

Syrian Invasion Threatens New Mideast War

HANDS OFF LEBANON!

Otelo Carvalho Rides Again

Peter Camejo: Situation in Spain

India—View From Gandhi's Jails

New 'Chronicle of Current Events'

Iran—21 Dissidents Murdered

Greek Regime Attacks Strikers

Italian CP Fears Winning Too Many Votes

The 'Proletarian Democracy' Bloc

Kremlin Puts Moroz in Mental Hospital

Palestinian Prisoners Fight for Rights

British Union Tops Back Wage-Cut Plan

Los Obreros Mexicanos Necesitan su Partido

Hands Off Lebanon!

By David Frankel

Claiming he was doing it to help the Lebanese people in a period of extreme crisis, Syrian President Hafez al-Assad ordered an invasion of Lebanon May 31. Radio Damascus claimed that the "assistance" of Syrian troops in northern Lebanon "led to the establishment of law, the calming of the situation and a stop to all types of fighting."

The truth is that Assad's invasion will not help solve the crisis in Lebanon, it will not help save lives, and it increases the danger of a new Middle East war.

Rather than "a stop to all types of fighting," the *New York Times* reported in an unsigned article June 7 that "air strikes and shelling attacks were reported last night on Palestinian and Lebanese leftist positions in eastern Lebanon, where Syrian troops lately entered the country in strength."

Farouk Kaddoumi, a leader of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), charged that hundreds of persons were killed when Syrian forces bombarded Palestinian refugee camps. In Beirut, soldiers of the pro-Syrian Saiqa Palestinian guerrilla organization—including Syrian troops in Saiqa uniforms—fought with rockets, artillery, and grenade launchers against Palestinian and leftist forces opposed to Assad's invasion.

The new Syrian move to back the rightist forces in Lebanon's fourteen-month-old civil war has aroused vehement opposition among the Muslim majority there and its Palestinian and leftist allies.

New York Times correspondent Henry Tanner reported in a June 3 dispatch from Beirut that a general strike called to protest the Syrian invasion "was nearly 100 percent effective" in the city's Muslim-controlled districts. "Stores, groceries and even sidewalk stands and money changers, who are among the hardest businessmen here, were closed," Tanner said.

Assad has two basic objectives in Lebanon, neither one of which has anything to do with the interests of the Lebanese or Syrian masses. He wants to preserve a balance of power favorable to the Christian rightists, and he wants to assert his control over the Palestinian liberation movement.

From Assad's point of view, the old discriminatory governmental system in Lebanon had many advantages. This system, which was devised by the French imperialists as a prop for their rule, guaranteed the Christian minority—and the Maronite sect in particular—

dominance in the government. The Maronite rightists, as a result of their shaky position, could be counted on to be deferential to their more powerful Syrian neighbor and not to challenge its policies. The same would not necessarily be true if the Muslim-Palestinian-leftist coalition were victorious in the civil war.

Assad wants to maintain a weak and divided Lebanon in order to maximize his regime's influence there.

The threat to the Palestinian liberation movement posed by Assad's intervention is clear. The Syrian invasion has been accompanied by flights of military planes over Beirut. "Sabra, the Palestinian refugee camp on the southern edge of Beirut, was close to the hub of the turn made by each of the formations," Tanner reported in his June 3 dispatch.

He quoted one Lebanese journalist who observed: "The Syrians are telling the Palestinians, 'We have planes and we can find your camps, your offices and your military positions on the map.'"

A June 7 Reuters dispatch from Damascus reported that the Syrian regime "described Al Fatah, the Palestinian guerrilla organization, and its allies as conspirators against the unity of Lebanon and the Palestinian cause and pledged that it would take a firm stand against them."

Israeli officials have expressed the hope that Assad is planning an attack on the Palestinian movement in Lebanon similar to King Hussein's 1970 "Black September" massacre in Jordan.

While Assad has intervened in the name of a compromise to end the civil war, the effect of his actions in Lebanon has been to prolong the conflict and prevent its resolution. The first example of this process was in January when Palestine Liberation Army (PLA) troops under Syrian command were introduced into the fighting.

The right-wing forces lost ground rapidly, but instead of helping the Muslim-Palestinian-leftist coalition bring the war to a successful conclusion, Assad sponsored a cease-fire. The agreement engineered by him called for maintaining the religious quotas in the government, although with some modifications.

When the rightist forces dragged their feet in implementing even the modest reforms proposed by Assad, fighting broke out anew. This time, pro-Syrian forces intervened openly on the side of the rightists, who were again losing ground.

A new cease-fire was imposed April 1,

but Syrian pressure against the Muslim-Palestinian-leftist coalition continued. On April 9, for example, Syrian troops entered Lebanon in an undisguised way for the first time.

Evidence of opposition inside Syria to Assad's reactionary policies in Lebanon is increasing. "Riots occurred in at least one Palestinian camp outside Damascus, where protesters carried placards attacking Assad by name," *Time* magazine reported in its May 31 issue. "Said one placard: ASSAD FIGHTS LIKE A LION IN LEBANON, BUT A CHICKEN ON THE GOLAN."

Dana Adams Schmidt reported in the June 1 *Christian Science Monitor* that Syrian police arrested about 200 persons during the last week in May. Previously, Reuters had reported the arrest of 300 to 400 officials of the ruling Baath party.

Assad has carried out his intervention into Lebanon step by step, testing to see the reaction. His aggressive plans were given a boost when Soviet Premier Aleksei Kosygin arrived in Damascus June 1, just as the main body of Syrian troops was entering Lebanon. On June 4, Kosygin and Assad issued a joint communiqué praising the role of their respective governments in the Lebanese crisis.

Assad's blows against the Lebanese masses, the Palestinian liberation movement, and the left-wing forces in his own country have been warmly applauded by the Ford administration and by Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin. The White House issued a statement June 1 saying that "the Syrians have played a constructive role in Lebanon."

Rabin, referring to the Syrian invasion, told Israeli students June 2, "... I will not stand in the way of anyone who wants to subdue Arafat's terrorists."

The imperialists are well aware of the fact that Assad's policies are weakening the ability of the Arab masses to resist future Israeli aggression. If Assad is successful in subduing the resistance of the Lebanese and Palestinian masses to the reimposition of the discriminatory governmental system, he will also have dealt a blow to the main force opposing an Israeli take-over of southern Lebanon.

In Syria also, Assad's attacks on the Palestinians and the most militant sectors of the Syrian masses will help Israel in its next assault against the Arab peoples.

While applauding Assad's attacks on the Palestinian liberation fighters in Lebanon, the Israeli regime has made clear that it reserves the option of declaring the Syrian intervention a threat to its "national interests and security needs" at any time. The Israeli regime is perfectly capable of standing by while Assad does his dirty work, and then using the presence of Syrian forces as a pretext for taking over southern Lebanon, which has been one of its long-standing objectives.

As Israeli Foreign Minister Yigal Allon

put it in a June 1 statement, "The deeper Syria gets involved, the more complicated the situation will be." Allon refused to specify what would constitute a "threat" to Israel, which maintains overwhelming military superiority against Damascus.

The step-by-step escalation of the Syrian attack on the Lebanese and Palestinian masses is heightening the danger of a new Middle East war by emboldening the Zionists. The reports that Israel has atomic weapons and was ready to use them against Arab cities during the October 1973 war underscore the danger that such a conflict could be transformed into a world war.

While the Israeli colonial-settler state maneuvers for a free hand in order to grab more Arab land, more powerful imperialist forces are also threatening to step in. The Ford administration has supplemented the threat of the U.S. Sixth Fleet in the Mediterranean by enlisting French aid.

The offer of French "peace-keeping" troops made May 21 by President Valéry Giscard d'Estaing after talks with Ford and Kissinger was renewed June 3 when French Foreign Minister Jean Sauvagnargues met with Syrian Foreign Minister Abdel Halim Khaddam. Sauvagnargues declared that the French and Syrian regimes have "identical" objectives in Lebanon.

Another meeting was held on the same topic in Beirut June 3. President Suleiman Franjeh, a leader of the Maronite rightists, met with the French ambassador.

The call for French troops was previously limited in Lebanon to the rightist forces, but on June 1 Kamal Jumblatt, one of the leaders of the Muslim-Palestinian-leftist coalition, reversed his position.

After meeting with the French ambassador, Jumblatt reportedly said, "I have asked for French diplomatic and political assistance to defend our independence." According to a June 1 dispatch by Henry Tanner, ". . . Jumblatt said that it now seemed the French offer [of troops] had been made in good faith."

But it was precisely French imperialism that laid the groundwork for the bloody struggle now tearing Lebanon apart. The purpose of French forces in Lebanon would be the same as that of Assad's troops—to back the rightists there.

Regardless of any miserable maneuvers carried out by Jumblatt or other misleaders, it is necessary to back the demand of the Lebanese and Palestinian people that the Syrian troops get out now and that Israel and the imperialists stay out. □

Documents discussed at 1974 Tenth World Congress of Fourth International. 128 pages, 8½ x 11, \$2.50

Intercontinental Press
P.O. Box 116, Village Station
New York, NY 10014

In This Issue

Closing News Date: June 7, 1976

ITALY	932	CP and SP Fear Winning Too Many Votes —by Gerry Foley
GREECE	934	Regime Unleashes Cops Against Workers
SPAIN	936	Interview With Peter Camejo —by Judy White
SOVIET UNION	938	Moroz Sent to Mental Hospital
	945	The Trial of Sergei Kovalyov —by Marilyn Vogt
ZIMBABWE	938	Reagan Threatens Freedom Fighters
PORTUGAL	939	Otelo Carvalho Rides Again —by Gerry Foley
BRITAIN	942	Union Leaders Back New Wage-Cut Plan —by Tony Hodges
INDIA	944	The View From Gandhi's Jails —by Ernest Harsch
DENMARK	946	The Fight Against Political Firings —by Frede Jakobsen
IRAN	947	Twenty-One Dissidents Gunned Down
ISRAEL	948	Political Prisoners Fight for Rights
UNITED STATES	948	FBI Exposed in Rosenberg Cover-up
NEWS ANALYSIS	930	Hands Off Lebanon!—by David Frankel
CAPITALISM		
FOULS THINGS UP	949	
SELECTIONS		
FROM THE LEFT	950	
AROUND THE WORLD	952	
BOOKS	953	SWP Suit Reported From Coast to Coast —reviewed by Ernest Harsch
DOCUMENTS	954	The 'Proletarian Democracy' Bloc in Italy
	956	Italy—The Communist Party in the Government?
DRAWINGS	933	Enrico Berlinguer; 939, Mário Soares; 942, Denis Healey—by Copain
EN ESPAÑOL:		
MEXICO	958	Los Obreros Necesitan su Partido
DOCUMENTOS	959	Crece el Fermento en las Fábricas Argentinas

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

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Published in New York each Monday except last in December and first in January; not published in August.

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

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

Paris Office: Pierre Frank, 10 Impasse Guéméné, 75004, Paris, France.

