recalled the experience of the Russian revolutionists, who also had to combat these same politics: "I say, like Lenin did, like Trotsky did, that there can be no government blocs, no alliances, no 'junta' with parties or representatives of the bourgeoisie."

The audience rocked with laughter at his reference ("junta") to the deals the Spanish reformist parties are trying to establish through a "junta" with their bourgeoisie. The applause was loud and prolonged.

The audience included a number of supporters of Spain's large, underground Communist party. Their faces grew serious as Camejo denounced international Stalinist politics, past and present.

"But," Camejo went on, "we must not confuse the rank and file of the Communist parties or the Social Democratic parties with the disastrous lines of their leaders. We must be able to work together, to unite, around the many important goals we all support—like freeing all political prisoners—even if we disagree with much of their politics."

This touched a responsive chord throughout the audience, which burst into a new round of applause.

During the question period, a young woman asked, "Can you tell us about the women's movement in the United States? This is important for us, since we are seeing the rebirth of the women's movement in our country." It was a question that had been raised at almost every meeting Camejo addressed.

"This is, I think, much more important than the international socialist movement understands," Camejo replied. He outlined the roots of women's oppression, and stated his party's total support for the struggles of women. "We believe that all socialists should support the formation of an independent women's liberation movement to fight for its demands; because it is necessary for women, precisely because they are oppressed as women, to unite and work together to develop their own leadership."

The following evening in Madrid, Camejo spoke to an audience of about 1,500 at Madrid University, the largest meeting of the tour.

During the meeting a heated debate occurred between a CP supporter who took the floor and Trotskyists in the audience. In his concluding remarks, Camejo turned the microphone back to the CP supporter, and the meeting closed with rousing chants of "Unidad" and "Amnistia."

The enthusiastic tone of the meeting was tempered somewhat when the crowd left the auditorium. Six truckloads of armed police were parked to the side of the building.

All of Camejo's meetings were legal,

sponsored by university groups and neighborhood associations or clubs. But this did not always guarantee that a meeting could be held, as the banning of one of the meetings in Madrid testified. Nor did it imply that the authorities were not keeping a close watch, as was shown by the police stationed outside two other meetings. Even though the regime has been forced to allow some freedom of speech because of mass pressure, the police still make arbitrary arrests and disperse many gatherings.

This does not stop people from attending political meetings, however. Everywhere the response was similar: eagerness to hear an American revolutionist, deep interest in all political questions, a lively and enthusiastic response.

At the first meeting of the tour, held the evening of May 24 in the University of Barcelona's Sociology Department, Camejo was presented with a plaque, a cultural symbol of the Catalan people.

The following morning at the University of Valencia, Camejo spoke to 450 students in the Economics auditorium. Outside the hall, a huge, hand-lettered banner announced his meeting. A literature table set up by the Liga Comunista (LC—Communist League, a Spanish sympathizing organization of the Fourth International) did a brisk business selling pamphlets, books, and two posters advertising a Barcelona women's liberation conference. The posters read, "Without revolution there can be no women's liberation; without women's liberation there can be no revolution" and "Don't beg for your rights; fight for them."

At the side of the table, copies of *Inprecor*, the fortnightly magazine of the United Secretariat of the Fourth International, and *Combate*, the newspaper of the LC, were displayed. Across the hallway a young woman sold posters protesting the killings at Vitoria last March. Many of the university walls were covered with slogans calling for amnesty and freedom. In all,

the atmosphere seemed less restricted than in Barcelona or Madrid.

That evening, back in Barcelona, Camejo spoke in front of a large banner proclaiming, "For the World Revolution; Long Live the Fourth International." This talk, in the Barcelona University Faculty of Philosophy and Letters, drew 500 persons who filled the hall to overflowing.

Earlier that day Camejo conducted a number of press interviews and met with Luis Xirinacs, a radical priest who is holding a vigil for amnesty outside the main men's prison in Barcelona. Xirinacs, who spent two years in jail for his opposition to the regime, has vowed to continue his vigil until amnesty is won.

A crowd of Xirinacs's supporters, surrounding him on the sidewalk, wore bright red, yellow, and white T-shirts with the words, "Marxa de la Llibertat" (Catalan for "March for Freedom"). They told Camejo how a long march that was to pass throughout Catalonia in support of amnesty had been prohibited by the government only the day before. Xirinacs presented Camejo with one of the T-shirts.

At his last meeting, held in an industrial suburb of Barcelona May 29, Camejo spoke to an audience of 600, predominantly workers. To his concluding remark, "Long live the world socialist revolution," the audience replied with a loud and enthusiastic "Viva!"

During the tour Camejo was interviewed by every major daily newspaper in Barcelona and Madrid. These included *La Vanguardia Española*, Spain's largest daily; the widely read new Madrid daily *El Pais*; and *Avui*, the first Catalan-language daily to appear since the civil war. In Barcelona alone, six of the seven major dailies printed interviews.

Camejo was also interviewed by the three newsmagazines with the largest national circulation. Many more papers carried articles announcing his arrival, the banning of his Madrid meeting, and his discussions with labor leaders. □

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## Ethiopian Junta Prepares New Offensive in Eritrea

By Ernest Harsch

In the sixteen months since it stepped up its bloody war in the northern territory of Eritrea, the Ethiopian military junta has been unable to crush the Eritrean struggle for independence. According to recent reports, the Provisional Military Administrative Council (PMAC) in Addis Ababa is now preparing another major offensive against the Eritrean freedom fighters.

A government communiqué broadcast in the capital April 7 claimed that there was a "plot" between the Eritrean independence forces and Ethiopian rightists to turn Eritrea over to "foreign interests." It called on the population to arm itself and to remain in a state of alert.

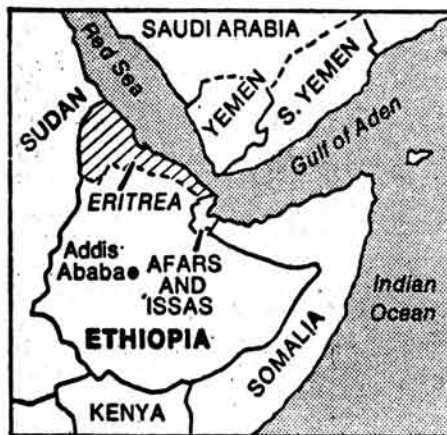
According to American government officials cited by David Binder in the May 12 *New York Times*, the PMAC has begun to recruit a "peasant army" among the predominantly Christian Amhara<sup>1</sup> population of the Ethiopian highlands. The peasant "volunteers" are said to number in the tens of thousands and to be armed with pre-World War II weapons left over from the Ethiopian resistance to the Italian occupation. An official cited by Binder said that Addis Ababa has recently spent millions of dollars in Turkey and Italy for ammunition for the arms.

The PMAC has denied that it is recruiting peasants to supplement the 20,000 Ethiopian troops already in Eritrea and has tried to bar journalists from traveling there. However, American reporters in Ethiopia have confirmed much of Binder's account.

*Washington Post* correspondents Tamenne Asmara and Jonathan C. Randal reported May 18 from Gondar, the capital of Begemder Province, that thousands of peasant recruits were gathering in that city on their way to Eritrea. Lt. Col. Atnafu Abate, one of the two strongmen of the regime, is reportedly playing a major role in the recruitment drive.

"In Dejen," Asmara and Randal reported, "some 300 miles farther south, weeping women watched the departure of their menfolk, apparently chosen deliberately from the middle-aged peasantry because the authorities did not fully trust the younger generation or the urbanized Ethiopians."

Bernard Weinraub of the *New York Times* said in a May 22 dispatch filed from Mekele, the capital of Tigre Province, that between 20,000 and 25,000 peasants repor-



New York Times

tedly passed through that city on their way to a base camp at Adigrat, just south of the Eritrean border. Weinraub reported seeing hundreds of empty trucks returning southward, apparently to pick up more peasants from Tigre and Wollo provinces.

According to Weinraub, inhabitants of Mekele "said that illiteracy, superstition, hatred of Moslems and the poverty and hunger in the hundreds of villages of northern Ethiopia had been exploited to build up a fervor for the attack."

In the tradition of the late Emperor Haile Selassie, the "socialist" military rulers in Addis Ababa are trying to whip up a chauvinist anti-Muslim hysteria among the Christian Amharas against the Eritreans (actually, the Eritrean population is about half Muslim and half Christian).

It is not yet clear what role the untrained and poorly armed peasant recruits are expected to play in the PMAC's military campaign. Since the Eritrean guerrillas are experienced and have some sophisticated weaponry, the peasant contingents may be used primarily against Eritrean civilians. Eritrean guerrilla leaders have expressed a fear of this, denouncing the new offensive as "genocide."

Addis Ababa is also bolstering its regular military forces. International relief officials returning to the capital from Eritrea have reported large-scale troop buildups there. The Territorial Army, a reserve force of 10,000 troops, was recently reactivated. A light infantry unit called the "Flame Brigade," which has been armed and equipped by Israel, is undergoing intensive counterinsurgency training.

Free-lance journalist Dan Connell, who

was the last American reporter known to have visited Eritrea, said in the May 20 *Washington Post* that heavy fighting was reportedly under way around army bases at Nacfa and Afabed, two towns north of the Eritrean city of Keren. According to guerrilla sources he interviewed in Sudan near the Eritrean border, 500 Ethiopian troops were surrounded at the bases and were able to receive supplies only by parachute.

An Eritrean representative in Khartoum, the Sudanese capital, said May 23 that Eritrean guerrillas had clashed with about 5,000 Ethiopian peasants two days earlier. He did not give the location of the battle, but said that the peasants had fled, leaving many of their weapons behind.

Addis Ababa's inability to bring the territory under control after years of counterinsurgency operations by half the Ethiopian army testifies to the high level of resistance of the Eritrean population to continued Ethiopian rule.

Eritrea, which was ruled as an Italian colony for half a century, became part of Ethiopia in 1950 under the terms of a U.S.-sponsored United Nations resolution. Although it was initially granted a measure of regional autonomy, Selassie's feudalist regime soon took away most of the basic democratic rights in the territory and imposed Amharic as the sole official language.<sup>2</sup> In 1962 Selassie officially annexed Eritrea as Ethiopia's fourteenth province.

The military officers who ousted Selassie in 1974 claim they favor "scientific socialism." But their approach to Eritrea's struggle for self-determination is fundamentally the same as that of their predecessor. Their basic aim is to "modernize" and centralize Selassie's empire within a bourgeois framework. Under the slogan of "Ethiopia tikkem" (Ethiopia first), the military leaders have continually proclaimed the necessity of maintaining the country's "sacred unity."

Although Ethiopia is peopled by a number of other oppressed nationalities, such as the Somalis, Oromos, and Nilo-Saharan, it is the Eritrean struggle for independence that now poses the major challenge to the PMAC's centralization scheme.

From the reports of a number of journalists who visited the territory, the Eritrean liberation movements have been growing

2. The major languages spoken by Eritreans are Tigre, Tigrinya, and Arabic.

1. The Amharas are the traditionally dominant nationality in Ethiopia.

stronger over the past year and a half. The Ethiopian occupation forces now control only the major cities, such as Asmara, Keren, Massawa, and Assab, in addition to a few garrisons.

Since the heavy fighting of February 1975, hundreds of Eritrean youths have joined the guerrillas, who are now thought to number, according to various estimates, between 10,000 and 25,000. Although the guerrilla forces were originally dominated by Muslims, many of the recent recruits have been Christian.

The two guerrilla groups, the Eritrean Liberation Front-People's Liberation Forces and the Eritrean Liberation Front-Revolutionary Council, occasionally fought each other in the past. But they have been conducting joint military operations against the Ethiopians since early 1975. The two groups say they are now holding merger discussions.

Weinraub noted in the May 24 *New York Times* that "the reprisals of Government soldiers against the civilian populace—public hangings, the bombing of villages with American built F-5 and F-86 aircraft, mass arrests, publicized incidents of villagers being herded into mosques and shot—have brought growing support for the rebel movement."

Because of the continual reprisals against civilians in Asmara, the population of that city has dropped from 300,000 to 175,000 since the beginning of 1974.

According to Eritrean leaders, a massacre took place in February at the village of Um Berami, just nine miles north of Massawa, when Ethiopian troops killed 140 persons during the celebration of a Muslim holiday.

The Ethiopian regime's brutal war against the Eritreans has been financed largely by the U.S. government. Since 1953, Washington has provided more than \$200 million in military assistance. The Ethiopian army is almost entirely equipped with American weapons.

Forty-six American military advisers are now stationed in Ethiopia, and Washington has allocated \$22 million in military aid to Addis Ababa for the current fiscal year. The White House is expected to ask Congress for a similar amount next year.

According to a report by Smart A. Ekpo in the November-December 1975 issue of the *New York Monthly Africa Report*, "a secret long term arms agreement for \$300 million over a five year period has now been signed between Ethiopia and the US."

The U.S. imperialists have expressed some concern, however, over the possible consequences of Addis Ababa's projected offensive against the Eritreans.

The *New York Times*, one of the most authoritative bourgeois newspapers in the United States, said in a May 27 editorial, "Ethiopia's military rulers are behaving with callous recklessness in sending an untrained army of peasants into Eritrea,

ostensibly to crush a separatist guerrilla movement that regular Ethiopian troops have been unable even to contain."

The *Times* pointed out that the "Horn of Africa's political instability carries the threat of great-power involvement."

According to the May 14 *Washington*

## Junta Forced to Grant Wage Increase

# Growing Ferment in Argentine Factories

The May 12 issue of *Adelante*, a news bulletin that began publishing in Buenos Aires after the March 24 military coup, features a report on the response of the working class to the austerity measures imposed by the Videla junta.

In conformity with the restrictions on political activity enforced by the junta, the news bulletin describes itself as "a platform of opinion unaffiliated to any political organization." Welcoming signed contributions from any source, "its goal is to contribute to the explanation of important national and international questions."

The lead article in the May 12 issue took as its starting point the junta's May 8 announcement of wage increases. (See *Intercontinental Press*, May 31, p. 870.)

In explaining why the junta took this step, *Adelante* said:

Part of the answer lies in the Ministry of Economy communiqué on the wage increase, which indicates the "considerations of the national government in arranging a general increase in the level of remuneration." The principal "consideration" is the following:

"Despite the express suggestion made by the minister of economy in his April 2 speech and later in his May Day speech of the thirtieth of last month, some businessmen ordered wage increases."

This "consideration," which, we insist, is only part of the truth (and the least important part of it), forces us to reach an initial conclusion. The government never had any intention of giving a wage increase. (Aides of [Minister of the Economy José] Martínez de Hoz said this repeatedly in the preceding days.) But it was forced to grant it rapidly because of the raises that had been won in a number of factories.

*Adelante* pointed out that the Ministry of Economy had neglected to mention the role played by the workers in forcing through these raises:

At IKA Renault there was a slowdown of about forty-five days. After workers in some job categories won increases, the mobilization grew in strength; we are sure this was a central factor precipitating the Ministry of Economy's decision.

But Renault was not the only example. At the Ema plant in Vicente López a 30% raise was won, with an additional 15% for those with good attendance records. And it did not stop there. A total work stoppage organized to protest the army's intervention at the plant won the release

*Post*, similar concerns are being weighed within the State Department: "There is fear expressed on the working level of the State Department that the Ethiopians cannot win such a war. Failure in such a war could lead to the creation of an anti-American Eritrean state." □

of imprisoned workers. At Yelmo a slowdown was ended by military intervention, but still continues among some sections of skilled workers. At Mercedes Benz a petition was circulated and signed by all personnel, demanding a 40% increase. At the San Justo Chrysler plant shop stewards were being elected (in face of the desertion of the bureaucrats) to present demands to the bosses.

Work at the Monte Chingolo plant was totally paralyzed to protest the firing of a worker. The factory committee made up of bureaucrats resigned, saying it was not willing to act in the absence of full trade-union rights—as if to get them it is not necessary to keep fighting! Stirrings had also begun there about presenting wage demands. At CBS in the capital a 15% raise was won; at Cifa in La Plata, 15%; and raises were obtained at Kaiser and Ofa.

*Adelante* said that this was not a full report of what was going on in the factories, but that it was intended to give an indication of an initial "turn in the tide" in workers struggles.

However, the working class will have to move cautiously, *Adelante* continued, because it has been seriously weakened since the coup and "the initiative remains in the hands of the government."

The important thing, the article pointed out, is that these actions by some sectors of the working class "mark the effort begun to place a limit on the sweeping offensive of the bourgeoisie. . . ."

The fundamental task at this time, *Adelante* concluded, is to "reorganize the workers movement totally independent of the state." □

## Popovic Wins Suspended Sentence

The one-year prison sentence handed down against Srdja Popovic this March was suspended May 26 by a Yugoslav appeals court. Popovic, a Belgrade lawyer, had been convicted of "maliciously spreading false information and causing public disorder" because of his courtroom defense of a dissident writer in 1974.

While suspending his sentence, the appeals court stipulated that Popovic be barred from practicing law in Yugoslavia for one year. Popovic plans to appeal the ruling to the Supreme Court of Serbia.



## Britain After Wilson

[The following interview with Alan Jones, a member of the Political Bureau of the International Marxist Group, British section of the Fourth International, was obtained in London May 3. We have taken the text from the May 13 issue of *Inprecor*, a fortnightly news bulletin published by the United Secretariat of the Fourth International.]

\* \* \*

*Question. What is the economic background to the current wage negotiations between the government and the TUC (Trades Union Congress)?*

*Answer.* The most important point is the collapse of profits during the past few years, especially 1973-75. Between 1963 and 1973 the rate of profit in British industry fell by 50 percent, and between 1973 and 1975 it fell by half again. In spite of the economic crisis this produced, until the winter of 1974-75 the working class managed to maintain its standard of living, which went up 8 percent during the year following the fall of the Heath government in autumn 1973.

The economic situation remains disastrous for the bourgeoisie despite the fact that since the important defeat of the working class in summer 1975 the standard of living has fallen 6 percent and unemployment has risen to 1,250,000 without any serious working-class resistance. For the first quarter of 1976, for example, profits in real terms were half of what they were in 1964. There are now recommendations for a 3 percent cut in workers' living standards by means of limits on wage increases and another 5 percent cut by means of tax charges—and still without any improvement in the economic situation for the bourgeoisie. The rate of inflation would remain about 10-12 percent a year and unemployment would not drop below 1 million. The rate of profit would still be lower than the 1973 level. Despite the fact that industrial production will rise slightly, there is no fundamental improvement in the basic situation. Any serious class offensive would throw the economy into the worst crisis since the 1930s. And the bourgeoisie will have to continue its attacks against the working class simply to try to stabilize the situation temporarily.

*Q. What about the political background to Wilson's resignation?*

A. In spite of the economic crisis, the political parties of the ruling class are

unable to engage in any serious direct test of strength with the working class of the type Heath attempted from 1970 to 1973. These parties are weakened by the crisis in northern Ireland, the rise of the Scottish Nationalist party (which reflects the division in the ruling class itself), and the fact that since the fall of the Heath government no section of the ruling class is confident about the results of a test of strength with the well-organized sections of the working class. In this situation, the ruling class has placed all its hopes in the Labour bureaucracy. Since the summer of 1975, with the introduction of wage controls, this bureaucracy has been carrying out an offensive against the working class, and the combination of this and the depth of the economic crisis has undoubtedly created confusion and disorientation within the working class. For example, in the nine months since the imposition of wage controls, the number of strike days has fallen to the lowest level since 1958. Among some sections of the working class—construction workers, dockers, Chrysler workers—there have been serious defeats as a result of unemployment, bureaucratic repression, and combinations of the two.

But in spite of these setbacks, there are no signs of qualitative defeats of the working class as a whole. People are not leaving the unions; the factory leaderships established during 1968-74 remain intact. Attacks on the trade unions still meet very strong resistance. And since winter 1975-76, there have been slow but sure signs of a new working-class recovery since summer 1975. Last November 26, for example, 20,000 people demonstrated in London against unemployment despite the opposition of the TUC; last March 3,000 delegates attended a conference in London on unemployment called by the Communist party and the left Social Democrats.

In past weeks there have been seven or eight strikes in the motor industry around wages, working conditions, and so on. There have also been eight strikes around the question of equal pay for women during past weeks and a one-day general strike in Dundee in Scotland against social-service cuts. This recovery has also been reflected, in a bureaucratic fashion, in somewhat more activity by the left Social Democrats. In the week before Wilson resigned, for example, thirty-seven Labour MPs abstained in a House of Commons vote on a bill to cut social services; the bill was consequently defeated, at least temporarily. The left Social Democrats have also taken a new

initiative to get their program voted on at the next Labour conference. But naturally the left reformists have no intention of making a serious fight even to defend their own program, to the extent that they do find themselves clashing with government policy.

Wilson's resignation was undoubtedly a maneuver, an attempt to head off a new rise of opposition to government policy by putting himself in position to play a somewhat more individual and Bonapartist role, to give the government more protection from attacks from the left. Outside the government Wilson can make demagogic appeals for the unity of the Labour party; inside the government, Callaghan is his handpicked successor.

*Q. What are the government's prospects?*

A. A decisive change occurred in the summer of 1975. Until that summer, the Wilson government had attempted to "balance" between the classes, aiding the strategic policy of the ruling class but granting certain short-term concessions to the workers, such as an 8 percent increase in wages, freezes on rents, increased pensions. One of the reasons not to attack the working class, apart from the relationship of forces after the fall of Heath, was the referendum on British membership in the Common Market. Since the referendum (June 1975), the government has waged an uninterrupted series of attacks on the workers. The present government represents a very marginal shift to the right in the bureaucracy, but essentially it is unchanged since summer 1975.

The prospects of this government completely depend on the response of the workers. The trade-union bureaucracy will almost certainly succeed in getting the unions to accept the new round of wage controls. But there is a much larger and conscious minority in the trade unions more clearly opposed to the wage controls now than there was last time.

Furthermore, the government's economic policy—which promises to achieve the wage controls, reduce inflation to 5 percent a year, and reduce unemployment to 700,000 by 1979—cannot possibly succeed. The danger for the government is that the minority in the trade unions opposed to the wage controls will link up with mounting working-class opposition to the effects of the government policy. If this occurred, it would create a massive crisis in the mass organizations of the working class. Thus, to counter this danger, the bureaucracy is trying to stamp out any resistance of any kind to its policy. For example, a rule has been introduced into the trade-union councils forbidding any activity contrary to the policy of the Labour party and the TUC. Each of the strikes in the motor industry led to a direct intervention of the top bureaucracy against the struggle. At



the Scottish TUC Jack Jones, leader of the 1,750,000-member Transport and General Workers Union, personally intervened against a resolution submitted by one trade council critical of the Labour government. It was like using a sledgehammer to kill a fly. But at the moment, the ruling class does not appear to believe that the bureaucracy can control the situation, despite these measures. For the first time in a year, there is discussion in the ruling class press about the desirability of removing the government, hoping that the combination of wage controls and severe Labour electoral defeats would demoralize and contain the workers.

As for our analysis, we expect a slow but steady rise in the struggles of the workers. The government may fall, perhaps in the winter or spring, amid the increasing indifference and hostility of both classes.

*Q. What has been the reaction of the left Social Democrats and the CP?*

A. The left Social Democrats increased their weight in the Labour party during the period of working-class struggles from 1968 to 1974. This was reflected in the rise of Anthony Wedgewood Benn, who advocated economic policies based on reflation of the economy, selective nationalizations, planning agreements (investment policies by the government and the capitalists), and workers' participation in industry. An economic policy somewhat similar to that of the Union de la Gauche in France.

Of course, this rise of the left Social Democrats was a bureaucratic reflection of the struggle of the working class from 1968 to 1974. But with the defeat of the working class since the summer of 1975 and a new consensus among the ruling class and the bureaucracy, this current has gone into retreat. Benn was removed from a central post in the government and sections of the left Social Democratic program (which had been put in Labour's Election Manifesto) were removed from it.

But the Benn current retains the support of Labour party activists. For example, at the last conference Benn received by far the highest vote for the party Executive, and the lefts still control the main policy-planning committees of the party. With a new upturn in workers struggles, these forces can be expected to step up their activity somewhat, while avoiding a clear break with the trade-union bureaucracy, which continues to support the government. The perspective for the Bennites is almost certainly that the government will fall in a discrediting manner and then they can make a bid for the leadership of the party.

In practice, the policy of the CP is to attempt to put pressure on the left Social Democracy to play a slightly more active role. But this is bankrupt, since the Bennites are interested in the struggle for the leadership of the Labour party and not

in a fight against the trade-union bureaucracy.

*Q. What perspectives are put forward by the IMG?*

A. Our perspectives are to try to centralize the rising working-class struggle against the government and to give it an



HAROLD WILSON

adequate programmatic base. This means a central campaign around the sliding scale of wages, nationalization of firms threatening redundancies, rejection of cuts in social services, campaign for a program of public works, etc. The perspective advanced by our organization is the centralization of all those forces prepared to fight against government policies into a class-struggle left wing in the labor movement. This means an axis of united actions not merely with vanguard forces, but also with those left Social Democratic workers (and in certain cases CP members) who are prepared to fight against government policies. This fight involves a head-on confrontation with the central sections of the trade-union and Labour party bureaucracy and a continued demand that the Bennites define their positions on the struggles of the workers. On the issues of unemployment, cuts, and wages the struggle remains at a relatively fragmented level. But we have been able to intervene and carry out solidarity with some of these struggles. For example, our comrades were involved in a successful occupation at the Cromwell Smelters Factory in Southwest England and at the Personna firm in Glasgow. We also participated in the national demonstration against unemployment called by the CP last November 26 and we are building the Day of Action on

Unemployment and Cuts on May 26.

This fight against government policies meets such direct resistance from the bureaucracy and the potential for crisis in the mass organizations is so clear that the fight has a logic of transforming itself into a struggle around the leadership of the workers organizations, both locally and later nationally.

The perspective we see for the coming months is to attempt to develop all forms of resistance to government policy and to prepare for the crisis within the mass organizations that will accompany any rise in working-class struggles and will assume an explosive form if the government does fall. This means lending priority to work in the trade unions and increasing the number of people in the Labour party and in the Labour party Young Socialists who support the policy of the IMG and would be members of the IMG were it not for the reactionary rule that prevents them from joining the IMG and remaining in the Labour party or Labour Young Socialists.

The major successes we have registered in moving toward a more centralized response have been in the struggle against cuts in the Health Service, where we have been able to form a united front with left Social Democrats and centrist forces which has established a real presence in relation to this fight. On the question of abortion and the Campaign for the Working Women's Charter, the National Abortion Campaign has held two demonstrations of 30,000 and 15,000 in London and the work around the working women's charter has established about thirty local groups. □

#### **Former Japanese Prisoner Sues for Damage to Health**

Yuji Kondo, a former member of the Japanese Red Army (Sekigun), filed a damage suit for 50 million yen (about US\$166,000) against the Japanese government May 21, demanding compensation for the deterioration of his health while he was in prison.

Kondo was convicted of holding up a bank in Yonago to raise money for the group. He was imprisoned from August 1971 to October 1974.

Kondo said that his prison cell had no sunlight or fresh air and that it was extremely humid. He began to feel pain in his legs shortly after entering prison, but his appeals for medical attention were ignored. He also asked for parole in 1972 and 1973 and was turned down both times.

His condition deteriorated and he was later diagnosed as suffering from polyneuritis. After doctors said that he would be unable to withstand continued prison life, he was released. By that time, however, the damage to his health was permanent and the Nara Prefectural government officially designated him as a handicapped person.