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

For airmail subscriptions in Europe: Write to Pathfinder Press, 47 The Cut, London SE1 8LL. In Australia: Write to Pathfinder Press, P.O. Box 151, Glebe 2037. In New Zealand: Write to Socialist Books, P.O. Box 1663, Wellington.

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

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

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Italian CP and SP Fear Winning Too Many Votes

By Gerry Foley

Politicians who want to win elections normally do not predict their own defeat two weeks before the vote. The reason for this is obvious. Even if they expect the worst, any indication that they are giving up the fight will discourage those who might otherwise vote for their slate.

So, there was some bewilderment expressed in the press when Italian CP General Secretary Enrico Berlinguer forecast in Paris June 3 that his party might not do as well as expected in the June 20 elections.

New York Times correspondent Flora Lewis cabled June 3 from the French capital:

Mr. Berlinguer told a small group of reporters at the Hilton Hotel, where he is staying, that information he has been receiving from all over Italy shows the dominant Christian Democrats regaining strength. The surprisingly pessimistic prediction from a politician little more than two weeks before what he called "most important elections" was not explained, and Italian reporters were puzzled by it.

A similar prediction was made by the pollsters working for the pro-SP daily *Repubblica*. Their conclusions were summed up in an editorial in the Rome paper June 3:

The figures in our second preelection poll published yesterday show a tendency that can be summed up as follows: The DC [Democrazia Cristiana—Christian Democracy] started from a point lower than the vote it got in the June 15, 1975, elections [35.3%] but it is recovering, at the expense in particular of the MSI [Movimento Sociale Italiano—Italian Social Movement, the neofascists].

Overall, *Repubblica* said, the poll indicated that the outcome of the June 20 elections would not differ substantially from that of June 1975. "If this tendency continues . . . it is clear that the left will not win 51%."

The pro-SP daily predicted that the upcoming election would result in two almost evenly balanced blocs. Its political conclusion from this was that "in these conditions, the only certain element in any considerations is the 'centrality' of the Socialist party for any possible parliamentary bloc."

It seems clear that the CP leader and the pro-SP editors of *Repubblica* are not overly upset about the prospect that the left might not get a majority in the approaching elections.

The fact is that the CP and SP leaders probably do not want to win over 50%.

That might alarm the bourgeoisie. It might encourage the workers to demand "too much," that is, to demand gains that the reformist parties could not deliver without overly upsetting the capitalists. In short, for the reformists a clear majority would be a mixed blessing, and might even be disastrous.

What would be preferable from the reformists' point of view would be a standoff with the bourgeois parties that would enable them to extract certain concessions through negotiations without having to take responsibility for the government. Thus, their predictions of defeat may be intended to be self-fulfilling.

The pollsters working for the weekly magazine *L'Espresso* came up with quite different results than *Repubblica's* team. In its June 6 issue, the left weekly predicted that the elections would be "an earthquake that will upset the present geopolitical structure of power and bring about a disastrous crumbling of the DC and some other minor parties, enabling the left to win a majority of 52%."

L'Espresso predicted that the DC vote would fall to 27.6%, with the CP and SP vote rising respectively to 34.5% and 15.7%, or a total of 50.2%. It also predicted that Democrazia Proletaria (DP—Proletarian Democracy, a bloc of the smaller left parties) would get 1.9%.

Of the bourgeois parties, the poll predicted that the MSI would get 8.5% of the vote, gaining about 2%, at the expense essentially of the DC. In the south and islands, the neofascist vote was expected to bulk large in comparison with that of the DC, 20.5% as against 30.2% for the main bourgeois party.

Among students, the CP and DP were almost equal, 34.6% for the official party and 28.5% for all those groups claiming to stand to the left of the CP. In this milieu, the Christian Democracy was reduced to the position of a minor party. Only 5.8% said they supported it.

For youth between eighteen and twenty-three years of age, the percentage for the Proletarian Democracy bloc dropped to 6.8%. In this group, the poll showed 43.1% backing the CP, 19% backing the SP, and 14.7% supporting the DC.

The main conclusions indicated by the *Espresso* poll are the following: (1) Despite the hesitations and betrayals of the reformist parties, the majority of the population are looking forward to a break from the capitalist past. (2) The youth overwhelmingly reject all the capitalist

parties. (3) Of the youth that have had a chance to study political ideas, nearly a third support some formation that criticizes the reformist parties for not being revolutionary.

The formations that have arisen claiming to represent a revolutionary alternative to the CP and SP are already rather large. Numerically the largest groups in Europe that claim to stand to the left of the CPs are in Italy.

According to an article by Paolo Flores d'Arcais and Franco Moretti in the March-April issue of *New Left Review*, the three largest of these formations, Avanguardia Operaia, Lotta Continua, and PdUP (Partito d'Unità Proletaria—Party of Proletarian Unity), each have between 10,000 and 15,000 members and a similar number of sympathizers. It is these groups that are the major organizations comprising the Proletarian Democracy bloc. (For an outline of their positions, see p. 954.)

Il Manifesto, the daily organ of the PdUP, sells about 25,000 copies. The daily papers of the two other groups reportedly sell slightly under 20,000.

However, the membership of each of these groups consists primarily of students or former student activists. Each remains centered in the city where it first developed. Milan is the stronghold of Avanguardia Operaia, Turin of Lotta Continua, and Rome of PdUP.

Despite the size of these groups and the fact that the class struggle in Italy has been very sharp since 1969, none of these groups has been able to convince a substantial portion of the working masses that it offers an effective political alternative to the CP and SP. This remains true, even though PdUP, which brings together left centrist splits from the CP and SP, has some leading union cadres and holds leadership of the metalworkers unions.

All these groups lack a revolutionary Marxist program and tend to fall back on just playing the old songs at a louder volume. Flores and Moretti write:

Of the three organizations, *Avanguardia Operaia* was the first to develop, towards the end of 1968; it was founded by dissident Trotskyist nuclei. The group's founders (Gorla, Vinci, Corvisieri, Barbieri) criticized the Italian section of the Fourth International for its inability to break radically with the policy of entrism in the PCI [Partito Comunista Italiano—Italian Communist party]; they favoured constructing an independent organization, the choice made in France by Krivine. They aimed at developing rank-and-file workers' structures (the CUB:

United Rank-and-File Committees), on the basis of strong ideological criteria. The initial Trotskyism of this group was rapidly abandoned in favour of an increasingly explicit and un-critical adherence to Maoist positions in the international and theoretical domains. In addition, because of the entry of workerist intellectuals from *Quaderni Rossi* (Rieser in Turin, Motture in Naples), *Avanguardia Operaia* was increasingly characterized by simple trade-unionist maximalism.

In describing Lotta Continua, Flores and Moretti say:

Lotta Continua arose not as a vanguard organization, but as an informal unification of those sectors of the student movement that, towards the end of 1968, decided to give priority to intervening in the factories. Founded by a workerist group in Pisa, *Lotta Continua* developed during the 1969 wage-contract battles at FIAT (Turin). Its leading group included the main student leaders from all the major Italian universities, with the sole exceptions of Rome and Milan. In its initial phase, *Lotta Continua* opposed the emergence of factory councils, which it saw as instruments whereby the trade unions would "recuperate" working-class autonomy. *Lotta Continua's* slogans (*Siamo tutti delegati, Vogliamo tutto, Prendiamoci la città*—We are all delegates, We want it all, Let's take the city) clearly reflected their rejection of all intermediate objectives, which they denounced as reformist. Of the entire Italian revolutionary Left, *Lotta Continua* was undoubtedly the organization with the most confused and oscillating political line and theoretical positions.

Flores and Moretti amplified this last point later in their article: "*Lotta Continua* does not have a real theory of its own—nearly all ultra-left currents in the history of the workers' movement coexist and mingle within it."

The PdUP not only lacks a consistent political alternative to the CP's line; it represents an unwieldy combination of a number of centrist currents:

The PdUP was born in the summer of 1974, as a product of the fusion of the *Manifesto* group (Magri, Rossanda, Natoli, Pintor) which had left the PCI in 1969, a section of the PSIUP's¹ left wing (Foa, Ferraris, Miniati) that had refused to enter the PCI in 1972, and some left Catholic groups (Migone, Puleo). Although it was by far the best known and most sophisticated theoretically, of the three organizations, and commanded a considerable presence in the trade unions at all levels (Giovannini, national secretary of the CGIL;² Lettieri, national secretary of the metalworkers union; Scavi, national secretary of the chemical workers), the PdUP was nonetheless also the least homogeneous. The historical division between its two major original components (Communist Left and Socialist Left) was compounded by internal dissension over the nature and role of the PCI, the organization of the party, the relationship between party and

1. Partito Socialista Italiano d'Unità Proletaria (Italian Socialist party of Proletarian Unity), a section of the SP that split away when the latter entered the center-left coalition in 1964.

2. Confederazione Generale Italiana dei Lavoratori (Italian General Federation of Workers), the CP-SP federation.



BERLINGUER: Stalinist leader worried that combined CP-SP vote could be majority.

trade union, and control of the daily newspaper.

Moreover, the PdUP has recently suffered a split:

The orthodox Leninists had originally been in the Italian section of the Fourth International, which went into crisis at the end of the sixties. Virtually the entire membership in Sicily, led by Mineo, left the section and ultimately entered the PdUP. They were expelled in the autumn of 1975 for forming a faction, at a time when the two main components of the party leadership were still hoping to hold a "monolithic" congress.

The fundamental weakness of all these groups, according to Flores and Moretti, is their underestimation of political questions:

In the PdUP this is manifested in two different ways, corresponding to the group's original components. On the one hand, the workerist trade-union wing is often uneasy about broaching the problems of a comprehensive strategy or an analysis of non-proletarian social strata. On the other hand, the theory of the revolution as a social phenomenon, in which the conquest of political power is the final and not the initial act, typified the history of the *Manifesto* group. *Lotta Continua*, for its part, is marked by an extreme populism according to which "the people" is intrinsically revolutionary and its concrete political choices constitute only an ephemeral superstructure. It was on the basis of this notion that *Lotta Continua* supported the Reggio Calabria revolt in 1970, despite the fact that this was led by the fascists, and that today it calmly maintains that once in the government the PCI will be easily overwhelmed by the "force of circumstance" and Berlinguer will wind up like Kerensky. Finally, for *Avanguardia Operaia*, politics is identical to professed ideology. When everyone was still discussing the role of the workers' councils, *Avanguardia Operaia* held that it was more important to devote itself to creating narrow committees of revolutionary workers. Again, to give an example of a different sort, after the abortive 11 March 1975 coup in

Portugal, *Avanguardia Operaia* blithely asserted that since power was in the hands of revolutionary soldiers, the dictatorship of the proletariat already existed in Portugal.