# OUT NOW!

## Chapter 19

### The Labor Leadership Assembly for Peace

By Fred Halstead

Following the Pentagon march, Dellinger wrote an evaluation in which he said: "One of our continuing aims must be to disrupt and block the war machine. There may be a need for other well conceived 'disruptions' as well, which will make it increasingly difficult for our society to conduct 'business as usual' while the war continues. (We might discuss the implications of trying to disrupt the nominating conventions of the Republican and Democratic parties in order to expose their hypocritical and undemocratic nature.)"<sup>1</sup>

The implications were discussed and there were objections raised as a matter of civil liberties. Any attempt to disrupt a convention of a political party would put the movement on very dangerous ground, especially since any precedents in that direction were far more apt to be destructive of the gatherings of dissenting political parties or the antiwar movement itself than of the Democrats or Republicans. The parties in power did not lack the means to adequately defend their rights to orderly meetings or to disrupt the meetings of their opponents if that's the way the game was going to be played. (Indeed it was played that way covertly by the government through such operations as the FBI's Cointelpro [Counterintelligence Program] which were revealed later.) So the idea of disrupting any conventions was dropped. The idea of a demonstration outside the Democratic Party convention—in the same city at the same time—was, however, considered to be a good one. In fact it looked like a natural.

The president was not only the chief executive, centrally responsible for the administration's foreign policy, but also the

universally assumed, he were chosen as the Democratic Party's candidate. Conceivably he could continue to avoid public appearances that were announced far in advance even through the primaries, since it appeared he had the nomination locked up anyway. But the convention scheduled for August in Chicago had to be another matter. Johnson's appearance at the convention to accept the nomination—a must, by tradition—would almost certainly be the occasion for an antiwar demonstration of unprecedented magnitude. The place and time frame of his appearance would be known far in advance. The antiwar forces would have not just a few hours, but months to get out the word.

Within the ruling circles of the country, no doubt, there was some trepidation about the natural focus Johnson would continue to provide for a mass surfacing of the growing opposition to the war.

\* \* \*

In 1967 virtually all the so-called practical politicians within the two-party system were convinced that Johnson had the nomination sewed up. A rare exception was Allard Lowenstein, a New York reform Democrat. Lowenstein was a friend of Norman Thomas, a member of SANE, and a past president of the National Student Association. Since June, working with people from SANE, Women Strike for Peace, the Inter-University Committee for a Debate on Foreign Policy, and other groups, he had been trying to mount a "dump-Johnson" movement based on antiwar sentiment within the Democratic Party.

Through his NSA connections he had involved a number of students, including David Hawk of the Union Theological Seminary and Sam Brown of the Harvard Divinity School. Joseph L. Rauh, head of Americans for Democratic Action and Washington counsel for the United Auto Workers, took a pessimistic view of these efforts, but in September Lowenstein and Curtis Gans, an ADA staff worker, launched the National Conference of Concerned Democrats. Its aim was to unite groups of antiwar Democrats across the country and pledge volunteers for any dove candidate willing to challenge Johnson in the primaries. Local affiliates proceeded to collect signatures and donations from thousands of disaffected Democrats to run ads against Johnson and the war, listing the signers.

On October 20—the last day, incidentally, of the Oakland Stop the Draft Week and the day before the Pentagon march—Lowenstein finally found a candidate. He received a verbal commitment in a Los Angeles hotel from Senator Eugene McCarthy of Minnesota. McCarthy stepped up his speaking schedule, appearing at meetings around the country to criticize Johnson's policy on the war. I was present at one of these appearances two weeks before McCarthy publicly declared his candidacy.

The occasion was a conference of trade union officials in Chicago November 11-12 called the Labor Leadership Assembly for Peace, which was an outgrowth of the Trade Union Division of SANE. It was far broader than the similar conference the year before. This time there were 523 union officials from 50 international unions, including 50 officers on the national level.

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commander in chief of the armed forces, a constitutional power that Johnson took literally. It was no secret that he spent hours poring over the maps of Vietnam and even took a personal hand in ordering bombing operations. This sort of thing, and his vigorous denunciation of his critics on the war, had identified Johnson as *the* walking symbol of the war policy. By late 1967 Johnson could hardly appear in public—even on short notice—without being greeted by antiwar demonstrations. If he appeared on a few hours notice there would be dozens or hundreds; on a few days notice in a large city, there would be thousands. As a result, Tom Wicker observed in the November 16, 1967, *New York Times*, "going back to at least midsummer, the President of the United States has been in contact with the great American public only in the most limited, guarded and last minute fashion."

People were beginning to wonder how Johnson was going to campaign for the general election in 1968 if, as was almost

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1. *Mobilization Report*, pamphlet published by the National Mobilization Committee to End the War in Vietnam, undated. (Copy in author's files.)



McCarthy had not been one of the guests originally scheduled and his appearance gave substance to the rumors then afloat that he was preparing to announce his candidacy. So there was considerable interest as McCarthy got up to speak. The content of the talk was in tune with that particular audience right enough, but the delivery was disappointing, especially compared to the rest of the program. This included a wit like the economist John Kenneth Galbraith and the platform mastery of Martin Luther King, Jr., not to mention Norman Thomas and some of the union officials themselves for whom a fighting stance at the podium was a tool of the trade.

"A nice guy, but a born loser if I ever saw one," commented one unionist in the hallway after the senator's presentation. I couldn't resist interjecting: "That's what he's there for, to suck the kids out of the streets and then lose." After that I had plenty of empty space around me for the rest of the conference. Even in those circles, the atmosphere among labor officials was still such that it was not considered entirely safe to be seen talking to a bloody Bolshevik.

In McCarthy's talk—it was hardly a speech—he proposed a bombing halt and negotiations with both the National Liberation Front and Hanoi. "We are in the wrong," he said quietly. "We must take those steps called for in order to make things right. . . . There is now no question that the war is totally immoral and this matter must be brought to the people for judgment. This is more than just a question of Vietnam. It is a great reexamination by the American people of what our objectives as a nation are. It will be very difficult for the people to accept some limitations on our power. But that is really the question."<sup>2</sup>

In appealing for labor to get more involved for peace, McCarthy emphasized a point which occasionally broke through elsewhere at this conference. "This is not the kind of political controversy," he said, "which should be left to a children's crusade to save the country."

The revolt of the youth, and the awareness that the labor movement had no present influence or control over it, was something of a specter haunting this assembly. Actually they could easily have taken the leadership of the antiwar movement then and there if they'd had the will, by simply calling some mass antiwar actions and throwing their weight behind them. They certainly had far more resources at their command than those who were then leading the movement. The moderate antiwar groups would have followed them, as would the majority of students. The radicals would have had no choice but to find themselves isolated or remain in the broader movement as a left wing, in all likelihood no longer as central leaders. In spite of the problems this would raise, many of us would have welcomed such a development because of the greater breadth and potential power it would have meant for the movement as a whole.

But the labor leaders in the assembly couldn't bring themselves to take such a plunge. Many of them weren't even thinking in such terms. And those who might have been, had, like Hamlet, all sorts of ramifications to consider and reservations to give them pause.

For one thing they still represented a distinct minority in the AFL-CIO officialdom, though the polls at the time showed the rank and file of labor to be as disaffected on the war as the general population. A successful fight with Meany *within* the AFL-CIO would require redressing the balance of power by involving the rank and file. By nature the officials moved very slowly and with great caution when that sort of thing was involved. No telling where it might lead.

Equally important were their ties with the politicians of the two-party system and their tradition of seeking solutions through the Democratic Party.

Some respect for the student activists was expressed at the assembly, mostly in the corridors but occasionally on the floor. At

2. *Labor Voice for Peace*, January 1968. (Copy in Tamiment collection, Bobst Library, New York University.)

one point a delegate said unionists attending this conference were putting their heads "on the block." Abe Feinglass, a vice-president of the Amalgamated Meat Cutters and Butcher Workmen, responded: "Our youngsters' heads are on the block. They face the draft and they fight against the war. Yes, our heads are on the block. So be it. Some things are that important. I tell you now, and I don't care who hears it. I sat through that scene at the San Francisco [1965 AFL-CIO] convention [where Meany ordered the sergeants at arms to "clear the kookies out!"], and I admired those kids in the balcony."<sup>3</sup>

But those in control of the conference, especially United Auto Workers Secretary-Treasurer Emil Mazey, made it clear they were very wary of the independent antiwar movement in the streets. Their efforts, for the time being, would remain largely confined within the two-party election process, though formally the assembly would not endorse candidates.

For those who were there, the most dramatic development at the Chicago assembly was a talk by Victor Reuther, director of the UAW International Affairs Department, which handled relations with unions in other countries. It was dramatic because it was a description of covert CIA and U.S. State Department activities within the union movement, coming from an authoritative American union leader who was in a position to know the inside story.

Reuther delivered a scathing attack on the AFL-CIO International Affairs Department headed by Jay Lovestone. He described how together with the CIA it participated in the 1964 coup d'état that overthrew the elected liberal government of João Goulart in Brazil and, in the process, helped weaken the auto workers' unions there. This hurt U.S. auto workers, said Victor, because General Motors, Ford, and Chrysler were all multinational corporations, and auto parts were even being shipped from plants in one country to those in another. The trends in the industry required the UAW to set up arrangements with foreign unions to mitigate the undercutting of wages and union conditions. World auto councils were being formed for this purpose, he said, but the AFL-CIO's blind obedience to the State Department and its associations with the CIA made it difficult for the UAW—which was a AFL-CIO affiliate—to be trusted by legitimate unionists overseas.

The AFL-CIO's "obsession with anticommunism" had led it into "open collaboration" with the most right-wing, antiunion agencies "both at home and abroad." "The listing of organizations with which the AFL-CIO under Meany has affiliated itself," declared Reuther, "comprises the listing of almost all major rightist groups in the U.S. and in South American affairs." He also accused the AFL-CIO International Affairs Department of helping to arrange "fascist corporate-state unions" in several countries.<sup>4</sup>

3. *Militant*, November 20, 1967. Feinglass was one of the most consistent labor supporters of the antiwar movement.

4. The quotes from Victor Reuther's speech used here are from an article I wrote for the November 20, 1967, *Militant*, and were based on notes I took while Reuther spoke. The same story presented in that speech is contained in Victor Reuther's recent book *The Brothers Reuther* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1976). In that memoir Victor says he had known for years that the AFL-CIO was being used for "disgraceful" purposes by the U.S. State Department and the CIA. He had remained silent because Walter Reuther feared a revelation on the part of the UAW would mean a split in the AFL-CIO and in such a fight Victor "would never be able to produce enough documentation to stand up against the barrage of fabricated documents the agency could produce so easily" (p. 423).

Victor began to disclose some of the story in May of 1966 in an interview for the *Los Angeles Times*. He doesn't mention the point, but this came immediately after the April 1966 issue of *Ramparts* magazine created a national sensation with an exposé of CIA manipulation at Michigan State University. After the *Los Angeles Times* article appeared, Victor Reuther was censured by the AFL-CIO Executive Council for making "irresponsible" charges. He says Walter was disturbed that he had "spoken so openly," but informed the UAW Executive Board he had told the truth. In May 1967, in an attempt to discredit its critics, the CIA revealed that in the

It was no secret at the time that a growing rift had developed between UAW President Walter Reuther and AFL-CIO President George Meany. Both Meany and Walter Reuther were supporting Johnson for the presidency, but Reuther had recently called for a bombing halt and differentiated himself from Meany's all-out support to Johnson's war policy. Victor Reuther's speech laid out the trade union background to the rift. The abuse of the AFL-CIO by the State Department and the CIA, and Meany's unquestioning support to this collaboration, had become a bread-and-butter liability to the powerful UAW. This was a development of great potential importance to the antiwar cause.

Only a small fraction of its potential was developed at the time, however. The top UAW leaders never laid it out before the rank and file of the AFL-CIO the way Victor Reuther laid it out before the Chicago assembly. (Victor Reuther's speech was considered too much of a bombshell to publish in full and only brief excerpts were printed.) They never carried out a full fight *within* the AFL-CIO. Instead the UAW boycotted the upcoming AFL-CIO convention, stopped paying dues to the AFL-CIO, and quietly dropped out of the federation in 1968. The massive impact the issues might have had on public opinion, and on the labor movement as a whole, was muted. They rocked the boat as little as possible.

The AFL-CIO convention took place in December 1967 in Bal Harbour, Florida, a suburb of Miami. On December 11 a delegate from the Colorado Labor Council, A. Toffoli, took the floor and read a statement critical of the war adopted by the Labor Leadership Assembly for Peace. Meany declared the Chicago assembly had been "planned in Hanoi," and that he had read the statement before, "every line of it in the *Sunday Worker* [a Communist paper] two weeks before the meeting was held in Chicago."<sup>5</sup> (Actually the *Worker* carried the statement—which had been released to the press—after the Chicago meeting, not before it.)

In his account of this incident in *The Brothers Reuther*, Victor Reuther's memory plays an interesting trick on him. He writes:

"In 1966 [actually 1967], at the first conference, held in Chicago, of the Labor Assembly for Peace, which we helped to found, hundreds of union delegates were addressed by Martin Luther King, Jr., Norman Thomas, and others; and Emil Mazey and I also spoke. At the end of the conference a resolution was adopted, calling for an end to the war. Some of the participants in that conference were elected, by their unions, to be delegates to the upcoming AFL-CIO convention in Miami. When a group of observers at that convention indicated its negative feeling about the Vietnam War, Meany thundered from his rostrum, 'Throw the kooks out!' Mazey insisted on speaking, and Meany charged that the resolution we had adopted in Chicago 'had been written in Hanoi.' This hysterical remark was reminiscent of the most sinister tactics of Joe McCarthy."<sup>6</sup>

The last line is accurate enough, but in the rest, Reuther condenses events which took place in different places and on different days over a two-year period, thus transforming the hesitating Hamlet into the bold and decisive Henry V.