The second fundamental weakness of these groups, according to the two Italian Marxists, is that they have not broken "strategically" from Stalinism. This would account, too, for the poverty of their political thinking:

One section of the PdUP (the former *Manifesto* group) has recently taken to presenting itself as the real heir of Togliatti. . . . all three in general support the positions of the Maoist leadership, which they see as offering a strategic riposte to revisionism.

Any criticism of the Peking leadership is in the framework of support:

The least tied to Chinese orthodoxy is perhaps *Lotta Continua*, though it is at the same time the most Maoist of the groups in other respects, aiming to reproduce the political forms which characterized the Cultural Revolution as norms of internal life for the organization.

As for *Avanguardia Operaia*, Flores and Moretti say:

Avanguardia Operaia generally follows a "justificationist" line, seeking to bring out all the "objective" elements which explain the reactionary options of Chinese foreign policy. The latter are presented simply as contradictory, to be explained either by the continuing influence of a "revisionist" group (which successive cultural revolutions will have to unmask and defeat) . . . or by means of a "correct" distinction of roles, tasks and policies between Party and State.

The attitude of the PdUP is more nuanced:

There thus coexist within the PdUP the dogmatic, explicitly Stalinist pro-Chinese positions of Mario Capanna, the "French Maoist" positions of Rossana Rossanda, and the more lukewarm and indeed largely agnostic positions of many leaders from the "trade-union" wing, who consider these questions excessively ideological and in any case not worth dividing over.

Although all these groups tend to accept the theories about a capitalist restoration in the USSR, they have contradictory positions about the opposition to Stalinism in the workers states.

Lotta Continua "concentrates its critical fire on the dissidents, whom it treats *en bloc* as reactionaries. For the militants of *Lotta Continua*, the repressive measures against Solzhenitsyn were, if anything, examples of an excessive, 'revisionist' tolerance." PdUP defends the dissident intellectuals but as an alternative to the Kremlin's repression it holds up the "correct" methods of Peking.

It is clear that these three groups do not offer a revolutionary Marxist alternative to the reformist perspectives of the Stalinists and Social Democrats. The Proletarian Democracy bloc, which they dominate, still has not been able to come up with a common electoral platform. It remains to be seen if such a platform will be agreed upon before the elections are held. □

Greek Regime Unleashes Cops Against Workers

On May 24 and 25, hundreds of thousands of Greek workers struck to protest the government's plans for restricting trade-union freedom and imposing new wage guidelines. The government's wage plan sets a ceiling for raises far below the level of inflation.

Early in the second day of the strikes, a battle developed in Athens between police and demonstrators. It was reportedly the most violent confrontation between workers and the repressive forces since the fall of the junta in July 1974. The conflict built up quickly and in a rather unclear way. The two factions of the Communist party and Andreas Papandreou blamed provocateurs for touching off the clashes, although at the same time they said that the violence of the government had created a grave crisis.

The reformists played an ambiguous role in preparing and leading the strikes. In its May 20 issue, *Aughe*, the daily paper reflecting the views of the "interior" faction of the Communist party, reported that public workers unions were planning "coordinated strike actions on a national scale, which do not exclude the possibility of a forty-eight-hour general strike. The objective is to oppose adoption of the antilabor law that will be discussed in parliament starting Saturday afternoon [May 22] and continuing Monday and Tuesday [May 24 and 25]."

Aughe explained: "The Coordinating Committee of the Municipal Workers Organizations in Athens and the working people in general have been in ferment since yesterday. Thousands of denunciations and telegrams from all the workers organizations have been sent opposing [Labor Minister] Laskaris's attempt to deprive the workers of the right to strike."

The following day, May 21, *Aughe* reported that the union formations of the parties that claim to represent the working class had come out in support of the strike. This included the Antidiktatoriko Ergatiko Metopo (AEM—Antidictatorial Workers Front) of the "interior" CP; the Eniaia Syndhikalistike Antidiktatorike Kinesis (ESAK—United Antidictatorial Trade-Union Movement) of the "exterior" CP; and the Panellenio Sosialistiko Kinema ton Ergaton (PASKE—Pan-Hellenic Socialist Workers (Movement) of the Panellenio Sosialistiko Kinema (PASOK—Pan-Hellenic Socialist Movement), the party of Andreas Papandreou.

Other organizations listed as supporting the projected actions were the following: the Bank Workers Organization, the Hotel Workers, the Coordinating Committee of



Ergatike Pale

COPS BEAT STRIKER: Caramanlis regime took velvet glove off its mailed fist as part of drive against rights and living standards of Greek workers.

Building and Wood Workers Organizations, and the printers. The national union federation, the Genike Synomospondhia Ergaton Ellados (GSEE—General Confederation of Greek Workers), did not support the strike call.

Only about 20 percent of the Greek working class is organized in unions. The national union federation is quite undemocratic and passive. Since the Greek civil war, the government has intervened directly in the union movement to combat CP influence. Under the junta, the GSEE was allotted the role of a transmission belt for government control of the labor movement. A number of unions have been expelled from the GSEE at various times, usually those in which the influence of the CP or other radical groups was strong.

At the national conference of the GSEE on April 12, the pro-Caramanlis forces, along with the surviving projunta officials, won 68 percent of the vote. The three opposition formations together got 31 percent.

Up to now, the two CPs and PASOK

have not opposed the Caramanlis regime very strongly. They have tended to follow a policy of "national union" against the supposed Turkish threat. They have also tended to defer to Caramanlis on the theory that he was the most effective barrier to a restoration of the military dictatorship.

So, *Aughe's* support for a wave of strikes against the government was a rather sudden turn. It is possible that the reformists became worried that Caramanlis was going too far to the right and threatening their basic positions. It is possible also that they were pushed by a rank-and-file upsurge of militancy. Undoubtedly both factors were present, to one degree or another. What is certain is that the reformists had not prepared the workers they influence for a head-on collision with the Caramanlis regime, and once a confrontation developed they were incapable of offering the workers effective or consistent leadership.

According to the May 29 issue of the

British *Economist*, the CPs felt particularly threatened by the proposed labor law because "it would ban strikes by workers who do not belong to recognised unions and, second . . . it would make any strike called for political purposes illegal."

It is not clear, overall, how successful the strikes were.

The headline in the May 25 *Aughe* was "The General Strike Is a Success." The paper reported: "Hundreds of thousands of workers struck throughout the country, while tens of thousands surrounded the Diana Theater at the meeting where the Coordinating Committees were organized yesterday evening." However, in previous issues, *Aughe* had predicted that a million or more of the three-million-strong Greek working class would participate in the strikes.

The government claimed that only about 150,000 workers participated in the actions. According to the London *Economist*: "The strike was fairly ineffectual and by mid-week was petering out. All the same, it closed the banks and large stores, halted the flights of foreign airlines, stopped trolley-bus services and depleted hotel staffs. And the government issued call-up orders to keep doctors at work, telecommunications going, trains running and Olympic Airways [the Greek national airline] flying."

At the very least, tens of thousands of workers in the Athens area, especially building and typographical workers, who have been among the most militant, apparently welcomed the opportunity to fight back against the Caramanlis government. They found, however, that the opposition union leaders planned only a limited and hesitant action.

In its May 29 issue, the Greek Trotskyist paper *Ergatike Pale* commented:

Seeing the grave danger represented by the union bill, the working class and all the working people began to call forty-eight-hour and twenty-four-hour strikes, both with and without organization. The strikes were touched off at the level of industrial branches and isolated plants. Hundreds of thousands of workers struck in Athens and Peiraieus. However, even according to the most optimistic estimates, the size of the rally on Monday was no more than 40,000 persons. What was the reason for this discrepancy? Who is responsible?

The first reason for this is that although there was supposed to be a *general* strike mobilization, the Stalinists who control the Coordinating Committees called for a rally in a theater. That gives the measure of the reformists' policy. Next, while the reformist dailies, *Aughe* and *Rizospastis* [CP "exterior"], ran dramatic headlines in the days preceding May 24 calling for strikes by different categories of workers, they deliberately avoided calling for a national general strike. And this splitting maneuver could not be covered up by the extent of their demagoguery. They deliberately avoided carrying out a campaign for a militant, mass rally in an open area. They cut down the rally to the size of their policy.

So, the workers who went to the rally in

the Diana Theater were given no direction, and the tens of thousands who could not even get into the auditorium were left to wander away.

Furthermore, while the reformists wanted to apply pressure, they were determined to stay within the framework of "critical support" for Caramanlis:

It was in line with this logic that the reformists used chains of monitors and other bullying methods in an attempt to exclude other organizations such as the OKDE [Organosis Kommouniston Diethniston tes Ellados—Organization of International Communists of Greece, Greek section of the Fourth International] that carried slogans such as "Down with Caramanlis's terror."

Objectively the hesitations of the reformists played a provocative role. Once again, on the morning of May 25, the building workers who came to a rally at the Gloria Theater got no direction. But this time they did not just wander away. A spontaneous demonstration started up and developed into a march on parliament without any leadership or definite objective. The crowd of several thousand building workers was attacked by the police.

Ergatike Pale reported:

The events began in Stadiou Street, where the police cut off the march to parliament. The march was started at the labor exchange by building workers, along with other working people. It later spread throughout the center of Athens.

The murder of a woman (who was run over by an armored car that drove onto the sidewalk) on Aiolou Street shocked all the demonstrators and brought their indignation to a peak. By throwing pieces of wood and stones, demonstrators kept the police cars, which were roaming the center of town to direct the armored vehicles, from coming down the streets toward Kotsia Square.

A lot of people had gathered in Omonoia Square when the armored cars and paddy wagons converged on the area from three directions. From this point on, the demonstrators built barricades and set fires throughout the downtown area to ward off the attacks of the police. Centers of resistance developed everywhere, from the Exarcheia to Peiraieus and from Solonos to Kolokyntou and around the area.

Throughout the afternoon and evening, the police slowly broke up the scattered and leaderless demonstrations.

Reuters reported: "The center of the city looked like a battlefield, with tear-gas smoke hanging over areas usually thronged by tourists." No deaths were reported besides that of the sixty-five-year-old woman bystander crushed by a careening armored car. The police claimed that only ten demonstrators were hurt, but according to Reuters, "witnesses saw at least 20 casualties, many of whom were taken to hospitals."

Thirty-seven persons were arrested and charged with offenses ranging from disrespect for the police to carrying illegal weapons and attempting to do grave harm to officers of the law.

The reformist parties' protests against the police rampage were indecisive and contradictory.

For example, in an editorial on the front page of *Aughe* May 26, T. Tsouparopoulos wrote:

We fear the government has chosen the worst road of all. It must go no further on this course. It bears a grave responsibility for what happened. The armored cars on Aiolou Street opened up a critical moment in the life of the nation. Social problems cannot be solved by armored cars and police attacks. This sort of thing is grist to the mill of the enemies of order, who are biding their time. The supporters of the junta and all the ultrareactionary forces were rubbing their hands yesterday. A parliamentary government that follows such a policy is opening the way for the dark schemes of these people.

All the reformist parties avoided placing the responsibility for the violence unequivocally on the Caramanlis government. According to them, provocateurs were responsible for the clashes developing. Andreas Papandreou even said that he would be "the last to doubt the patriotism" of the Caramanlis government.

The May 24-25 actions not only failed to make the government withdraw its antilabor law but left the reformist opposition in disarray. "It is true we are going to suffer a temporary defeat," *Ergatike Pale* said. "The working class and working people are going to have to fight in much more difficult conditions." □

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'People Want Socialism—There's No Doubt About That'

By Judy White

"The ruling class in Spain is under enormous pressure to try to clean up the image of the fascist dictatorship," Peter Camejo said in an interview given to *Intercontinental Press* on his return from a nine-day tour of Spain.

Camejo is the presidential candidate of the Socialist Workers party in the United States. In late May he spoke at meetings attended by a total of about 4,000 persons in Barcelona, Madrid, and Valencia on "The Political Situation in the United States and Its Impact on World Politics." In addition, he met informally with several leaders of the mass movement.

Camejo gave his impression of the political situation in Spain: "The pressure is coming from the mass workers movement and from the middle classes. It is combined with international pressures from the working class of Europe and general hostility to the fascist regime.

"What the ruling class is attempting to do is give the appearance of establishing some democratic rights in order to be able to say that they are moving away from fascism."

But, he continued, "their problem is an enormous repressive apparatus that has been built up over the years by the fascists. This apparatus is very powerful. And, of course, the fascists fear that any opening toward bourgeois democracy could mean their end. Therefore, the fascists oppose such an opening and put pressure on the bourgeoisie to guarantee the continuation of the apparatus. To justify their existence, the fascists need to perpetuate the myth that they are struggling against the 'danger' of Communism."

What the government is saying is that only certain groups should be granted legal status—some Social Democratic currents—and that groups like the Communist party, which is the largest party in the working-class movement today, as well as the Trotskyists and Maoists, should remain banned. This way, he pointed out, it can maintain the basic principle of victimizing individuals for their political views.

However, such an approach poses a contradiction. "The ruling class can't begin to allow some democratic rights, which people will utilize to fight to better their conditions, and then necessarily contain that motion."

The objective situation clearly favors the workers, Camejo said. "They feel they'll be able to beat back the government. That's

why there is such great tension right now throughout Spain. Everyone is waiting to see what these so-called new laws will actually mean in reality. There's a continual testing going on of what can be printed, what can be said, what meetings can be held."

The "reform" proposal of the Juan Carlos regime, Camejo said, is "quite reactionary when compared to any of the bourgeois regimes of Europe. In fact, it becomes almost ludicrous."

To make his point, Camejo described the proposal for a "reformed" parliament. It calls for a two-house legislature, with the upper house appointed by the Francoist regime and the lower house elected only by heads of households. Moreover, there would still be a monarchy, and the parliament would have no powers except to advise the king.

Another proposal of the "reform" plan is a law on public meetings.

"This is a new law which is supposed to guarantee the right to hold meetings," Camejo said. "It is a law which says that any gathering of twenty people, except for weddings or specific church events, must have a police permit and police must be present. And to show how democratic this law is, it very carefully explains that the police are *not* allowed to get up and intervene to present their point of view. The only thing they're allowed to do is stop the meeting if they think it is in any way violating the law."

I asked Camejo how the masses view these maneuvers and promises.

"There is clear mass sympathy for democratic rights and civil liberties," he replied. "The masses want freedom of speech, freedom of assembly, freedom for all political organizations. They want amnesty for all political prisoners. That's why there is tremendous unity between the working class and the middle class—the peasantry and so forth."

However, he cautioned, "there is political confusion on the role the bourgeoisie plays in this. There is a tendency among some political groups, especially the Communist party, to see the bourgeoisie as reliable allies in the fight for democratic rights against the fascists."

"You met with Marcelino Camacho, whose views generally parallel those of the Spanish Communist party," I said. "How did he explain this?"

Camacho is the central leader of the workers commissions that were first formed about fifteen years ago in Spain.

"He believes in the desirability of creating a political bloc between the workers and sectors of the capitalist class. His point of view is probably the majority opinion right now on the left in Spain, although there are big doubts about it among some sectors.

"Camacho's view is that the bourgeoisie has more or less separated from the fascist apparatus—or at least large sectors of it have—and that it is generally fighting for democratic rights. What is needed, therefore, is to make a political bloc with the bourgeoisie on a bourgeois program to get them to use their great influence to force the fascists to give democratic rights.

"Camacho seems to place a great deal of hope in these big bourgeois figures. He kept repeating to me that the government is extremely nervous over the fact that the big bourgeoisie are willing to meet with him.

"What I think this reveals is the weakness of the bourgeoisie in Spain, that they are forced now to deal with people they have suppressed for more than thirty years. They now have to meet with members of the Communist party and others—even though these meetings are illegal, formally speaking—in order to try to use the workers parties to control the working class. They have no other vehicle to control them. The fascist unions have lost credibility in the eyes of the working class."

The main thing he discussed with Camacho, Camejo said, was the question of political prisoners. Camacho had been released from jail only two days earlier. In all, he has spent fourteen years in prison.

Camacho reported that the situation in the prisons has gotten worse since Franco died last November. There are approximately 140 prisoners left in the jail where Camacho was imprisoned, including some workers who have been there for twenty-five years for trying to set up unions. And he estimated that there are at least 700 political prisoners throughout Spain.

Camacho himself faces a new trial on charges that he has advocated changing the government. This charge carries a minimum penalty of twenty years.

"More importantly, he pointed out that the arrest of political opponents of the government continues," Camejo said. "In fact, in the last year there has been a 35 percent increase in the number of political trials. There is a continuing process of arresting people and throwing them in jail



Joanna Rossi/Militant

CAMACHO and CAMEJO: Leader of workers commissions and Socialist Workers party candidate discussed plight of political prisoners and need for campaign to free them.

for a month or two to intimidate them. So, the number of political prisoners is hard to judge. It may go up to 1,000 or 2,000—maybe even higher—for a period, especially around strikes or when there is a demonstration.”

Camejo also referred to meetings he had with working-class leaders from other political tendencies. One of the big debates going on in the workers movement, he said, is the question of how the movement should be organized. Should there be one union federation encompassing the existing illegal workers organizations dominated by the Communists, Social Democrats, and anarchists? Or should there be three separate trade-union federations? The big fear of the Social Democrats, anarchists, and others is that the CP would not allow the right of tendency within a unitary federation.

“The UGT [Unión General de Trabajadores—General Workers Union, the Social Democratic union] leaders are fearful that the CP would try to do what the Stalinists did in Portugal. The Communist party there took over what remained of the fascist formations and used them bureaucratically to try to control the working class, to make it harder to achieve democracy in the workers movement,” Camejo said.

The Social Democrats and anarchists have a longer tradition in the workers movement than the Stalinists, Camejo pointed out, dating from before the civil war. However, the CP-dominated workers commissions now have more influence in the working class, since they led the major struggles that have taken place in the last fifteen years.

While he was in Barcelona, Camejo talked with Luis Xirinacs, a radical priest who is holding a vigil for the amnesty of political prisoners. He described Xirinacs’s campaign:

“Xirinacs is very directly and consciously imitating the type of actions that Martin Luther King was associated with in the South [of the United States]. He’s sitting out in front of the jail in Barcelona seven days a week, twelve hours a day. Other people sit with him. This is illegal. He has been beaten up many times; he has been thrown in jail.

“The government tried to stop him forcibly but they found that every time they tried to repress him, they would get bad publicity throughout Europe. It was even reported in the *New York Times* and other papers in the United States. This publicity put a stop to their beating him up. Now they seem to have given up. They’re just watching him.

“But more important, he had projected the idea of a pacifist march across Catalonia. They were going to start in three different places and march throughout the entire area demanding amnesty and autonomy for Catalonia. This would be a peaceful march.

“The day I met with him the newspapers had on the front page that this march had been prohibited by the government. The government explained that the reason they were banning it was that they thought it could get in the way of commerce! Trucks might run into these people walking along the highways and not be able to deliver their goods. The government also complained that the march might slow up tourists on their way to the beaches and this would cut off the tourist trade.

“But in general the government doesn’t like the idea of people gathering in big crowds. And they thought that this march somehow could turn into a big crowd.”

I asked Camejo about his public meetings. “What were the audiences like politically, and what questions aroused the most discussion?”

“Probably most of the people who attended were politicalized,” he replied, “although at some meetings we had at the universities or in workers districts they could very easily have just been ordinary people.

“People want socialism in Spain—there’s no doubt about that. If there were a referendum tomorrow about what social system they wanted, the overwhelming majority would vote for socialism. So the question then becomes, what type of socialism and how to get it.

“When I explained that the main danger I saw was workers subordinating their own interests for the sake of a bloc with sections of the bourgeoisie or supporting any bourgeois government, there was overwhelming support to this position.

“There were many members of the Communist party present at these meetings. I would notice that they would applaud for these positions. Also, when I would make it clear that I oppose the bureaucracy in the Soviet Union, that I favor democratic rights for workers in the Soviet Union, this would bring applause.”

Camejo feels that people are joining the Communist party “because most workers see it as the largest party on the left, a party with many members who have fought very hard and who are respected. They hope that by joining this large party they will get socialism.”

This explains why the rank and file of the Communist party is so open to listening to other political groups, he said.

“After making the point about the Soviet Union, I would always explain that the Socialist Workers party was in solidarity with the Fourth International. This would also bring a lot of applause. This was due in part, of course, to the fact that there were supporters of the Fourth International in the audience. But that was far from the total explanation. The applause was very generalized. At my Madrid meeting of 1,500, students began shouting, ‘Fourth, Fourth International,’ at the end of my talk. Those shouting very clearly included most of the audience.”

He noted that the two sympathizing organizations of the Fourth International in Spain—the Liga Comunista (Communist League) and the Liga Comunista Revolucionaria/Euzkadi ta Azkatasuna VI—Revolutionary Communist League/Basque Nation and Freedom VI—are growing.

“There is little doubt that if legality were established for the Trotskyists in Spain, they would become the largest Trotskyist organizations in the world,” Camejo said.

Moreover, he concluded, “it’s far from settled which tendency will predominate among the workers.” □

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Ukrainian Dissident Sent to Mental Hospital



MOROZ: Ukrainian dissident faces new abuses at hands of Soviet bureaucrats.

Valentyn Moroz, Ukrainian historian and prominent opponent of the national oppression of the Ukrainian peoples in the USSR, has been transferred to a psychiatric hospital. This was made known by Moroz's wife, Raissa, at a press conference in Moscow May 18, according to a Reuters news release.

Moroz was sentenced in November 1970 to a fourteen-year term (six years in prison, three years in a labor camp, and five years internal exile) on charges of "anti-Soviet agitation and propaganda." The charges

Israeli Advisers Said to Help South African Army

Marcia Freedman, an Independent Socialist member of the Israeli parliament, charged May 31 that hundreds of Israeli troops were attached to the South African army as advisers.