Actually Meany's "clear the kookies out" remark occurred two years earlier at the AFL-CIO convention in San Francisco.<sup>7</sup> At that time no one insisted on speaking. Several days later at the

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early 1950s it had given Walter Reuther \$50,000 in \$50 bills and Victor had distributed it to anticommunist unions overseas. The Reuthers acknowledged this. Walter said it had been done "reluctantly" and never repeated. Victor says that at the time they were "naive" about the methods of the CIA.

5. *Proceedings, Seventh Constitutional Convention, AFL-CIO*, Bal Harbour, December 11, 1967, vol. 1, p. 282. Immediately before Meany spoke, Thomas W. Gleason of the East Coast International Longshoremen's Association boasted that "we kept our muscles in shape," by which he meant he had sent some of his goons to help the cops beat up demonstrators during Stop the Draft Week in New York.

6. *The Brothers Reuther*, p. 377.

same convention Mazey took the floor and did dissociate himself from Meany's earlier action and also from Meany's hawk position. In the context it was an act of courage. Mazey was so careful about it, however, that it is impossible to tell from his remarks whether he voted for or against the resolution being discussed—to endorse Johnson's policy on the war. "We must put ourselves," said Mazey, "on the side of our government in its efforts to negotiate so that we can bring a peaceful solution to this problem. . . ." In the same discussion, Walter Reuther spoke in favor of the resolution endorsing Johnson's policy.

That was the last AFL-CIO convention Mazey or Reuther spoke at, because the UAW boycotted the next one two years later where Meany made his "planned in Hanoi" statement. Mazey gave his answer to that from Detroit, calling it "libelous." There were those of us at the time who wished the stand had been taken the way Victor Reuther now remembers it. Certainly the tendencies in the largely student-based antiwar movement toward alienation from the labor movement, and toward a lack of stability, would not have been so strong.

\* \* \*

Meanwhile, at a press conference in Washington, D.C., November 30, Senator Eugene McCarthy had made the formal announcement that he would challenge Johnson in at least three state primaries. He was entirely candid about the reasons. After outlining his view that a bombing halt, scaled-down fighting, and negotiations with the NLF were necessary, he declared:

"In addition, there is growing evidence of a deepening moral crisis in America—discontent and frustration and a disposition to take extralegal if not illegal actions to manifest protest.

"I am hopeful that this challenge, which I am making, which I hope will be supported by other members of the Senate and other politicians, may alleviate at least in some degree this sense of political helplessness and restore to many people a belief in the processes of American politics and of American government.

"That the college campuses, especially—on those campuses—and also among adult thoughtful Americans, that it may counter the growing sense of alienation from politics which I think is currently reflected in a tendency to withdraw from political action, to talk of nonparticipation, to become cynical and to make threats of support for third parties or fourth parties or other irregular political movements."<sup>9</sup>

The *New York Times* commented: "The decision of Senator Eugene McCarthy of Minnesota to challenge Johnson in the Democratic Presidential primaries now enables those who dissent from the Administration's policy in Vietnam to find political expression for their conviction. Energies that might otherwise be dissipated in marches and demonstrations which often antagonize more people than they persuade can now be used constructively in politics."<sup>10</sup>

How nice.

[Next chapter: *The First National Student Strike and the Split in the SMC*]

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7. *Proceedings, Sixth Constitutional Convention, AFL-CIO*, December 10, 1965, p. 133. This incident is described more fully in Chapter 16.

8. *Ibid.*, December 15, 1967, p. 564.

9. *New York Times*, December 1, 1967.

10. *Ibid.*

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# Capitalism Fouls Things Up

## Hopewell—'Chemical Capital of the South'



The Life Science Products Company of Hopewell, Virginia, no longer exists. Life Science's makeshift plant has been buried in a special plastic-lined pit. Soil at the former plant site has been removed to a depth of three feet to rid the area of contamination.

Since the runoff from the Life Science plant was channeled into the Hopewell sewage system, the state of Virginia is paying an engineering firm to devise a special incinerator to burn the sludge from the sewage plant without letting any poison escape into the atmosphere. Dr. Robert S. Jackson, the Virginia state epidemiologist, said the project is expected to cost "well over \$1 million."

But, Jackson noted, "We don't know how to get Kepone out of the body."

That is a problem for about seventy-five Hopewell residents, along with their families. They suffer from uncontrollable nervous tremors, erratic eye movements, loss of memory, slurred speech, loss of weight, liver damage, and stillbirths in women and sterility in men. No cases of cancer have been reported yet, but it has been less than a year since the misnamed Life Science plant was closed down.

Kepone, a deadly poison closely related to DDT, Aldrin, and Dieldrin, all of which have been banned in the United States, was the sole product of Life Science Products. It is used in diluted form as an ingredient in insecticides.

The deadly Kepone pollution was not confined to Hopewell, "chemical capital of the South." The effluent from the Hopewell sewage plant was dumped into the James River. Traces of Kepone have been found in fish and shellfish, and the sixty-mile length of the James River from Richmond to the Chesapeake Bay has been closed to fishing. Scientists are checking to see if the contamination has spread to Chesapeake Bay itself.

Although Life Science is now defunct, the same is not true of the Allied Chemical Corporation. A giant company based in New Jersey, Allied Chemical grosses more than \$2.2 billion in annual sales.

From 1968 to 1974, Allied was the producer of Kepone in Hopewell, where it employs in its plants 4,000 persons out of a population of about 24,000. Production

was transferred to Life Science in early 1974.

Allied now denies having any connection to Life Science. But the new company was established by Virgil Hundtofte, a former Allied plant manager, and William Moore, another Allied employee. Allied supplied Life Science with the raw materials for making Kepone, and bought its entire output.

Like all huge corporations, Allied cloaks its operations under a curtain of secrecy. A look at its books would doubtless reveal the reasons why Allied chose to set up the Life Science company.

On May 7 a federal grand jury charged Allied Chemical, the Life Science Products Company, and the city of Hopewell with a total of 1,096 violations of federal water pollution laws. Allied and four employees were also charged with criminal conspiracy to thwart water pollution control laws, and Hundtofte was charged with criminal conspiracy.

The charges carry potential fines of more than \$17 million against Allied, \$3.9 million against Hopewell, and \$3.8 million each against Life Science and its two founders. The conspiracy charges carry possible prison terms of up to five years, and Moore and Hundtofte face up to a year's imprisonment on each of 153 pollution violations.

A spokesman for Allied denounced the indictments as "unwarranted," "unprecedented," and an "extreme reaction." □

### The Karen Silkwood Case

A preliminary report to a congressional subcommittee has raised new questions about the death of Karen Silkwood. Silkwood, a worker at the Kerr-McGee Corporation's Crescent, Oklahoma, plutonium plant, was killed in an auto accident in November 1974 after making an issue of the plant's safety record.

In January 1975, a report by the Atomic Energy Commission (AEC) claimed that although it found evidence supporting twenty of Silkwood's thirty-nine charges regarding safety at the plant, the violations "did not pose a hazard to workers or the public."

Dr. Karl Z. Morgan, a professor of nuclear engineering at the Georgia Insti-

tute of Technology, and the official responsible for safety at the Oak Ridge, Tennessee, nuclear facility for many years, reached a different conclusion after studying the Crescent plutonium plant.

"I have never known of an operation in this industry that was so poorly operated," Morgan said.

He reported that plutonium pellets were scattered about desks and hallways, and that "with regard to long-term cancer risks of plutonium, there seemed to be little concern."

Morgan added: "It is difficult for me to comprehend why the Atomic Energy Commission and the Nuclear Regulatory Commission permitted this facility to operate for such a long time."

If the AEC's investigation of Silkwood's charges was so slipshod, was the investigation into her death conducted by the Federal Bureau of Investigation any better?

Silkwood and other workers at the Crescent plutonium plant met with AEC officials concerning their charges on September 27, 1974. Silkwood herself was exposed to a large dose of deadly plutonium radiation on November 5, 1974.

On November 13, 1974, while driving to meet a representative of the Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers International Union and a reporter from the *New York Times*, Silkwood was killed in an automobile crash. Five days later, the union's Washington representative said that Silkwood's death may not have been an accident.

A Justice Department official announced in May 1975 that an FBI investigation had found no evidence that Silkwood had been murdered.

### Deep Breathing Not Recommended

Thirty tons of dust and soot fall on each square kilometer of Kawasaki, Japan, each month, contributing to a drastic increase in cases of chronic bronchitis and bronchial asthma. In a recent count, cited by *New Asia News* April 2, the city's pollution inspection board listed 3,004 victims of pollution-related diseases.

Conditions may even be worse in Osaka, where officially recognized victims of pollution number 10,179.

# Selections From the Left

## la brèche

*Twice-monthly organ of the Revolutionary Marxist League, published in Lausanne, Switzerland.*

The Swiss bourgeoisie are disturbed over the appearance of Soldiers Committees that have set out to defend the democratic rights of army personnel. Governmental repressive efforts have been dramatized around a coming trial.

"July 12: a date to remember. On that day the trial of two members of the Soldiers Committees will open in Basel," Clément Renard writes in the May 10 issue. "A political trial—the nearness of West Germany seems to have inspired the cops and judges to ape the current methods of the German courts. Thus in Basel, military and civil laws have been combined so that the evidence will be neither arms nor guerrilla manuals but newspapers published by soldiers and antimilitarists. No witnesses will be called in the trial. It may well be held behind closed doors. The defendants have already spent long weeks under secret preventive detention. Transcriptions from tapped telephones are included in the dossier. The prosecution and the judges are putting pressure on the attorney for the defense to bar him and the two defendants from venturing to appeal to public opinion in Basel."

Switzerland, like the other advanced capitalist countries, is undergoing a social crisis, Renard points out. The bourgeoisie fears the effect of this crisis on the army. A solidarity movement might emerge between the "antimilitarist militants and the most active layers of the workers movement, all the more so, since 30 percent of the recruits are unemployed youth. . . ."

## DIRECT ACTION

*Socialist weekly published in Sydney, Australia. Presents the views of the Socialist Workers party.*

"Australian students have overwhelmingly voted in support of a motion calling for the withdrawal of Indonesian forces from East Timor," Dave Deutschmann reports in the May 20 issue.

A second motion debated on Australian campuses, calling for the "cessation of all flights and tours to Indonesia organised by the Australian Union of Students (AUS) travel service," lost by only four constituent votes.

"The AUS officials raised the argument

that the financial loss would severely affect the union and restrict its functioning."

At Queensland University the local branch of the Socialist Youth Alliance campaigned vigorously for the boycott despite the financial losses that would be incurred.

"The support given to the second motion was larger than expected, which indicated among other things that the AUS officials were not as advanced as many students in their understanding of the issue."

Some left-wing groups were divided on the issue, the principal division being "among members and supporters of the Communist Party of Australia."

They key issue is very clear, Deutschmann concludes: "Support for the East Timorese people comes first. In putting the narrow interests of the travel service above this support the AUS officials have made a gross error."

## rouge

*Revolutionary Communist daily published in Paris.*

An article by François Gaillard and Gabriel Pietri on the Corsican nationalist movement is featured in the May 20 issue. The material assembled by the authors through on-the-spot interviews in the island is especially useful as background material in connection with the current trial in Paris of Edmond Simeoni and eight of his associates. The Corsican nationalists are accused of "participating in an armed band opposing state authority."

Gaillard and Pietri trace the Corsican nationalist movement from the creation of the Committee for the Study and Defense of the Interests of Corsica in 1966 through several splits up to the summer of 1975 when Simeoni made an impassioned speech at the Ninth Congress of Action for the Rebirth of Corsica (ARC), attacking the French colonialists, calling for revolutionary struggle, and invoking the image of Che Guevara.

After the ARC was banned, a new organization was formed last February, the Association of Corsican Patriots (APC).

The ARC had about 100 members; the APC has 700. Besides this there are 3,000 close sympathizers, "an impressive figure for a population of 120,000 Corsicans."

The weekly *Arritti*, which features articles by Simeoni, has a circulation of "4,000

to 4,500 copies, of which 2,000 are subscriptions."

Gaillard and Pietri hold that the APC now stands at "The Crossroads" (the title of the article). Either the APC will move forward along the revolutionary road; or it will be displaced by other, more militant, groups. The response to the trial, especially if it ends with heavy sentences, may indicate the decision, they say.

## VOZ SOCIALISTA

*Weekly journal of the Socialist League, Venezuelan sympathizing organization of the Fourth International.*

An open letter by the Executive Committee of the Socialist League, published in the May 19 issue, appeals to the three trade-union federations in Venezuela to launch a common struggle for a 40 percent nationwide increase in wages and a minimum daily wage of Bs. 33 (about US\$7.65). The letter also points to the importance of gaining a sliding scale of wages.

"There has not been any increase in wages since 1974," the letter declares. "Yet in the past two years, while wages have remained frozen, prices have continued to go up, to the detriment of the workers and the people."

The letter accuses the trade-union leaders of not having done anything concrete up to now to rectify the situation, although they have recognized that something must be done.

As an effective course of action, the letter proposes that the three federations join together and stage a twenty-four-hour general strike to put pressure on the government, since the bosses and their political representatives in office will grant nothing unless the workers engage in militant struggle to maintain their standard of living.

## RED WEEKLY

*The paper of the International Marxist Group, British section of the Fourth International.*

In preparation for demonstrations on May 26, the "day of action" against unemployment designated by the National Assembly on Unemployment, the lead article in the May 20 issue calls Hugh Scanlon sharply to account.

Scanlon, the president of the Amalga-



mated Union of Engineering Workers, is doing his utmost to force wage cuts down the throats of the rank and file instead of challenging the policies of the Labour government that are undercutting the workers' standard of living.

Among other things, Scanlon argued that failure to accept pay cuts could lead to the downfall of the Labour government.

"The utterly disastrous policies of this Government are already ensuring that," the editors reply.