Defense Ministry spokesman Naphtali Lavie denied the charge, claiming, "There are no Israel defense forces personnel in South Africa." On the same day as his denial, however, the South African and Israeli regimes announced a program to strengthen scientific and technological ties between the two apartheid states.

Lavie also denied a report by United Press International the previous week that Israeli advisers were training the Ethiopian army in counterinsurgency techniques.

were based on his writings in defense of Ukrainian national rights and against Stalinist repression. The six-year term of imprisonment was to have ended June 1, and he was to have been transferred from Vladimir prison to a labor camp.

Moroz is now being held in the Serbsky Institute of Forensic Psychiatry. The staff of this institution has become notorious for declaring political dissidents insane. According to Amnesty International, a commission of such "experts" will rule on Moroz's sanity in mid-June.

Raissa Moroz reported that "her husband last wrote her from Vladimir [prison]

in March," according to Reuters. She went to Moscow May 17, from Ivano-Frankivsk in the Ukrainian SSR where she lives, to find out where Moroz was being held. She was told earlier in May that he was in an unspecified medical institution.

According to the New York-based Committee for the Defense of Soviet Political Prisoners, Raissa Moroz has learned since May 18 that her husband was transferred to the Serbsky Institute on May 10.

Moroz's case became internationally known in 1974 when he conducted a five-month hunger strike against the harsh conditions of his confinement. For example, after he was attacked and stabbed by criminal cell mates, he was placed in solitary confinement for nearly two years. He went on the hunger strike to demand to be transferred to a labor camp. He ended his hunger strike in November 1974 and was transferred to an ordinary cell with another political prisoner. □

Threatens to Send U.S. Troops

Reagan's Warning to Zimbabwe Freedom Fighters

At a news conference in Sacramento June 2, former California Governor Ronald Reagan, a leading contender for the Republican presidential nomination, raised the threat of sending American troops to Zimbabwe (Rhodesia). His remarks were in the same vein as his earlier bellicose statements on retaining U.S. control of the Panama Canal by force.

Responding to a question on how he, as president, would prevent warfare between Zimbabwe's Black majority and the racist Rhodesian regime of Ian Smith, Reagan declared: "Whether it will be enough to have simply a show of strength, a promise that we would [supply] troops, or whether you'd have to go in with occupation forces or not, I don't know. But I believe in the interests of peace and avoiding bloodshed, and to achieve a democratic majority rule which we all, I think, subscribe to, I think would be worth this, for us to do it."

The next day, Reagan quickly modified his threat, claiming that he had "made a mistake." However, he still left open the possibility of U.S. forces intervening in Zimbabwe under some circumstances, pointing to the example of Eisenhower's dispatch of an American military force to Lebanon in 1958. (He also suggested that Washington should send a "token military force" to Lebanon to intervene in the current civil war there.)

Mike Deaver, the head of Reagan's campaign staff, told reporters that Reagan believed that a United Nations military force in Zimbabwe "might be a better way."

President Ford, whose campaign for the

Republican presidential nomination has been seriously challenged by Reagan, said in Washington June 3, "Any indication that a President might send American troops to southern Africa, I think is irresponsible."

Reagan's addition of a few qualifiers to his saber-rattling remarks and Ford's denunciations of them do not diminish the seriousness of the threat, however. The political representatives of the American ruling class frequently raise unpopular proposals—only to later retract or deny them—as a way of testing possible reactions or of preparing the political climate for their implementation.

Moreover, even the suggestion that American troops might be used serves as a warning to the Zimbabwean struggle against white minority rule. □

Oil Spill at La Coruna Bay

A Spanish oil tanker carrying 110,000 tons of crude oil exploded near La Coruna, Spain, May 12, spilling tons of oil into the ocean and blackening at least sixty miles of beach along Spain's northwest coastline. Biologists fear that the oil spill may have killed much of the sea life in La Coruna Bay, which is one of the world's finest breeding grounds for oysters, clams, lobsters, mussels, shrimp, and fish.

The spill also affected the fishing industry in La Coruna. Mayor Lieano Flores called on the government to declare the spill a disaster and provide aid to the 5,000 fishermen in the area.

Otelo Carvalho Rides Again

By Gerry Foley

Since May 27, the final date for registering candidates, the main lines of the Portuguese presidential campaign have become fairly clear.

All the parties that claim to represent the working class, except the Trotskyists, continue to support a class-collaborationist alliance with the military, or sections of it. Within the framework of this policy, tactical shifts have occurred. But the general picture has not changed, except that the opportunism of the reformist and centrist parties has become more open and abject.

Along with the main bourgeois parties, the Socialist party leadership is backing the candidate of "law and order," Gen. António Ramalho Eanes.

The Communist party is running a formally independent campaign while giving backhanded support to Eanes.

The Maoist groupings that follow the Peking line closely are supporting the general as the "anti-social fascist" candidate.

A new element in this picture is the seemingly indestructible demagogue, the former general, Otelo Saraiva de Carvalho. He is supported by three of the groups that were in or around the Frente de Unidade Revolucionária (FUR—Front for Revolutionary Unity) before November 25.

The largest of these groups is the União Democrática do Povo (UDP—People's Democratic Union), an eclectic Maoist group that has taken some centrist and syndicalist positions. Since the nucleus of this group consists of former CP union cadres, it has had more of a base in the working class than the other groups that claim to stand to the left of the CP. It has also managed to maintain a degree of independence from the CP.

By the April 25, 1975, Constituent Assembly elections, the UDP had established itself as the strongest of the groups that designate themselves as the "extreme left." It has continued to increase its strength relative to its rivals.

The other groups in this milieu that were not completely hardened Maoist sectarians were torn apart and discredited as they were drawn into the wake of the CP and the "People's Power" plan. The Frente Socialista Popular (FSP—People's Socialist Front) never functioned as anything more than a cat's-paw for the CP in its sectarian campaign against the SP.

The Movimento de Esquerda Socialista (MES—Movement of the Socialist Left)



SOARES: Social Democratic leader backs military strongman Eanes as "our candidate."

developed as a more or less spontanist group. In the period immediately following the fall of the Caetano regime, it was the main opposition to the CP in the unions. When its anarchistic orientation proved ineffective against the Stalinist machine, it became a satellite of the CP. In the process, it lost a number of its militant unionists to the UDP.

All three groups backing Carvalho got around 3% of the vote in the April 25 legislative elections this year. However, as a leading figure in the Movimento das Forças Armadas (MFA—Armed Forces Movement), the former commander of the military security forces is well known nationally. The illusion among radicalized petty-bourgeoisie and youth that the MFA would establish socialism tended to focus on this gregarious and voluble young military commander. Pictures of him in a black-leather jacket or in shirt-sleeves were sold on the street along with portraits of Mao, Lenin, Stalin, and Fidel Castro.

Carvalho's Tortuous Course

Carvalho's military security command played its most important role in the period when the mass upsurge was too powerful for the bourgeois state to control by repression. He brought the most radicalized units under his command and manipulated them, using them in an attempt to build up a private political

machine with direct ties to sections of the masses. The military security forces were supposed to be on the side of the people. Radicalized youth were encouraged to collaborate with them and were even taken in military vehicles to occupy unused housing.

In July when Carvalho pushed the plan for "People's Power" under MFA guidance as an alternative to "bourgeois parliamentarianism," young ultraleftists and centrists demonstrating for the dissolution of the Constituent Assembly got free rides on the tanks of the military security forces.

At every critical turn in the revolutionary process opened up by the fall of the Caetano regime, Carvalho has sought to lead his admirers on the left into a trap, most often with success. At the time of General Spínola's attempted coup d'état on September 28, 1974, Carvalho played a completely passive role toward his hierarchical superior. At the same time, he objected to the popular mobilizations, claiming that they usurped the functions of the armed forces, although they saved his skin as well as blocking the rightist move.

In the April 25, 1975, Constituent Assembly elections, Carvalho tried to encourage casting blank ballots, an action that would have given the MFA an unlimited mandate to run the country. When the hoped-for blank vote failed to materialize, Carvalho encouraged schemes for a "direct" link between the military and the masses. He was the strongest supporter of the "People's Power" plan adopted by the Council of the Revolution on July 8. His command backed a take-over of the SP daily *República* by printing workers led by Stalinists and their allies.

Following the April 1975 elections, in which the SP won a plurality, a bitter split developed in the workers movement. The CP and its ultraleft and centrist allies, who hoped to gain from "People's Power," lined up against the majority of the working people who followed the SP.

In the first stage of this conflict, Carvalho played a most provocative role. The split opened with the *República* occupation, which he encouraged from behind the scenes. In early August, he made threats about herding all "counterrevolutionists" into the Lisbon bullring, threats that in the context of the conflict that had opened up seemed to be aimed against the SP. At the same time, he intervened to save the right-wing commander of the Amadora Commandos from being purged by a

soldiers committee. This unit later became the backbone of the government's repressive operations against radicalized soldiers and the most militant sections of the workers movement.

Although Carvalho had been the most outspoken supporter of "People's Power" in the MFA leadership, once a faction of the military came out against the implied alliance with the CP, the hero of the ultraleftists and centrists changed sides. He tried to make a deal with the Group of the Nine, the military faction that exploited the split over the "People's Power" project by opening a campaign to bring the mass movement back within the bounds of "law and order."

The deal would have preserved the demagoguery of "People's Power" but put it at the service of the stronger faction in the MFA, which had decided that the time was ripe to dump the alliance with the CP. Carvalho was unable to get his followers to accept this maneuver. However, the proposed deal was no aberration of a pure-hearted but naïve soldier of Portuguese national liberation, as his political admirers and apologists claimed. The "Portuguese Fidel Castro" has continued to present this scheme as his program.

Even Carvalho's most enthusiastic supporters were soured when he gave the coup de grâce to the Vasco Gonçalves government, which had included "People's Power" in its program. When he appeared in the streets during the new government's test-run occupation of the CP-dominated radio stations in September, his former admirers hooted him. He seemed completely discredited.

The November 25 Adventure

However, once it became clear that the new government remained weak vis-à-vis the mass movement, Carvalho started making overtures to the CP, which were quickly accepted. His fortunes as a demagogue revived. He became the hero of the counteroffensive by the CP and its ultraleft and centrist allies. At the height of his new popularity, however, this campaign led to the disaster of November 25. The ultraleft and centrist groups used as shock troops by the CP and the Gonçalves faction of the MFA began to call openly for an insurrection. That enabled the government to set the stage for a decisive counterblow.

Then the CP and the supporters of Carvalho and Gonçalves in the military decided to stage a show of force. Paratroopers occupied their bases in defiance of the general staff, and the military security forces seized the radio and TV stations. The government closed the trap and crushed the radicalized units in a matter of hours, with the majority of the population standing aside.