"Scanlon, by fighting for wage cuts and against the struggle to defeat this Government's policies, fights for the disillusionment of millions of workers—which will not only bring down the Labour Government, but will leave the working class demoralised before what would be the most vicious Tory Government since the 1930s."

The course chosen by Scanlon and his ilk can be blocked. "The next big step is a massive turn out on 26 May and to fight to win the miners' ballot against the pay deal. Despite all the sabotage of Scanlon, the Communist Party and the lefts, a powerful day of action can be built and the right in the NUM [National Union of Mineworkers] can be defeated."

Proletarier aller Länder vereinigt euch!  
**was tun**

*Weekly of the International Marxist Group, published in Frankfurt, Germany.*

The Socialist Bureau has called for an "antirepression congress" in Frankfurt on June 6-7. In the May 20 issue, the editors comment: "When you consider that the theme of this congress is one that affects everyone in the left directly and when you take into account the broad political and social spectrum the Socialist Bureau addresses itself to and which will certainly be mobilized to a large extent for this congress, then it can be said for sure that it is not going to be a usual gathering but an important initiative for the entire left."

The meeting took on importance, as well, the editors said, because it is being held at a time when the situation in the class struggle has begun to shift in favor of the workers, as shown by the recent victory of the printing workers. A long defensive phase, in which there were practically no national campaigns by the left, seems now to be ending. Mobilizations against a new wave of repression against left activists could play a major role in preparing the way for a new offensive by the working-class forces.

However, the editors criticize the vagueness with which the Socialist Bureau leaders pose the question of repression, as a general evil of capitalism. Discussion at the congress, they maintain, should focus on the concrete problem of the law that bans leftists from public employment, against which there have already been a series of demonstrations.

"Our criticism is not intended to belittle the importance of the antirepression congress but to make it into a real contribution to the defense of democratic rights and freedoms."

The center pages in the May 20 issue report an interview with Syd Stapleton on developments in the suit of the Socialist Workers party and the Young Socialist Alliance for damages suffered because of harassment by America's political police, the FBI.

**lutte  
ouvriere**

*Paris weekly supported by a grouping of militants who view themselves as Trotskyist in orientation.*

"An American president, whose prestige is visibly low, and a French president whose country is not well regarded, to judge by the polls in the United States, and who utilized the trip to help out the advertising agents of the *Concorde* airplane—these two men certainly have their affinities," an article in the May 22 issue notes.

Besides being representatives of two imperialist powers, both have electoral problems. For Ford the visit became the occasion for a banquet to celebrate his Michigan victory and the relief it gave him from his troubles over the Republican nomination. For Giscard d'Estaing, too, the Michigan victory was worth something. "For the fact of being supported by a head of state going downhill fast was not very attractive."

**NEISTI**

*Monthly paper of the Revolutionary Communist League, published in Reykjavik, Iceland.*

In the April 25 issue, a contributor reports on plans for a conference on the problems of low-paid female workers, scheduled for May 16. This is the second conference of this type. The first was held in January 1975. There are a number of sponsoring groups, including the Women Bakery Clerks Association. The main organizer is the Icelandic women's liberation group, Raudhsokkar (Red Stockings).

Workshops are planned on three questions: "(1) Wages, the price indexes governing cost-of-living increases, job classifications by the trade unions, inflation, and uniform wage demands. (2) The organization of the trade-union movement. Among other things, the question will be discussed whether men and women should be in the same union, the percentage of women in union leaderships, working women in the

union movement, the class-conscious woman. (3) Educational questions. The skilled woman worker (adult education), union schools, educational facilities in the trade-union movement."

The conference will also discuss such questions as maternity leaves and support for women in the home.

The author comments: "The fact that such a conference can be held shows how important a movement the Raudhsokkar is. It is one of the few movements that could bring together women from the working class to discuss their most pressing problems.

"The example of the Raudhsokkar movement in holding such conferences should encourage the unions to do the same, to improve the position of the working class through bringing the workers together to discuss their problems.

"It is important that such conferences be open to all working people. We want to encourage everyone who is concerned about their problems to attend conferences like these."

**rOOD**  
weekblad van de revolutionaire arbeiders liga  
belgische afdeling van de vierde internationale

*Flemish weekly of the Revolutionary Workers League, Belgian section of the Fourth International.*

Under the impact of the world depression and the crisis in the Catholic church, a clear class-struggle tendency has developed in the Belgian Catholic unions, which represent about half the working class and the overwhelming majority in Flanders. Most of the French-speaking workers belong to the labor federation linked to the Socialist party.

The confessional split engineered by the church and promoted also by the reformism of the SP unions, which have failed to offer a credible alternative to the Catholic unions and to support the national demands deeply felt by the Flemish workers, is one of the biggest weaknesses in the Belgian union movement. It resulted, among other things, in the defeat of the 1961 general strike.

Eric Corijn, writing in the May 20 issue, called on the militant Catholic workers to tackle the three main problems facing them in their struggle: (1) the need for a united labor movement; (2) the need to fight the ideology of class collaborationism promoted by Catholic unionism; (3) the need to break from the Catholic bourgeois party and build a labor party independent of the Catholic bourgeoisie and conservative middle classes.

These were the demands, Corijn said, that the contingents of the Revolutionary Workers League would raise in the May 22 traditional Catholic labor day demonstrations in Antwerp.

# AROUND THE WORLD



## Lenin a Revisionist, Says Japan CP

The Japan Communist party (JCP) is following the French, Italian, and Portuguese Communist parties in eradicating the term "dictatorship of the proletariat" from its program. Tetsuzo Fuwa, the JCP's general secretary, claimed at an April 26 news conference that Lenin and Stalin had distorted the original concept of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

"In his thesis," the April 27 *Asahi Evening News* reported, "Fuwa clearly distinguished between Marx and Engels on the one hand and Lenin on the other."

## Stokely Carmichael Blasts Kissinger

Stokely Carmichael, a leader of the American Black Power movement during the 1960s, has denounced Kissinger's new policy in southern Africa as a fraud. Kissinger is "speaking out of both sides of his mouth," Carmichael said in Los Angeles May 3.

"He thinks he can confuse us by claiming to support the idea of majority rule when he is actually a supporter of the racist regime of Ian Smith in Rhodesia.

"He is trying to whip up mass hysteria here at home by bringing up the specter of Soviet support and control of African liberation movements while hiding American support for white racists in Africa."

## Amnesty International Urges Release of Tunisian Political Prisoners

Amnesty International has called for a general amnesty for the estimated 120 political prisoners in Tunisia.

A May 23 release from the London-based human-rights organization said that political trials involving more than 100 defendants each had been held in Tunisia in 1968, 1974, and 1975. In each case the arrests followed unauthorized strikes and student demonstrations protesting poor working conditions and lack of political freedom.

In 1968, 134 persons were put on trial after a demonstration against a twenty-year sentence imposed on a theology student.

In 1974, 202 persons were tried for allegedly forming an illegal organization, spreading false information, plotting against the security of the state, and insulting the head of state.

The following year, more than 100

persons were tried for the same charges. Their leaders were sentenced to terms ranging from five to nine years.

Amnesty reported receiving "consistent and well-documented reports of torture" since 1968. One prisoner was in such poor health as the result of torture that he was unable to attend his trial in July 1975. When he finally was well enough to appear in court, he was barred from introducing evidence of torture during his trial.

## Maspero Bookstore Bombed in Paris

A bomb exploded at the Maspero bookstore in the Paris university district the night of May 24-25, causing heavy damage. According to a report in the May 26 *Le Monde*, the explosion shattered the store's display windows, damaged the interior, and destroyed an as yet unknown quantity of books, equipment, and files.

The store, famous for its extensive selection of radical books and periodicals, has been bombed thirty-nine times in the past. A spokesman for the Maspero firm stressed that the previous bombings had never forced the store to shut down, and that business would "continue as usual."

## 3,000 March in Manila on May Day

In one of the largest protests in the Philippines since martial law was declared in 1972, 3,000 workers and students demonstrated May 1 for an increased minimum wage and the return of the right to strike.

The protest began at a Catholic college in Manila where Bishop Gaudencio Rosales of the Church Labor Center conducted a mass. Leaders of the Association of Filipino Workers then led a march in the direction of the presidential palace of Ferdinand Marcos.

The protesters were immediately met by a force of 200 police and 100 neighborhood security forces armed with riot batons who blocked their march route. The demonstrators detoured through a commercial and residential area of the city, singing songs, chanting "strike," distributing newspapers, and painting wall slogans reading, "Return the right to strike."

They were again met by the police and security forces, who sealed off the highway the demonstrators were marching on. Manila Mayor Ramon Bagatsing arrived and persuaded them to return to the

college, where the protesters eventually dispersed.

Three of the demonstrators were arrested. According to a police major, they were suspected of carrying "subversive" literature, such as the newspaper of the *bukluran* (association), an unauthorized caucus of 120 unions.

The workers' call for an 18 peso (1 peso=US\$0.135) a day minimum wage was in response to Marcos's offer of 10 pesos in Manila and 9 pesos in the provinces. The government offer was supported by the official Trade Union Congress of the Philippines.

Since the previous minimum wage of 8 pesos was instituted in 1970, the value of the peso has lost more than half its value. According to Central Bank statistics, real wages for skilled workers have declined 35 percent and for unskilled workers 29 percent since 1965.

The demand for an increased minimum wage was first raised in January by the *bukluran*.

## Japanese Question Inflation Figures

Official government figures show that the rate of inflation in Japan from April 1975 through March 1976 was 8.8%. But a recent nationwide poll showed that about 70% of the people in Japan feel that prices are rising more rapidly than is shown by the government index. Nearly half of those polled thought that prices were rising at a rate of 20% or more, and 21.9% thought that prices were rising by 10% to 20%.

## SP Tops CP in French By-election

Vote results in a by-election in the French city of Tours May 9 showed that the Socialist party is continuing to make rapid electoral gains. However, Jean Royer, the reactionary mayor of Tours and a former government minister, won the election to a vacant seat in the French parliament.

Royer received 56% of the vote, and a second bourgeois candidate received nearly 3%. In the 1973 legislative elections, the combined vote of the bourgeois parties was slightly greater—60% of the total.

Of interest was the vote credited to the two major parties of the working class, the Socialist and Communist parties. In the 1968 elections, the CP was clearly the leading workers party in the region, with



18.61% of the vote. This increased to 19.16% in 1973 and declined to 17.94% in the current election.

The decline in the CP vote has been paralleled by the growth of the SP tally. In 1968 the SP vote was much smaller than the CP's, amounting to only 11.38% of the total vote. In 1973 the SP vote advanced to 17.89%, and this year it surpassed the CP with 21.53%.

Three other candidates were credited with the following totals: Daniel Vitry of *Lutte Ouvrière*, 276 votes (0.58%); Frédéric Castello of the Revolutionary Communist League, 166 votes (0.35%); Mérija Surduts, supported by the United Socialist party, *Révolution!*, and the Worker and Peasant Left, 156 votes (0.33%).

### 'Subversives' Arrested in Singapore

The Singapore government announced May 27 that it is holding seventeen persons who were supposedly part of an underground network planning "infiltration and terrorism." The seventeen are being held under the regime's internal security law, which permits detention without trial.

Ten others arrested by the regime were Malaysian citizens who were turned over to the authorities in that country. In a nine-page statement the Singapore government linked the supposed "subversive" network to a recruitment and fund-raising center in Sydney. In the past the repressive regimes in both Malaysia and Singapore have victimized students and workers who have been swayed by "subversive" ideas as a result of living abroad.

### Rhodesian Troops Gun Down Blacks

Faced with growing opposition to continued white minority rule, Rhodesian troops have stepped up the Smith regime's campaign to terrorize the Black population.

According to a report by John Darnton in the May 28 *New York Times*, the security forces shoot on sight any Black villager who violates the 6 p.m. to 6 a.m. curfew that extends along most of the 700-mile border with Mozambique. The curfew is most rigidly enforced near the forty "protected villages," in which as many as 200,000 Blacks have been forcibly resettled.

One Rhodesian soldier told Darnton that the villagers were not fully informed about the curfew. He said he was reprimanded for not shooting them.

Defense Minister P.K. van der Byl, replying to a complaint by a Black member of the white-dominated parliament that innocent Blacks were being killed, said: "I have no intention of attempting to do anything about this, and as far as I am concerned, the more curfew-breakers who are shot the better, and the

sooner that is realized everywhere the better."

Darnton reported that the torture of villagers to extract information on the movement of Zimbabwean freedom fighters is also increasing. The Roman Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace, an organization of the Rhodesian Bishops Conference, has charged the paramilitary police with beating villagers with hoses, immersing them in water, and applying electric shock.

### Journalists Urge Dacca to Release Peter Custers

The continued detention in Bangladesh of Dutch free-lance journalist Peter Custers has provoked protests in the Netherlands and elsewhere in Europe. Custers was arrested in December 1975 and accused of unspecified "antistate activities."

The Nederlandse Vereniging van Journalisten (Dutch Journalists Union) wrote to the Dacca regime that the members "most vigorously protest against this imprisonment. This treatment will be regarded as contradictory to fundamental human rights." The International Federation of Journalists, based in Brussels, has also demanded his release.

The International Press Institute in Zurich and Amnesty International have expressed interest in the case, according to a statement issued by *De Groene Amsterdammer*, a Dutch weekly that has published articles by Custers.

### City University of New York Shut Down for Lack of Funds

The City University of New York was shut down May 28 when the state legislature failed to appropriate necessary funds to meet operating expenses and employees' wages. The closure left faculty members unpaid, interrupted examinations, and postponed graduation and final grades. No date for reopening was set.

The refusal to grant funds to the university, one of the largest in the world, with 270,000 students, is one of the most dramatic attacks so far in the continuing offensive against the living standards and social services of New York residents.

At issue is the university's policy of free tuition, enabling tens of thousands of working-class students to attain a university education. In view of current high unemployment and reduced job openings, Wall Street considers this an unnecessary frill and favors instead instituting tuition charges similar to those at state universities—\$750 to \$900 a year.

### Paris 'Clarifies' Troop Offer

French Foreign Minister Jean Sauvagnargues said May 26 that his government had no intention of intervening militarily



GISCARD: Second thoughts.

in the Lebanese civil war. Only five days earlier, President Valéry Giscard d'Estaing had offered to send "several regiments" to Lebanon, which he said would be prepared for combat.

Giscard d'Estaing made his offer after consultation with Ford and Kissinger in Washington, and announced that his proposal was backed by the White House. However, Sauvagnargues insisted that this was "a purely independent offer and, in order to make it, we did not consult the Americans at all."

### Arafat Not Welcome in Syria

Confirmation of the continuing rift between Syrian President Hafez al-Assad and Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) leader Yassir Arafat came May 28 when Palestinian sources in Beirut acknowledged that Arafat was denied entry to Syria May 26. Arafat had intended to fly to Libya from Damascus to meet Libyan chief of state Col. Muammar el-Qaddafi.

Arafat went to Libya by way of Egypt instead, meeting with Egyptian officials in Cairo. PLO officials said that Arafat could have flown to Libya directly from Beirut, but went to Cairo first "to keep the line open with Egypt in case of further difficulties with the Syrians."

## Prospects for Socialism in America

Reviewed by David Frankel



On the surface, socialism does not seem to represent a serious alternative in the United States today. The American trade-union movement is led by a group of aging men whose views place them to the right of many capitalist politicians. The lack of any mass socialist movement in America leaves an open field to the daily press and the schools, both of which dismiss socialist ideas as utopian and simplistic.

But this picture of conservatism and quiescence is one that reflects America's past, not its future. Powerful forces underneath the surface of American life are beginning to break into the open. This process, and what it means for the future, is the subject of *Prospects for Socialism in America*.

The 1960s saw a broad radicalization of American youth, fueled by the militant struggles of Blacks and by the Vietnam War. The development of the women's liberation movement and the unraveling of the Watergate scandal made a further impact on the consciousness of the American people.

*Prospects for Socialism in America* relates these political developments to the deeper economic and social changes occurring in American life. For instance, in a key document included in the book, a May 1975 report to the National Committee, Jack Barnes, the national secretary of the Socialist Workers party (SWP), explains:

We think the depression of 1974-75, the one we are still in, caps a four-year period, a period beginning in August 1971 with the wage freeze, going through the brief speculative boom, the meat and oil shocks, the double-digit inflation, and culminating in the depression. Something new has happened that is more than just a quantitative extension of the attitudes of the young radicals and young protesters penetrating the younger layers of the working class. The working class as a whole is being affected—and gradually beginning to think they are affected—as a class by the new economic situation.

In examining the changes in the thinking of the working class as a result of the capitalist economic crisis, *Prospects for Socialism in America* also looks at the changes in the structure of the working class that affect its attitudes. For example, Mary-Alice Waters points to the growth of the American working class, both in

absolute size and relative to other classes, over the last forty years. She says:

The changes that have taken place along this line have helped to alter the petty-bourgeois or individualist or frontier mentality that dominated American life so long and impeded the growth of proletarian class consciousness.

One of the most striking consequences is the relatively small role slated for the land question in the coming American socialist revolution. . . .

The precipitous decline of the family farm as a weighty feature of American society has removed a whole avenue of retreat and refuge in

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*Prospects for Socialism in America*, by Jack Barnes, Mary-Alice Waters, Tony Thomas, Barry Sheppard, and Betsey Stone. New York: Pathfinder Press, 1976. 265 pp. \$2.95 paper.

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distress for the individual worker in this country. It reinforces consciousness that the only road that is open leads to collective organization and struggle as part of the working class—not back to the old homestead on the family farm.

Another change noted by Waters is the incorporation of massive numbers of women and oppressed national minorities into the American working class.

The Black population has been transformed as a class force in less than thirty years. Even at the end of World War II the majority of the Black population was still a landless peasantry—sharecroppers, to use American terminology. Today they are more urban and proletarian than the white sector.

The racist oppression faced by the Black masses and the struggle against it is dealt with in more detail by Tony Thomas. He observes that in many Black ghettos unemployment is estimated at more than 50 percent:

We must understand that this desperate situation faced by many Blacks will not be limited to the current depression. The ruling class is openly projecting the maintenance of long-term higher levels of unemployment. The same thing is true of the cutbacks. The government is projecting deep cuts in social services which they hope to make permanent, well beyond the current downturn.

This means that a major feature of the new period we are entering will be one of singling out oppressed minorities for intensified oppression. There is going to be a continued widening of the economic gap between whites and Blacks, and

more actions taken which will lead Blacks to lose hope in the ability of American capitalism to provide decent jobs, housing, education, and political and social equality.

The fact that Blacks and Hispanics are being driven en masse into the ranks of the unemployed has tended to mask the capitalist offensive against the working class as a whole. However, the attack on Black rights is an essential part of that broader attack on the living standards of the American people.

Jack Barnes discusses this point:

The ruling class must create a pariah section of the working class, a special pool, accepted as such by the relatively more privileged sections of the wage workers, which can be pushed in and out of the labor market and used to exert downward pressure on the wages and working conditions of the working class as a whole. . . .

As the social crisis remains unresolved and this offensive of the rulers continues, a growing class polarization occurs. The rulers try to do everything they can to camouflage this reality and portray it as a race war, or a battle of the sexes, or the righteous anger of the honest taxpayers.

One of the themes in *Prospects for Socialism in America* is the need to unite the working class in struggle against layoffs, cutbacks, and other manifestations of the ruling-class economic offensive. Betsey Stone discusses the lack of working-class unity—and the attempts of the more privileged white workers to push the burden of layoffs onto Blacks, Puerto Ricans, and women—as it was evidenced in the New York municipal crisis:

We suggested simply that all those who were victimized by the cutbacks and layoffs should unite to fight back together. Such a theme of unity was a radical departure from the general response to the cutbacks. [SWP leader] Frank Lovell told me there was even a story that circulated during the crisis that the union bureaucrats were wearing buttons with the acronym LOSE, which stood for "Lay Off Somebody Else."

Stone notes that the lack of labor solidarity in the New York crisis was part of a larger problem of leadership in the American trade-union movement. The trade unions must be transformed into a fighting social movement based on a program of class struggle. She says:

The solutions and demands put forward by a



class-struggle left wing must be tailored to deal with the problems stemming, not from a period of relative prosperity, but a period of crisis, when there is high unemployment, inflation, cutbacks, and exacerbation of racism and sexism. The program of such a left wing must challenge the present needs, prerogatives, and orientation of the employing class. It must view the labor movement as a social movement fighting for the toilers of this country and all the victims of capitalism's brutalities.

This issue is also discussed by Barry Sheppard in his contribution to *Prospects for Socialism in America*—a May 1975 report to the SWP National Committee. Speaking of the growing opportunities for socialists to influence the working class, Sheppard comments:

We are not proposing a narrow union orienta-

tion, turning our backs on the struggles of Blacks, women, or other layers, or concerning ourselves only with economic questions. . . .

The new stage of the radicalization means that the party has new opportunities to deepen its work in the much wider mass movements, among Blacks, Chicanos, Puerto Ricans, the unemployed, in the unions, in industries—in the whole working class. This means taking our general party work, the party campaigns as they develop out of the issues that are raised in the class struggle itself, into wider sectors of the mass movement.

It is the SWP's view that millions of Americans are soon going to see socialism, and not capitalism, as the most realistic way for solving the problems they face. As Mary-Alice Waters puts it:

We are not making predictions on the tempo of this process. We are not saying there won't be

upturns in the economic cycle. We are not saying that revolutionary struggles are guaranteed around the corner. We are saying: Not only is the long postwar boom over but we have entered upon a new historical experience that is going to be for our generation the equivalent of the great social crisis of the 1930s.

The forms of the convulsions are not going to duplicate those of the Great Depression. But the duration and the scope of the coming social crisis and the revolutionary perspectives inherent in them are going to be comparable.

The book is especially recommended to socialists interested in events in the United States. It provides an indispensable insight into the changing class relations that may soon erupt in a way completely unexpected to those who view America as a monolith of reaction. □

## DOCUMENTS

### Slogan of 'Government of the Left' Debated in Italy

[The following article was published in the May 10 issue of *Bandiera Rossa*, the weekly newspaper of the Gruppi Comunisti Rivoluzionari (GCR—Revolutionary Communist Groups), the Italian section of the Fourth International. The translation is by *Intercontinental Press*.]

These last two months of discussion among the vanguard, consisting of revolutionary forces and centrist organizations, have seen not only the strong emergence of the aspiration for unity. They have also seen the development of an unexpectedly broad debate on some fundamental questions involving the analysis of the political stage we are in and the perspectives for the immediate and relatively near future.

At first in a confused way, and then with greater clarity, the various organizations have begun to confront each other—to test their positions against those of the other groups and against reality. This is occurring, moreover, not just on the level of positions taken by the national leaderships. Rank-and-file activists, the vanguard in the factories, have—often with considerable clear-sightedness—linked up the proposed unity with an analysis of the situation, with defining the prospects and tasks of the revolutionists.

This development is not accidental. It was not without reason that we have been saying since last fall that a process of political ripening and thoughtful reflection is going on in the vanguard, above all the vanguard in the factories. For the first time since 1969 the union leaderships' line for new contract negotiations has been challenged and there has been an embry-

onic regroupment around alternative objectives.

This process, which resulted from the concrete experience of the miserable results of the reformist line on the question of wages and jobs, and which began to extend into a national conflict over new contracts, has now been transferred to the general political arena. It is the acceleration of the capitalist crisis in its manifold aspects (economic, social, and political) that has posed new demands and new questions for the vanguard.

Questions are being asked today about the meaning of the phase we are going through, about the perspective of a government of the left, about the program revolutionists should offer the masses in this election campaign and afterward, about the process of building a revolutionary party.

#### A Government of the Left

All of us agree, obviously, that the Christian Democratic regime (that is, the specific form the bourgeois government has taken in Italy over the last thirty years) is in a grave crisis, and that there is a definite possibility a new majority can emerge from these elections, a majority that will enable the left parties to come into the government. But to proceed from noting this fact to agitating for a "government of the left" as a slogan, as a general objective of the masses counterposed to the "historic compromise," requires careful thought.

Up to now, total confusion has reigned on this question; and the confusion has

been promoted in particular by Lotta Continua (LC—The Struggle Continues) with its ambiguous call for the "CP in the government." This slogan fails to clarify the nature of the proposed government of the left. Moreover, the LC let it be understood at times that revolutionists should favor collaboration on the governmental level between the CP and at least a part of the DC [Democrazia Cristiana—Christian Democracy], once the latter breaks up. Things are now becoming clearer.

In a document dated April 10-11, which was published in the April 13 issue of its paper, *Quotidiano dei Lavoratori*, the Central Committee of Avanguardia Operaia [AO—Workers Vanguard, a Maoist group] introduced an essentially correct distinction. A government of the left, AO said, could go toward one of two "poles." It could take the form of "what could be characterized as a government following an anticapitalist course," carrying out some major reforms in combination with "a rise of workers and people's control from below." Or "it could take the form of a class-collaborationist government taking on the job of pushing the economic measures the bourgeoisie wants." In the latter case, such a government would open the road to a restoration of reaction. Which one of these "poles" prevailed "would depend largely on the relationship of forces between the pressure of the bourgeoisie and the pressure of the mass movement that will be brought to bear on such a government."

This distinction is essentially correct, along with the conclusion that (with some

ambiguities) is drawn from it. That is, a CP-SP government (which would not necessarily be an anticapitalist government but which would be much more susceptible to mass pressure) has a different perspective and logic than a coalition government including the CP, SP, and smaller bourgeois formations (for example, the PSDI and the PRI), even if they might try to exclude the DC from the government. In this latter case, the presence of bourgeois parties, along with the CP's demonstrated willingness to "flirt" with the various "La Malfa proposals," would give the government a clearly class-collaborationist character.

The idea that we should call not for a "government of the left" in general but more precisely for a CP-SP government seems to be gaining ground. Even several representatives of Lotta Continua have used a formula of this type in the preelection debates that have been held in a number of cities (although nothing of the sort has ever appeared in the LC's official documents).

The LC, for its part, is trying to go beyond this question and define the framework of the contradictions that would be faced by a government of the left. The document submitted by the Preparations Committee to the April 19 National Assembly of the LC (published in the April 14 *Lotta Continua*) talks about a "double defeat for revisionism" (i.e., the CP), that is, rejection by the masses and by the bourgeoisie whom it addresses. LC repeats its view of the CP as a party with "two faces," a bourgeois face and a working-class face. "The apparent and parasitic strength of the revisionist party" is the expression "of a genuine weakness, the weakness of the capitalist state's traditional representative system, and a genuine strength, one that still lacks its own full expression, the strength of the working class."

The LC therefore predicts that in the first phase of a government of the left, which according to them would be marked by a series of measures against the people, contradictions would arise between the CP's line and a maximalist one. The maximalist line "in itself will not be able seriously to challenge the hegemony of the revisionists." But it could yield quite different results as a basis for the "initiative and hegemony of a revolutionary party" in every area, among the masses and at the level of institutions.

Obviously we are witnessing new attempts—in part, novel ones—by the centrist organizations to analyze more fully the nature of the reformist workers parties and to work up tactical perspec-

tives for the movement that take into account the experience yet to be gained by the masses with these parties in power.

In this discussion, it is clear that the PdUP<sup>2</sup> stands to the right in an isolated position. By going through the experience of a government of the left (until recently, it was by going through the experience of a "new opposition"), the left as a whole, the PdUP hopes, will be "remolded." In this process there is also room for regeneration, if only partially, of the reformist parties. Thus recently (in an article published April 28) Magri appealed in substance for not complicating the difficult work of a left government that would be called on to manage a desperate economic situation until a "new force" of the left could be created (that is, a fusion of AO and PdUP) able to prevent the polarization of a right opposition to the government of the left.