Once again, Carvalho had led his supporters into a trap. Although demagogues themselves often suffer a harsh

fate when the bourgeoisie casts them aside, the military hierarchy preserved Carvalho for new adventures. He abandoned his supporters the minute it was clear that the government would not yield to pressure. According to the report on the coup attempt released by the military investigating committee in January, his ambiguous attitude caused some bitterness, not to say frustration.

"On November 27, before the Amadora Commandos arrived, the officers gathered with General Otelo in Copcon headquarters tried to get him to act. They raised the possibility of his going to [the paratrooper base at] Tancos to take the lead of the rebellion. Major Barão da Cunha and Lieutenant Colonel Metelo were the most insistent. The latter went so far as to pull the straps on General Otelo's leather jacket."

The ultraleftists, centrists, and eclectic Maoists that hitched their wagon to Carvalho's star suffered losses. But the biggest losers were the workers. The government was able to take advantage of the confusion caused by this operation and the earlier maneuvers by the "people's general" to regain the initiative and throw the workers movement on the defensive.

However, the November 25 adventure also had a good effect, to believe Carvalho. He explained to a crowd in Coimbra, as reported in the May 31 *Jornal Novo*:

"It enabled me to free myself from any compromises or conciliationist agreements made in cabinets or in the corridors. . . I now have no obligation to any council, I am entirely devoted to the struggle of the working class."

It is not surprising that the ultraleftists and centrists have been unable to learn from so many deceptions by their military hero. They are profoundly opportunist in their thinking, and the fact that the CP and a wing of the MFA used them in a large-scale political operation has apparently turned their heads.

However, Carvalho's candidacy has had a wide impact.

On May 29, more than 70,000 persons greeted the demagogue in Oporto. "Tens of thousands of persons waved red flags bearing the word 'unity,'" *Le Monde* reported. It is ironic that the political figure who has done his best to divide and disorient the Portuguese working class has now made "unity" one of the slogans of his latest maneuver.

The reason Carvalho's campaign has had this effect seems to lie in his appeal to the disappointed hopes of the masses that the April 25, 1974, overturn would lead to socialism. In Oporto he denounced the government for "letting the bosses come back and letting the political police out of jail." He attacked the political parties, which he said "after two years of liberty have divided the people." This last point sounds like Carvalho's old antipolitical line adjusted to the new situation, the

situation of a deep split in the working class that he himself helped to create by demagogic attacks on "political parties" as such.

However, at the time Carvalho began his campaign against political parties and for "direct democracy," it ran up against the determination of the masses, after a half century of authoritarian rule, to make their own decisions. Now, in the relative decline that has affected the mass movement since the November 25 adventure, Carvalho is trying to present himself as the only candidate who stands for the frustrated aspirations of the masses. He is the only candidate denouncing the moves of the government to reconsolidate capitalism, the only one denouncing the procapitalist orientation of the SP leadership.

The intention of Carvalho's campaign in fact is to divert the indignation of the militant workers and youth and deepen their disorientation. In this, he continues to serve the bourgeoisie as well as he has always done. However, it is the void left by the ever more open and scandalous capitulation of the reformist parties that enables him to do this.

Eanes and the Belly Crawlers

The prostration of the reformist parties before Eanes, the candidate for military strongman, is a warning sign of worse to come. It is illustrated by the picture on the back of the May 27 issue of *Portugal Socialista*, the SP weekly, which last summer claimed to be the defender of the democratic rights of the masses against military usurpers. General Eanes is shown on a billboard in full uniform, gold braid and all, above a big red headline that says: "Our Candidate."

The SP, of course, never broke from a line of subordinating the workers movement to the MFA. But it was forced for a time to take a tactically more independent stance and oppose attempts by the MFA to run the workers movement directly. As a result, for a period, it came under heavy pressure from the military tops. And now, the SP, which was the main target of the MFA's antiparty demagoguery last spring and summer, is calling for a "nonpolitical" president under whom it hopes to gain an advantageous position. On May 24, at an SP rally in Almada, an industrial suburb of Lisbon, Salgado Zenha, one of the party's national leaders, said:

"General Ramalho Eanes is not a Socialist, he is not a member of the Socialist party, neither publicly nor secretly, as was the case for several officers in the MFA who were CP members, although they said they weren't. He does not belong to any political party, nor do we want the future president to belong to any political party. What we want is for the future president of the republic to be the representative of the armed forces, to be supported by the armed forces, and to guarantee the application of the constitution drawn up

by the representatives of the Portuguese people."

The SP leader defended his party's capitulation to the military and its rejection of united action with the CP by pointing to a similar betrayal by the Stalinists:

"Another argument the CP also fails to explain is why it has suddenly dropped its theory and its doctrine of the alliance between the people and the MFA."

Salgado Zenha recalled what CP General Secretary Alvaro Cunhal's attitude on this had been the very day he returned to the country from exile.

"Alvaro Cunhal got off the plane, a little nervous as usual. A CP activist on top of a car said in a speech greeting him that the CP and SP would march together to build socialism and democracy in Portugal.

"Cunhal responded to this by saying that socialism would be built but not by an alliance between the CP and SP but by one between the people and the MFA."

No doubt this point made an impression on the SP supporters, who felt threatened last spring and summer by the military's alliance with the CP at their expense. But it could hardly arouse much enthusiasm for the SP's own version of the MFA-People Alliance. The answer to Salgado Zenha's rhetorical question about why the CP dropped its stress on the MFA-People Alliance must have occurred to many workers. The CP supported the MFA-People Alliance because it had no intention of establishing a workers government. Since power would remain in the hands of the bourgeois army, the way to gain a better position was to snuggle up as close to the military as possible. Now the military has kicked the CP out of the bed.

Moreover, the workers could ask some questions of their own. Why does the SP now subordinate itself to a "nonpolitical" general? And, why does it think this is any better than what the CP did? In this shouting match of the pot calling the kettle black, the two reformist workers parties discredit themselves.

Since the bourgeois parties and the right wing of the SP are blocking behind Eanes and excluding the CP from any deals, the Stalinists have adopted a tactically more independent stance to hold their own ranks. To gain some leverage, they are running their own candidate for president. But this shift is a very limited one. The basic position of the CP remains class collaborationism through subordination to the military—it just wants to be included in the deal.

Thus, the CP candidate for president, Octávio Pato, explained in an interview in the May 25 *Jornal Novo*: "While we are not supporting the candidacy of Ramalho Eanes, for the reasons I already indicated, we are not hostile to it either. Nor do we present our own candidacy in direct opposition to his or a plan for counterposing the workers and people's movement to the armed forces."



CARVALHO: Military hero of "far left" tries to stage a comeback in elections.

Earlier in the interview, Pato indicated the CP's reasons for not supporting Eanes as follows: "Given the complexity of the present situation, aggravated by the confusionist activity of the reactionary parties, we can only put forward our policy and defend it in an independent way." That is, apparently, the CP could not openly support Eanes's candidacy when he was being supported by the reactionary bourgeois parties calling for a pogrom against the CP.

The CP's two-faced line toward Eanes opens the way for a demagogue like Otelo Saraiva de Carvalho to exploit and divert the desire of the masses to oppose the military strongman the bourgeois and reformist parties are trying to foist on them.

The CP is apparently afraid of the impact Carvalho's campaign will have on their own ranks, and rightly so. In the CP election rally in Lisbon's Campo Pequeno May 29, Pato said that Carvalho's candidacy was "not aimed at forming a left government but at undermining the CP's bases of support." The demagogue intends to build his own machine at the expense of the workers parties. But it is their own opportunism that is offering him the opportunity.

None of the larger groups that label themselves as the "extreme left," moreover, offer any alternative. Now they are only more "extreme" than the CP in their opportunism.

Most of these groups are backing a bourgeois demagogic politician, Saraiva de Carvalho.

The largest group closely following Peking's "anti-social fascist" line announced on May 25 that it was backing Eanes because he was "a democratic, patriotic, antifascist, and anti-social fascist candidate." This was the Movimento Reorganizativo do Partido do Proletariado

(MRPP—Movement to Reorganize the Proletarian party), which has won considerable support among the radicalized youth and petty bourgeoisie because it seemed to be the group most intransigently opposing the MFA from the left. It was the main victim of military repression in the first year and a half of the regime. It claimed in fact that the MFA governments were still fascist and represented no qualitative change from the old regime.

Another Maoist group supporting Eanes, the Partido Comunista Português (marxista-leninista) (PCP[ml]—Portuguese Communist party [Marxist-Leninist]), did feel compelled to announce that it would campaign independently for the general because: "While collaborating with the liberal bourgeoisie, the PCP(ml) is not willing to serve as its shock troops."

The only candidate that stood for working-class unity and political independence from all factions of the bourgeoisie was the Trotskyist candidate Arlete Vieira da Silva. Unfortunately, the Liga Comunista Internacionalista (LCI—Internationalist Communist League, sympathizing organization of the Fourth International) and the Partido Revolucionário dos Trabalhadores (PRT—Revolutionary Workers party, a group that has declared its adherence to the Fourth International) felt compelled to withdraw their support for her candidacy on May 27. By that time, it was no longer possible to register another candidate.

Vieira da Silva had been on the PRT slate in Setúbal during the legislative elections in April. Since she had been a member of the underground Communist party for many years, the two Trotskyist organizations decided she would be an attractive candidate to point up the need for working-class unity against the bourgeoisie. However, they did not know her past well. The Trotskyist organizations consisted of only a couple dozen activists at the time of the fall of the old regime. They have grown geometrically since that time. The PRT in particular is a very young organization and had not had a functioning unit in Setúbal.

Thus, the Trotskyist groups were taken by surprise when some newspapers proved that Vieira da Silva had not spent three years in prison on political charges as she said. She had been jailed a few months for failing to pay for some household durables bought on credit. In view of this discrepancy and the questions it raised, they felt compelled to withdraw their support for her candidacy.

Objectively, this error was the result of the weakness of the small, young Trotskyist groups that have had to assume political responsibilities far beyond their organizational strength. "The greatest loss in this," the PRT representatives told the press, "is that the workers are left without a way of fighting the policy of the generals and the capitalists." □

British Union Leaders Back New Wage-Cut Plan

By Tony Hodges

LONDON—The General Council of the Trades Union Congress (TUC) has reaffirmed its support for the British Labour government's wage-control programme.

Brushing aside the interests of the ten million union members they are supposed to represent, the ossified bureaucrats of the General Council voted May 5, by 25 to 5, to endorse a new government pay plan. Prime Minister James Callaghan admitted the plan will bring a further substantial drop in British workers' living standards.

"Grin and bear it" was the prime minister's advice when he addressed a conference of the Union of Post Office Workers on May 23.

The new plan ("Stage Two" of the Labour government's wage controls) is set to take effect on August 1, when "Stage One" expires. Stage One began last August 1 and outlawed wage increases above £6 [£1=US\$1.77] a week.