But in these attempts by the centrist organizations to improve their analysis and work up tactics, AO and LC are blocked both by their failure to understand fully the features and potential of the present phase and by their still too schematic analysis of the nature of the CP and the union leaderships and the relationship between these formations and the masses. While Lotta Continua, for example, seems on many occasions to overestimate the role of the mass movement and the rate at which the masses are breaking with the reformist leaderships, AO seems to fall into the opposite fault, that is, failing to grasp the revolutionary potential of the present phase. We see this clearly in their position on the relationship between the unions and the program.

#### The Union Struggle and the Transitional Program

On this question, AO's formulation in its April 10-11 Central Committee document is symbolic. This document talks about the "battle to establish a class-struggle line in the unions." This is a correct objective and one that we have always fought for, too. But, according to AO, the struggle is supposed to "begin with giving the trade-union left a new start on clear political bases."

What trade-union left are they talking about? Do they mean the leadership of the FLM [Federazione dei Lavoratori Metallmeccanici—Metalworkers Federation, led by PdUP]? AO keeps making eyes at them. For example, it hailed the FLM leadership's position as "courageous and intransigent" (in an article April 16 by

2. Partito d'Unità Proletaria (Party of Proletarian Unity), a fusion of the *il Manifesto*, a vaguely pro-Peking split from the CP, and the section of the centrist Italian Socialist party of Proletarian Unity that did not join the CP when this formation collapsed. The Italian Socialist party of Proletarian Unity originated in a split from the SP of Pietro Nenni when it ended its postwar alliance with the CP and entered the center-left government.—IP

Vittorio Rieser) only two weeks before this leadership signed a sellout contract.

If we take the FLM leadership as the pivot of the fight for establishing a class-struggle line in the unions, then we fear we will have to wait forever. The trade-union left, from Carniti to Trentin to Lettieri, is an organic component of the bureaucratic reformist leadership of the unions. At every critical turn, it serves as a left cover for this leadership.

The fight for workers democracy *within the unions*, for winning the unions to the position of defending the interests of the working class (an objective for which we have always fought consistently and tenaciously and whose importance LC grossly underrates), is quite a different thing from cozying up to the left bureaucrats.

In fact, if AO fully appreciated the features of this phase, from the broad area of dissent *among the masses* over the contracts proposed by the unions in the fall, to the massive vote against the chemical workers union contract in recent days, it would understand the possibilities for working for a real alternative line within the unions and among the masses. It would understand what could be achieved if it really pushed such a line and did not get lost in petty maneuvers and a policy of always asking just a little bit more than the reformists.

The essence of AO's position seems to come out in an article by Luigi Vinci published April 24 and addressed to LC. "A program of revolutionary objectives, and more precisely 'transitional' objectives," Vinci says, "cannot leap over the immediate dimensions of a struggle when this struggle is being conducted within an overall relationship of class forces different from that of a revolutionary phase. In a nonrevolutionary phase, the 'transitional' program is for general propaganda and not for immediate mobilization."

The reasoning here seems to us to be a little too schematic. It is not enough just to ask yourself whether the present phase is revolutionary, decide that it is not, and then go on along the familiar ground of giving critical support to the contract proposals of the union leaderships, of campaigning for "democratic transformation" of the armed forces, and so on, following a minimalist line. The problem is more complex. We have to see whether the situation is evolving rapidly toward a revolutionary or prerevolutionary phase, assess the potential of the mass movement, the state of the discussion in the vanguard, and then, on this basis, decide which objectives in the transitional program should be raised in agitation today and which should be postponed.

At this point, we would like to repeat once again, briefly, the main lines of our analysis and the proposals we have made based on these. We would like to make this the starting point for a discussion with all



the left and vanguard forces. We think that the *possibility* (only the possibility, we repeat) of a revolutionary crisis in our country is opened up by the convergence of the following processes: the economic crisis (the general world capitalist crisis and the specific acute crisis we are experiencing in Italy); the political crisis (which is taking the form of a breakup of the DC and of a paralysis of the institutions of bourgeois rule and thus becoming a crisis of the system of government); and the continuing mobilization of the working class, along with the development of anticapitalist movements in other sectors of the masses.

We maintain that a gap has begun to develop between the fundamental, and even the immediate, demands of the masses and the line of the reformist parties. This is still an embryonic process that is expressed today in the contradiction between the confidence the broad masses continue to place in the *strength* of the reformist parties and their capacity to bring about changes in the situation in the country, and the skepticism, disinterest, and even open opposition, in some cases, which the broad masses are showing toward the political line of these parties, and in particular, toward the proposed "historic compromise."

We maintain that the reformist leaderships, particularly the CP leadership, must take account of this process because of their nature as *working-class bureaucra-*

*cies* (that is, as the expression of a counterrevolutionary line in the working class and not simply as bourgeois political forces dominating the workers movement). This process is a threat to them, inasmuch as the bourgeoisie will accept them as a governmental alternative *only* if they demonstrate that they can control the mass movement.

We think, therefore, that these parties will do everything possible to find a bridge between the mass upsurge and their political line, which is inevitably class-collaborationist. We think it is going to get harder and harder to find such a bridge as the crisis advances. Even in the *immediate* future, the crisis threatens to produce an irreconcilable conflict between the interests of the workers and the interests of the capitalists. This is shown by the outcome of the recent union contract negotiations.

The conclusion we draw from all this is not simply that the revolutionists must do everything possible to make sure that the masses go through the experience of seeing the reformists run the government, that is, that we must call for a CP-SP government based on the unions and the mass organizations. We also think the revolutionists will be unable to exploit the contradictions between the reformist leaderships and the masses unless they have an instrument with which to approach the masses and bring out these contradictions, and that instrument is a revolutionary program, a transitional program.

Of course, the rate at which the revolutionary process develops in Italy and the forms it takes, the timing and concrete ways in which the political consciousness of the vanguard elements and of the masses advances in this process, are largely determined by the policy of the reformists. Among other things, this creates an unevenness in thinking on various questions. For example, this results in the fact that certain transitional objectives (such as the reduction of the workweek, the "sliding scale of wages and hours") have already been taken over by broad sections of the masses, and in the coming period are destined to rapidly gain a wider acceptance, while others (for example, workers militias and the arming of the proletariat) have not yet advanced in the consciousness of the masses.

Our election program, therefore, is not the transitional program, it is not a program "for the dictatorship of the proletariat." It is a more limited one, calling for a government of the left that will take an anticapitalist course. But to fail to include in this program the essential elements of the transitional program that are being discussed among the masses, that already today represent the standpoint of the vanguard, or of important sections of it, in the name of the "immediate dimensions of the struggle," would mean paving the way for new and more serious capitulations. □

## Dissidents Demand Release of Czechoslovak Political Prisoners

[A number of prominent writers, scholars, and journalists known for their association with the "Prague Spring" have been imprisoned by Czechoslovak authorities over the past few years on frame-up charges of "antistate" and "antisocialist" activities. The following letter demanding their release was sent to the Czechoslovak Federal Assembly January 20 by fifteen former Central Committee members of the Czechoslovak Communist party. We have taken the text from the April 28-May 5 issue of *Informations Ouvrières*, a Paris weekly reflecting the views of the Organisation Communiste Internationaliste (Internationalist Communist Organization). The translation is by *Intercontinental Press*.]

Comrades,

The last time political prisoners were freed in Czechoslovakia was in December 1974. We now address ourselves to you to urgently demand the release of those political prisoners who have not yet been granted amnesty and whose sentences have not been reduced as they should have been under the usual principles of penal practice.

We are particularly concerned about the

well-known Communist leaders Milan Huebl and Jaroslav Sabata, as well as Jan Tesar, Jiri Muller, and other citizens imprisoned for their political beliefs.

We think that the freeing of political prisoners in Czechoslovakia will be seen as proof of the desire to establish a political climate in this country corresponding to the spirit of the Helsinki conference.

The practice of imprisoning citizens for their political beliefs—a practice that has been followed in Czechoslovakia—not only contradicts the Helsinki accords and the positions explicitly formulated by various international organizations, including the United Nations. It also contradicts the political principles now openly defended by the European Communist movement itself.

By following this policy, the present Czechoslovak regime denies itself the right to criticize the methods employed by political dictatorships.

The provisions of our penal code that permit a citizen to be deprived of freedom for a number of years—perhaps for having only read to friends a document considered hostile to the state—are in absolute contradiction with the pretension of being

prepared to recognize and extend political rights and to apply the principles of the Declaration of Human Rights adopted by the UN and recently ratified by our own Federal Assembly.

Those whose freedom we demand were jailed for having publicly stressed the need to combine socialism and democracy.

The views they put forward were very close to the official political line of the Communist parties of France, Italy, and other countries.

To continue detaining these citizens is an anachronism.

To combine Communist policies with the development of democratic policies and the guarantee and extension of all civil rights and freedoms is today an integral part of the theory and practice of the European Communist movement. It is thus inconceivable that in 1976 citizens can be imprisoned in Czechoslovakia for supporting such views.

*Jiri Hajek, Ludmila Jankovova, Jiri Judl, Miroslav Kabrna, Vladimir Kadlec, Karel Kaplan, Frantisek Kriegel, Karel Kosik, Zdenek Mlynar, Vaclav Slavik, Venek Silhan, Bohumil Simon, Martin Vaculik, Frantisek Vodslon, Jirina Zelenkova.* □

## El Congreso de la UGT—Triunfo de los Obreros Españoles

[El 15 de abril la Unión General de Trabajadores (UGT) inauguró su primer congreso realizado en suelo español desde 1932. A pesar de que la federación social democrática es ilegal, el régimen de Juan Carlos no tomó ninguna medida para prevenir el congreso o para evitar la presencia de varios cientos de delegados.

[Nicolás Redondo, un obrero metalúrgico de cuarenta y nueve años, fue reelegido como secretario general. Redondo es también secretario de organización del PSOE (Partido Socialista Obrero Español).

[A continuación transcribimos la entrevista que Redondo concedió a Carmelo Cabellos que apareció en la edición del 15 de mayo del noticiero español *Mundo*. Las notas de pie de página son de *Intercontinental Press*.]

\* \* \*

*Pregunta. ¿Cuál es el balance y valoración política de la celebración en Madrid del XXX Congreso de la UGT?*

*Respuesta.* Está en la mente de todos, y así lo han subrayado sobradamente propios y ajenos, que nuestro XXX Congreso—por el lugar donde se ha celebrado, por la manera cómo se ha desarrollado, por la participación ugetista e internacional, y por el alcance de las resoluciones allí adoptadas—ha sido un gran éxito.

Políticamente el congreso supone un paso significativo camino de la libertad sindical y de los demás derechos fundamentales que se niegan a los trabajadores desde 1939. Mediante la movilización de todos los recursos a nuestro alcance se han hecho retroceder las fronteras de la legalidad misma del régimen, en beneficio de todo el movimiento obrero. Cabe preguntarse después de este congreso qué sentido tiene la pretensión totalitaria de la CNS.<sup>1</sup> Lo cierto es que el Gobierno no ha demostrado sino su incapacidad de reacción ante el hecho consumado de nuestra iniciativa.

Por otra parte, en lo que se refiere a la UGT en particular, el XXX Congreso ha dado una prueba irrefutable de nuestra presencia en el seno de la clase trabajadora; se ha permitido además aumentar considerablemente nuestra audiencia en el país, y constituye en todo caso una excelente plataforma para extender e intensificar la implantación ugetista en todo el territorio del Estado.

1. Central Nacional Sindicalista, el sindicato apoyado por el gobierno. Conocido también como Organización Sindical Española (OSE).

*P. ¿Cómo definiría a la UGT? ¿Cuál es el modelo de sociedad socialista que propugna?*

*R.* En varias ocasiones, y concretamente en la resolución política recién aprobada, se define a la Unión General de Trabajadores como un sindicato de clase, libre, democrático, independiente, unitario, internacionalista y en suma revolucionario.

El sindicalismo por el que lucha la UGT supone la superación de la sociedad capitalista a través de la desaparición de la clase dominante y de la explotación que ésta ejerce actualmente. Nuestro socialismo es emancipador y democrático, autogestionario—que no burocrático—y entraña la participación plena de todos los trabajadores en la elaboración, en la adopción y en la ejecución de las decisiones a todos los niveles.

*P. ¿En qué consiste la “ruptura sindical”?*

*R.* La estrategia de ruptura sindical es para nosotros el camino que conduce a la libertad sindical, siendo la conquista de ésta el objetivo prioritario de la acción ugetista hoy en día. La ruptura sindical supone el desmantelamiento y la desaparición del aparato que es la CNS-OSE, cuyo carácter sindical le ha sido siempre negado por la clase trabajadora del país, y por la UGT, por supuesto—así como por la comunidad sindical internacional.

*P. ¿Qué implica la autodefinición de “revolucionaria” en la UGT?*

*R.* El carácter revolucionario de la UGT viene dado por los objetivos finales de la organización que son como ya hemos dicho la sustitución de la sociedad capitalista, por una sociedad sin clases, socialista. De ahí que nuestras luchas no puedan limitarse a acciones de tipo meramente economista o reformista, por estimarse que éstas por sí solas no podrían ir más allá de corregir o retrasar determinados aspectos del capitalismo, sin atacar a su fundamento.

*P. ¿Mantendrá la UGT su decisión de no participar en elecciones o planteamientos hechos desde la actual situación sindical?*

*R.* En efecto, el XXX Congreso de la UGT acaba de ratificar de forma tajante lo que ha sido una constante en la política ugetista desde 1939: rechazo total de la CNS, llevando esta postura coherentemente hasta sus últimas consecuencias, esto es,

la no participación en ninguno de los mecanismos o planteamientos de dicho aparato.