Under Stage Two, scheduled to run for one year, workers earning under £50 a week will not be able to receive a wage increase above £2.50 a week. A 5% limit will also apply to those earning between £50 and £80 a week. Workers earning over £80 a week will face a wage increase ceiling of £4 a week.

Speaking in Parliament on May 3, Chancellor of the Exchequer Denis Healey predicted that the new pay plan would result in a decline of 1% to 2% in living standards over the next eighteen months. "I think there's got to be some further fall in the next 12 months," Healey said April 24.

Real wages have already fallen as a result of Stage One. Over the twelve months to February, average earnings rose by 19% while the Retail Price Index rose by 23%. "The figures," the *Financial Times* commented April 22, "underline the short-term impact of the pay limit on living standards with the level of earnings continuing to lag behind the rate of increase in retail prices."

The fall in workers' real earnings is only one side of the Labour government's assault on workers' interests. Between 5% and 6% of the work force were registered as unemployed in April. And, on February 19, a government "white paper" announced plans to chop projected 1978-79 government spending by £3 billion with devastating consequences for the National Health Service, public housing, and education.

These anti-working-class measures are designed to bail British capitalism out of its chronic economic crisis. In decline



HEALEY: "Predicts" his government's policy will drive down workers' living standards.

relative to its imperialist rivals for some decades, and in more recent times buffeted by the world capitalist slump, the British ruling class is plagued by falling profit rates and the loss of markets. Their predicament is highlighted by a depreciation in the value of sterling against other leading currencies of almost 40% since December 1971.

Successive British governments—both Tory and Labour—have sought to impose wage controls in order to boost profits and make British industry competitive in the world capitalist market. As Healey put it in an April 24 speech: "I'm asking for what's necessary to get the country standing on its feet again and respected in the world. I don't like the sort of things being said about Britain in the last few years. I think we've got to make Britain a world leader and I think we can."

Ironically, the present Labour government came to power in the wake of massive working-class opposition to wage controls enforced by the previous Tory government. In the early weeks of 1974, more than 200,000 coal miners staged a nationwide strike in defiance of the Tory pay laws, finally forcing Prime Minister Edward Heath to call a general election. The Tories went down to defeat. The ruling

class then turned to the leaders of the Labour party, hoping that the incoming Labour government, trading off its close links with the trade-union bureaucracy, would succeed where the Tories had failed.

The mechanism was to be the "social contract," a pact between the government and the TUC by which the union leaders pledged to tailor wage demands "voluntarily." But the policy failed to stick. Faced with an inflation rate which soared above 20% a year in 1975, workers fought for and won large wage increases in spite of the social contract.

So the Labour government, like its Tory predecessor, resorted to statutory controls. Unlike the Tories, however, the Labour ministers succeeded in bringing the trade unions behind the new compulsory policy. Now, with the union leaders even more committed to Stage Two than they were to the £6 limit, government ministers are already talking of a further round of pay controls to follow in 1977-78.

No Labour party members of Parliament have criticised the new pay plan. "Not even muted criticism was heard from the Labour left," the *Financial Times* reported on May 6. Eric Heffer, a long-standing leader of the *Tribune* wing of "left" Social Democratic Labour MPs, wrote in *Tribune* on May 14: "I am in favour of a voluntary wages policy. . . . Although I am unhappy about the way the TUC/Government agreement was reached, and its contents, it would be futile to oppose it as such."

Anthony Benn, the secretary of state for energy in Callaghan's cabinet and an idol of the Tribunites, went further. According to the May 8 issue of the *London Times*, "he underlined his unqualified support for the proposals" in a speech to a miners' conference on May 7.

Most ruling-class commentators have credited the Labour government with the achievement of a considerable success. They see it as something of a breakthrough in pacifying industrial relations.

David Wood, the political editor of the *Times*, Britain's leading capitalist daily, expressed this line of thinking in an opinion column directed at the Conservative party in the paper's May 10 issue. Advising support for the Callaghan pay package, he argued: ". . . there can be no partisan loss in Conservatives, or anybody else, saying that the formula gives promise of some valuable economic benefits. Above all, when was the last time that the TUC general council, with only five dissentients, virtually committed themselves to fight alongside a Chancellor who proclaims that his policy means a fall of up to 2 per cent in the standard of living?"

As Wood saw it, "there has occurred an eruptive transformation which has shifted some of the most cardinal reference points of politics. Free collective bargaining, the hallowed principle of British trade unionism, has been voluntarily suspended again, and trade union leaders . . . have

effectually become part of government and placed the national interest first."

This, Wood argued, "is a development in disciplined trade union power that every government since 1945 has at some time sought, and sought backstairs not always in vain. The important difference now, as a reward for ten years of educative effort by Mr Wilson and Mr Heath, is that the TUC's role as underwriter of government policy has begun to be institutionalised."

This abject class collaborationism of the union bureaucracy underscores the need to build a new class-struggle leadership in the labour movement. One of the key planks of a fighting left-wing alternative would be the restoration of free collective bargaining, and to offset the effects of inflation, a sliding scale of wages.

How successful will the Labour bureaucracy be in policing Stage Two?

The General Council's endorsement of Stage Two is to go for ratification at a special congress of the TUC on June 16. There the assembled bureaucrats of the British labour movement are almost certain to give the policy resounding support. "In less than a week," the *Guardian* said May 19, "Britain's three largest unions, the transport workers, the general and municipal, and the engineers, have found themselves on the same side. And weighty bodies like the National and Local Government Officers' Association, the building workers and the post office workers, have all given their reserved assent to the policy."

To win workers' support for the policy, the union leaders have repeatedly used the bogey of a Tory resurgence if Stage Two is rejected. For example, Jack Jones, the general secretary of Britain's biggest union, the Transport and General Workers Union (TGWU), said May 7: "To oppose the proposal will play into the hands of reactionary forces and the result would be, if they gain power, that there would be no wage increase at all, and we would have economic policies dominated by public expenditure cuts and more unemployment."

The truth is that it is the present Labour government that has boosted unemployment, savaged the social services through public spending cuts, and engineered a cut in real living standards. It is these anti-working-class policies which are bringing disillusionment and demoralization, feeding a Tory revival that has already begun. The Conservative party made massive gains at Labour's expense in local government elections held in early May.

But it is also possible that the continued erosion of real wages will induce some sections of workers to fight back in self-defence. There are signs of a combative mood, for example, among the miners who drove a coach-and-horses through the Tories' pay laws in 1974. The National Union of Mineworkers (NUM) National Executive Committee divided 13 to 11 in favour of Stage Two. But on May 5 the annual conference of the South Wales area of the NUM voted unanimously to support

a call for £100-a-week wage for coalface workers, a 33% increase over present rates. On May 18, a meeting of 150 NUM officials from union lodges throughout South Wales voted 138 to 12 to oppose the Stage Two pay controls and to press ahead with the £100 claim. The executive of the Scottish area of the NUM voted unanimously against Stage Two on May 18.

The Yorkshire area council of the NUM has also voiced strong opposition to the pay policy, voting 70 to 6 on May 21 to reject Stage Two. "It has been my feeling over the past few weeks," Yorkshire NUM leader Arthur Scargill commented, "that there has been a tremendous groundswell against the pay policy, without any campaign. I believe the men feel they were conned last time with the £6 and they are not going to be conned now."

A reporter for the *Guardian* reported the next day: "Mr Scargill's liking for rhetoric is well known, but his insistence that the men are in a disillusioned mood was backed up in my inquiries among branch officials in the coalfield last night. One pit delegate said that, in contrast to last year's vote, men were already volunteering their determination to reject continued pay restraint. . . . The degree of confidence being voiced in Yorkshire is upsetting the confident assumption that the industry's 245,000 pit men will back their executive's 13-11 vote in support of the TUC-Government package." □

Thousands March in Stockholm to Protest Kissinger Visit



Internationelen

Part of May 23 march of 11,000 persons, protesting Kissinger's two-day visit to Sweden. The demonstrators denounced the crimes of

U.S. imperialism, particularly in Southeast Asia. Banner at right calls for withdrawal of all U.S. troops from South Korea.

India—The View From Gandhi's Jails

By Ernest Harsch

Since the state of emergency was declared in India in June 1975, the Gandhi regime's violation of human rights has taken on massive proportions. Tens of thousands of her political opponents have been thrown into jail, elected state governments have been deposed, the press has been muzzled, and strikes have been forbidden.

But repression in Asia's "showcase of democracy" was common even before Gandhi's coup, according to the testimony of Mary Tyler, a British teacher who was imprisoned in India for more than five years.

Tyler described her experiences in Gandhi's jails at a May 22 forum cosponsored by the Indian People's Association of North America (IPANA), Indians for Democracy, and Amnesty International. The meeting, held at New York University, was part of a speaking tour of Canada and the United States organized for Tyler by IPANA.

Tyler was arrested in May 1970 in Bihar state and was accused of being a "Naxalite," a term often used to describe members and sympathizers of the Maoist-Communist party of India (Marxist-Leninist).

"The police there found my presence suspicious," she said, "because I was obviously interested in the conditions of the peasants. And they arrested me. In the normal kind of affair, I would have been arrested, interrogated, and released or told to leave the country. As I was married to an Indian citizen, things didn't go quite so quickly."

Like most Indian citizens detained under similar circumstances, she was not charged or brought before a court for three years. As a result of pressure on the Gandhi regime by friends and relatives in Britain, however, she was finally charged with "conspiring" against the government. After five years in prison, her trial began. All charges against her were then abruptly withdrawn on the seventh day of the trial. She was released on July 6, 1975, a little more than a week after Gandhi staged her dictatorial coup.

Tyler gave just a few examples of the widespread political repression in India before the state of emergency. In September 1972, she said, about 3,000 striking teachers were brought to the jail in Bihar where she was being held. In 1974, about 50,000 striking railway workers were reportedly arrested, many lost their jobs, and their families were harassed.

Torture Is 'Official Policy'

The International League for Human Rights charged June 1 that the Indian regime followed an "official policy" of "torture, brutality, starvation and other mistreatment of prisoners."

In a seventy-three-page document calling on the United Nations to investigate violations of democratic rights in India, the league submitted names of hundreds of political prisoners said to have been tortured by the Gandhi regime.

The forms of torture cited in the report include beatings with steel rods and rifle butts, use of electric shocks, burning with candles, and tying rods to prisoners' necks in order to strain the spinal cords.

One form of torture is known as the "aeroplane," in which "the victim's hands are tied behind his back with a rope. The rope is taken over the pulley at the roof and the victim is pulled up a few feet above the ground."

A seventeen-year-old woman coal mine worker, who was taken to Hazaribagh jail in Bihar, explained to Tyler the circumstances of her arrest. She said the women workers, who carry coal to the surface of the mine on their heads, had earned only 4 rupees (about US\$0.35) a day and had no security. Since the trade union was controlled by Gandhi's Congress party, the workers formed their own independent union and went on strike, winning a 1 rupee raise. But shortly after the strike, a group of Congress party thugs attacked the workers. The police arrived and arrested seven of the coal miners.