*P. Se ha dicho que la UGT participaría en un congreso sindical constituyente. ¿Podría ser el punto de partida el congreso convocado por Martín Villa? ¿Cuáles son las condiciones imprescindibles para llegar a ese congreso constituyente?*

*R.* El congreso que puede convocar el poder se inscribe dentro de las coordenadas de la CNS que nosotros combatimos frontalmente. Otra cosa es un eventual Congreso Sindical constituyente que ciertas fuerzas obreras preconizan para que de él surja una gran central única de trabajadores. Los que esto proponen han matizado últimamente su proyecto situándolo ya después de la conquista de la libertad sindical. A nosotros nos parece prematuro hacer ya presupuestos de lo que los trabajadores mismos van a decidir precisamente en ese régimen de libertad. No es momento de hacer sindicalismo-ficción sino de aunar fuerzas en la lucha por la ruptura que haga realidad la libertad sindical a que no venimos refiriendo.

*P. Libertad sindical, pluralidad y unidad sindical. ¿Cómo entiende el engranaje de estos conceptos, y cuál sería el proceso para llegar a la unidad de los trabajadores? ¿Renunciaría la UGT a su propia identidad en pro de esa unión?*

*R.* La libertad sindical implica: libertad de afiliación, libertad de creación de sindicatos y libertad de acción sindical. Nuestro concepto de la unidad y nuestra vocación unitaria pasa indefectiblemente por el mantenimiento y la garantía de esas tres condiciones previas, una de las cuales evidentemente contempla el derecho a que los trabajadores decidan libremente si quieren uno o varios sindicatos, una o varias centrales. En suma, en el planteamiento ugetista son los trabajadores los que deciden. Y por supuesto que nosotros vamos a hacer cuanto esté a nuestro alcance para convencer a la clase obrera de la conveniencia de su unidad, ofreciéndole ya por lo demás una Unión General que pretende defender sus intereses e interpretar sus aspiraciones, y en la que todos los trabajadores que lo deseen—sin discriminación—tienen un puesto de lucha.

Por otra parte, es casi imposible pronunciar sobre sí, una vez reconquistada la

2. D. Rodolfo Martín Villa, ministro de relaciones sindicales.



libertad sindical, los trabajadores españoles van a aglutinarse mayoritariamente en una organización, o si por el contrario van a distribuirse entre las distintas centrales sindicales que existen ya en condiciones de ilegalidad. Si este segundo caso fuera el que se diera—con una situación parecida a la de Francia o la de Italia—la UGT desplegaría todos sus esfuerzos para promover un proceso unitario. A lo que la UGT no puede, ni va a renunciar, es a su concepto de sindicalismo con las características que antes hemos definido.

*P. La UGT ha propuesto la creación de "coordinación obrera." ¿Se colocaría dentro o en una estrategia común con "Coordinación Democrática,"<sup>3</sup> a la que actualmente pertenece la UGT?*

*R. La coordinación obrera que propone la UGT debería unificar la acción de las distintas fuerzas del movimiento obrero con vistas a lograr la ruptura sindical. Sin que, a nuestro modo de ver deben existir lazos orgánicos entre esta Plataforma y la Coordinación Democrática, es claro que los objetivos de ambos—ruptura sindical y ruptura democrática—están estrechamente interrelacionados. Por otra parte, el entendimiento entre las organizaciones sindicales que participan en Coordinación Democrática deberían permitirles hacer sentir más aún dentro de esta plataforma el peso de los intereses de la clase trabajadora.*

*P. ¿Existen conversaciones o contactos con otras organizaciones sindicales de oposición en este sentido?*

*R. En efecto, existen ya conversaciones entre las distintas fuerzas de la oposición que inciden en el terreno sindical. Esperan que pronto estos contactos puedan surtir los efectos que todos deseamos.*

*P. ¿Cuál es la estrategia sindical de la UGT en el contexto de la actual situación económica?*

*R. La UGT denuncia el que sean los trabajadores los que paguen—a través del paro, de la inflación, etc.—las consecuencias de la actual crisis económica. Al respecto, el XXX Congreso ha decidido, que los órganos competentes elaboren un proyecto de plataforma reivindicativa de alcance general adaptada al momento presente y que la base de la Organización deberá refrendar dentro de unas semanas. Hay que señalar que los problemas económicos que vive el país derivan fundamentalmente de las contradicciones internas del sistema capitalista en su conjunto, y que en nuestro caso están considerable-*

*mente agravadas por la crisis de las estructuras políticas, económicas y sociales.*

*P. ¿Cuáles son las piezas de recambio a los actuales problemas económicos?*

*R. Para nosotros el restablecimiento de un marco de libertades políticas y sindicales es condición indispensable para poder empezar a plantear los problemas con posibilidad de encontrar soluciones. Las piezas de recambio de la UGT, a que Vd. se refiere, están especificadas en el programa de reivindicaciones mínimas de nuestra Organización y que por lo demás va a ser actualizado en los próximos meses; se trata—en términos muy generales y por encima de las reivindicaciones concretas que planteamos en cada sector de actividad—de establecer una planificación democrática y de avanzar progresivamente en el control obrero a todos los niveles.*

*P. ¿Cómo ve la viabilidad de la autogestión en las circunstancias socioeconómicas de España?*

*R. La autogestión va haciéndose viable a medida que sea una realidad el control obrero a que acabamos de aludir, así como la consiguiente definición de unos objetivos socioeconómicos globales más acordes con los intereses de la clase trabajadora.*

*P. Me gustaría conocer su actitud ante*

*algunas cuestiones que afectan a la actual Organización Sindical, como son su patrimonio, la obligatoriedad de sindicación y su posible fuerza en una situación libre y democrática.*

*R. En primer lugar exigimos la restitución del patrimonio expoliado por la OS y otros órganos del Estado, en 1939, a las Organizaciones obreras y fundamentalmente a la UGT. Por otra parte de todos es sabido que el actual patrimonio de la CNS es producto casi exclusivo de las cuotas que se sustraen a los trabajadores como impuesto obligatorio. Por lo tanto, lo indiscutible es que dicho patrimonio pertenece a la clase obrera y no a la burocracia que lo administra y lo disfruta.*

*La sindicación obligatoria atenta contra el concepto mismo de libertad sindical a que antes me he referido. Para nosotros la definición del sindicato es la de una Organización que se dan libremente los trabajadores para defender sus intereses de clase. La CNS como tal dejará de existir en el momento mismo de la ruptura sindical. Lo que podrá darse quizás en un régimen de libertad sindical es un sindicato al servicio de intereses fascistas o reaccionarios que—como la CFT francesa o la CISNAL italiana<sup>4</sup>—clarísimamente minoritario y rechazado unánimemente por el conjunto del movimiento obrero. □*

4. Confédération Française des Travailleurs; Confederazione Italiana Sindacati Nazionali Liberi.

## International Campaign to Boycott Shah's Festival

The campaign for a boycott of the shah's Shiraz Festival met with its most recent success May 17, when Merce Cunningham announced that his dance company had decided to turn down its invitation to perform at the event. The festival, a public-relations extravaganza, is held in Iran each September.

The initial appeal for the boycott was made by the American playwright and critic Eric Bentley. In a statement issued March 15, Bentley pointed out that the shah and his wife have made the annual festival one of the "notable events" in world theater. "Quite cleverly," he said, "they have gone for the names that have the stamp of the avant-garde. . . . In this way one of the most backward regimes in the world can pose as the furthest forward."

Bentley urged support for the boycott as an act of protest against the repression systematically practiced by the Iranian regime.

The Committee for Artistic and Intellectual Freedom in Iran,\* which is helping to

\*853 Broadway, Suite 414, New York, New York 10003.

publicize the boycott, issued a statement March 16 calling attention to repression of cultural figures in Iran.

This festival and others, such as the Tehran Film Festival, sponsored by the Shah and the Queen—paid for by the Iranian people—are being used as cover-ups for the brutal repression of artists, poets, playwrights, critics, and others in Iran.

The number of political prisoners in Iran is 100,000. . . . The Shah of Iran extracted a recantation from Mr. Gholamhossein Sa'edi, the country's foremost playwright, under consistent torture, which lasted eleven months. . . . Mr. Nasser Rahmani-Nejad, a director, and his whole troupe were arrested and tortured for having rehearsed for performance *The Lower Depths*, Maxim Gorky's famous play. The director and his actors, who are among the prominent writers and poets of Iran, were given 2 to 11 years for the rehearsal of this play.

The appeal has won a favorable response in Britain as well, where it is being publicized by the Bertrand Russell Peace Foundation. British cultural figures who have so far endorsed the boycott include Albert Hunt, John Berger, Trevor Griffiths, John Arden, Margaretta D'Arcy, David Mercer, and Kenneth Tynan. □

3. El organismo resultante de la fusión de la Junta Democrática y de la Convergencia Democrática, que representan frentes populares donde participan los partidos Comunista y Socialista, respectivamente.

# FROM OUR READERS

In the introduction to the article in our May 10 issue "How Was Khadeeja Killed?" we included the following sentence concerning the editor of *Ha'olam Ha'zeh* from which the article was translated: "Avineri is a leading figure among Israelis who have tried to develop a 'left-wing' rationale for Zionist colonialism."

M.B.J. of New York sent us the following comments:

"As an Israeli who is acquainted with Zionism and its very small and weak opposition in Israel let me offer the following correction. *Ha'olam Ha'zeh* . . . is not edited by a 'leading figure among Israelis who have tried to develop a "left-wing" rationale for Zionist colonialism.' As a matter of fact, Uri Avneri (this is the exact spelling) explicitly refuses to identify himself with any ideology whatsoever, let alone 'left' or 'right.'

"Apart from the question whether this attitude is not an ideology in itself, let me add he is in favour of the Zionist state in its current colonialist and exclusivist nature, and his position only differs to some extent from that of the regime in his more 'compromising' standpoint toward the 1967 conquests and 'readiness' to make 'concessions' to the Palestinians."

*Direct Action*, a revolutionary-socialist newsweekly published in Sydney, Australia, reprinted "How Was Khadeeja Killed?"

The issue containing the article met with a very favorable response from a picket line of Palestinians at a meeting for Israeli military leader Chaim Bar-lev held in the Sydney Opera House on May 9.

In its April issue, *Third World Reader Service*, which is published in Washington, D.C., selected material from two different issues of Intercontinental Press for presentation to its readers. One item was Ric Sissons's "Portuguese Workers Fight Lock-out at Timex Plant." The other was a duplication of an entire page of "Capitalism Fouls Things Up."

Intercontinental Press's coverage of events in the Middle East has received an excellent response.

*Action*, Arabic-English newsweekly published in New York, reprinted David Frankel's article in our April 26 issue "Israel-South Africa—the Apartheid Axis."

The same article was reprinted by *Viewpoint*, a weekly magazine published in Lahore, Pakistan.

*Viewpoint* also used David Frankel's "Israeli Nuclear Arsenal—Time Bomb in Mideast," Antonio Soto's "Kissinger's Saber Rattling Over Cuba," and Marcel

Zohar's eyewitness account of the anti-Palestinian pogrom "Galilee After the Storm."

Chuck Fishman of Skokie, Illinois, whose photograph of Reza Baraheni, prominent Iranian intellectual, appeared on the May 10 cover, sent this explanation:

"Regarding the front-page picture: I am the photographer who took the photograph. I do free-lance work and am not a CAIFI reporter. Just wanted to let you know."

The editors of a publication interested in Brazilian affairs, and particularly concerned about the possibility of Brazil's becoming a nuclear power, wrote us about their goals:

"Your paper is for us very interesting and useful. We made copies from the articles about Brazil and sent them to some student organizations. . . .

"We are concerned with the politics of liberation in the whole world and are trying to show to all Brazilians that our interests don't go only till our frontiers; that being Brazilian means also being a Latin-Afro-Indian-American, or simply an American (with the system beside)—and all this on the way to be a *man*."

"We are interested in all contacts possible and need all the support we can get. We have a large step-by-step program."

M.S. of New Orleans, Louisiana, sent a note about our renewal notices with her subscription:

"I'd just like to say that IP's notices to subscribers informing us of how long we have until our sub goes Kaput are very nice. However, they definitely cause heart pangs when you get down to the one 'in plain English' and you still don't have, because of the exploitive relations under capitalism, the necessary funds to immediately renew one's subscription. Speed of renewal has a direct connection to the progress of the class struggle and the IP is indispensable to the positive outcome of the class struggle—so get it here in a hurry!"

S.W., Albany, New York, wrote us:

"I have been subscribing to the *Militant* newsweekly for over a year and have enjoyed the excerpts from *Intercontinental Press* that periodically appear in it. Therefore, I would be interested in a sample copy free with the possibility that I will subscribe to this weekly if, as I am sure, I am impressed with the sample copy."

Maybe we should have sent that letter to the editor of the *Militant*, who ran our ad

about writing us for a free sample copy of Intercontinental Press.

Walter Lippmann of Los Angeles, one of the strong backers of Intercontinental Press since our first copy rolled off the mimeograph, has sent us clippings regularly from the daily papers in his area. We were about to write him because we hadn't heard from him for a couple of weeks when we received this explanation:

"I was out of town for a week and swamped the week before. Couldn't get these finished till last night.

"IP is great!"

Clippings from Intercontinental Press readers are most welcome. We read them all. There are always items the other papers missed that just fit something we're working on—or should be working on.

In response to a special offer we made in *World Outlook*, a weekly international supplement to the *Militant*, we've received orders from St. John's, Newfoundland, Canada; Rochester, New York; Newark, New Jersey; Los Angeles and San Pablo, California, for the three issues containing Ernest Harsch's series "Pretoria and Washington—Allies Against Africa."

"Those articles should help me learn more about American imperialism," R.C. of San Pablo wrote us. Right on.

The series is still available and the special offer still stands. Just send us \$1 with your name and address. □

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