Bihar was the center of the mass movement led by Jaya Prakash Narayan against corruption, unemployment, and high prices. Between March and November 1974, Tyler said, more than 6,000 participants in that struggle were brought to Hazaribagh.

"These kinds of brutalities against people who are agitating for food," she said, "is something which has been going on for years and years."

The level of the repression in India was reflected in the size of Gandhi's police apparatus:

The paramilitary forces in India are something to be wondered at. There is not one paramilitary force; there is not just the army and the police.

There is the Central Reserve Police, the Railway Protection Force, the Central Industrial Security Force, the Coal Mines Protection Force, and the armed constabularies in each of the states. There is the military police in each state, apart from the army and the ordinary police. The Central Reserve Police alone, I think, has increased its battalions in the past ten years from sixteen to sixty. They are deployed all over the country to put down any kind of unrest by the most brutal possible methods.

Many of those who were arrested at the same time she was, or even before, are still being held without trial. Many were sixteen or seventeen years old when they were arrested and suffer from chronic anemia from the poor diet.

Disease is very widespread. In Jamshedpur, the last jail where I was held, almost without exception every prisoner had scabies. . . . But that was not all. There was typhoid, leprosy, tuberculosis, dysentery naturally, and smallpox the year before. . . . All people suffering from all types of diseases were kept together in that jail. It was built for 137, but there were 1,100 prisoners there at the time I left.

Although reports of particularly brutal torture of political prisoners have come out of other prisons, such as Presidency Jail in Calcutta, Tyler said she knew of no torture inside the prisons where she was held. Beating of prisoners, however, was standard. "It is used against everybody who is arrested and there is no bar on the police at all."

She knew of one young peasant woman, accused of being a "Naxalite," who was beaten unconscious at the police station, brought to the prison, where she recovered somewhat after a few days, and then taken back to the police station to be beaten again. "Another person alleged to be a Naxalite, I was told by a member of the jail staff, had been brought to jail having been dipped by the police bodily into a pot of boiling water."

Most of the alleged "Naxalite" prisoners, Tyler said, were kept in iron shackles, day and night, for years. The shackles, which are very heavy and cumbersome, made it impossible for the prisoner to walk, sit, or sleep properly. After a while, their legs become misshapen and atrophied.

Tyler said that on the afternoon of July 25, 1971, she heard shooting for three hours in Hazaribagh jail. "Afterwards I was told by members of the jail staff themselves who were opposed to what had happened that the large majority of those people shot had been dragged out of their cells and that some people had been beaten to death."

When asked during the question period if international protests to the Indian authorities helped the prisoners, Tyler replied that they did. She cited her own case, in which international pressures led to her being brought to trial and made it possible for her to receive more letters and visitors. The Gandhi regime, she noted, still did not like to admit that it was violating basic democratic rights. □

The Trial of Sergei Kovalyov

By Marilyn Vogt

The trial of Soviet dissident Sergei Kovalyov October 9-12, 1975, in Vilnius, capital of the Lithuanian Soviet Socialist Republic, illuminates the methods the Stalinist bureaucracy utilizes against Soviet citizens fighting for democratic rights.

A report on this trial and the events surrounding it are among the numerous items contained in the most recent issue of the *Chronicle of Current Events*, a Russian-language journal circulated clandestinely in the Soviet Union.*

Kovalyov, a biologist, was charged under Article 70 of the Russian Criminal Code—"especially dangerous crimes against the state," including the spreading of "slandorous fabrications which defame the Soviet political and social system."

The "evidence" used against him included his participation in the Initiative Group in Defense of Human Rights in the USSR, whose activities are fully legal according to the Soviet constitution; statements made in defense of persecuted dissidents such as Grigorenko and Bukovsky; a statement against the 1968 Soviet-led invasion of Czechoslovakia; a letter to the United Nations in defense of the rights of the Crimean Tatar people; and participation in a press conference with Andrei Sakharov on "Political Prisoners Day," October 30, 1974, in which information about conditions in the camps and prisons was given to foreign correspondents.

Also part of the "anti-Soviet activity" Kovalyov was accused of was participation in the compilation and circulation of the *Chronicle*. He and two others, Tatyana Velikanova and Tatyana Khodorovich, openly handed numbers 28, 29, and 30 of this journal to foreign correspondents in Moscow in May 1974. These were the first issues to circulate after a secret-police crackdown launched in January 1972 resulted in a lapse in the journal's appearance of more than eighteen months. Until October 1972, it had appeared roughly four times annually, since its beginning in April 1968.

Kovalyov refused to accept the court-appointed attorney for his trial. He was denied any of the attorneys of his choice. He refused to take part in the pretrial investigation because of the illegal nature

of the proceedings—his "crime," he maintained, was his beliefs.

At the trial, the judge would not allow Kovalyov to cross-examine prosecution witnesses. One witness declined to answer prosecution questions for ethical reasons. Another testified that he had known Kovalyov for a long time and believed Kovalyov would never distribute slanderous material.

Finally, when Kovalyov's demands for an open trial were denied, he declared a hunger strike and asked to be removed from the courtroom. This demand was met.

In the absence of either a defense attorney or the defendant himself, Kovalyov was convicted and sentenced to seven years in a strict-regime labor camp and three years internal exile.

However, as the *Chronicle* reports, the bureaucrats did not triumph on all fronts. Their attempts to discourage Kovalyov's supporters failed.

Kovalyov is a resident of Moscow. He was arrested there and charged under the Russian Criminal Code. However, his investigation and trial were conducted in the Lithuanian SSR—officially because he was charged with being involved with the Lithuanian samizdat journal the *Chronicle of the Lithuanian Catholic Church*. In reality the authorities sought to remove Kovalyov from proximity to his supporters.

Despite this ruse and the secret-police attempts to keep Kovalyov's supporters away from the trial, a number came from Leningrad and Moscow—including Andrei Sakharov—and twenty to thirty came from various Lithuanian cities as well.

Outside the courtroom, with others who were not allowed inside, Sakharov issued the following statement to the Supreme Court of the Lithuanian SSR, the presiding judge, and Kovalyov himself:

Having known Kovalyov many years, I want to give evidence at the trial as to his exceptional integrity and conscientiousness, his devotion to legality, justice, and the defense of human rights and legality. My profound respect for S.A. Kovalyov was expressed in the invitation I extended to him to be a guest of honor at the Nobel ceremony in Oslo, December 10, 1975 [where Sakharov was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize].

I know that Kovalyov is being charged with transmitting to the foreign press materials on the condition of political prisoners in the USSR made public October 30, 1974, at a press conference I chaired. To be exact then, it was I who really transmitted these materials. I take full responsibility for this action and want to

acknowledge this in the courtroom.

I am also the coauthor of a letter, which figures in the case, to the chairman of the KGB demanding that Kovalyov's copy of Solzhenitsyn's *Gulag Archipelago* [confiscated by the secret police] be returned to him.

I took part in composing numerous collective appeals that have been used to charge Kovalyov with slander. Such a characterization of our joint collective appeals seems to me incorrect and I want to explain and argue for my point of view in the courtroom.

Sakharov's appeal to be a witness was denied.

The *Chronicle of Current Events* reports:

Every day verbal skirmishes erupted outside the courtroom door, and KGB agents and their aides roughed up Sakharov and other friends of Kovalyov's. On December 12, when the trial ended, the skirmishes became particularly sharp in the vestibule and later in the street. Several of the "guardians of order" even tried to provoke "violence."

But this incident also occurred: one of those who emerged from the courtroom, passing by Sakharov, said quietly: "Excuse me, but it was not the Lithuanians who tried him."

Opposition to Russian domination and bureaucratic rule in the Lithuanian republic is massive and evidently not all of those whom the bureaucrats consider "safe" enough to be used to pack the courtroom are really the bureaucrats' trusted allies.

This issue of the *Chronicle* reports that the person who founded the underground journal was Natalya Gorbanevskaya. The *Chronicle* carried the following report on this well-known activist in the democratic movement:

December 18, 1975, Natalya Yevgenevna Gorbanevskaya emigrated.

N.E. Gorbanevskaya was born in Moscow in 1936. She received a degree from the philology faculty of Leningrad University.

In 1961, she contributed to the typewritten poetry collection *Syntax* (put out by A. Ginzburg).

August 25, 1968, N. Gorbanevskaya attended the protest demonstration in Red Square [against the Soviet-led invasion of Czechoslovakia]. Later she wrote a book about the demonstration and about the trial of the other participants, *Red Square at Noon*.

Natalya Gorbanevskaya was responsible for the establishment in the spring of 1968 of the *Chronicle of Current Events*. She organized the publication of the *Chronicle*, and her efforts in many ways determined its style, structure, and principles.

On December 25, 1969, Gorbanevskaya was arrested. The main points in the charge against her were writing the book *Red Square at Noon* and the systematic editing of issues of the *Chronicle*. She was declared not accountable for her actions and sent to a Kazan special psychiatric hospital. She was freed in February 1972.

Gorbanevskaya is a poet and the author of many collections of poetry distributed in samizdat in the 1960s and 1970s. In 1972, a collection of Gorbanevskaya's selected poems, *The Coast*, was published in the United States. In the Soviet press her translations of Polish, Czech, and Spanish poetry have sometimes been printed, but her original works are virtually unpublished. □

**Chronicle of Current Events*, no. 38. Russian-language samizdat. Khronika Press, New York, New York. December 13, 1975. 99 pp.

The Fight Against Political Firings in Denmark

By Frede Jakobsen

[The following article was published in the April issue of *Klassekampen*, the newspaper of the Revolutionaere Socialisters Forbund (RSF—Revolutionary Socialist League), Danish section of the Fourth International. The translation is by *Intercontinental Press*.]

* * *

"The employers organizations maintain a system of collecting information about individual workers, so that when employers are considering hiring anyone they can get the relevant information from their organizations."

This fact is seldom admitted so openly. As a rule, it is stubbornly denied. But a former labor-law attorney for an employers association, Professor Per Jacobsen, has revealed, among other things, that "blacklists" are used. He discussed this question in the second edition of *Kollektiv Arbejdsret* [Collective Labor Law].

We never doubted that blacklisting went on and goes on. Of course, the bosses and the employers organizations blacklist people who they think might get in the way of the smooth functioning of production. Revolutionists are likewise objects of such measures.

Up to now, however, both the bosses and trade-union leaders themselves—at least a majority of them—have denied the existence of these practices. So Per Jacobsen's "boldly" throwing this out in *Kollektiv Arbejdsret* is really unusual. Hereafter it is going to be difficult for the leadership of the LO [Landsorganisation—National Union Federation] to pay no attention to this question.

As I said, the fact that such things go on is nothing new to us and many others. We have seen a number of instances of this in the past period. It has gone on for a long time, but recently there has been more publicity about it. Some time ago, for example, *Klassekampen* had an article on the workers who were blacklisted at the Skive Cooperative Slaughterhouse.

However, the whole problem around blacklisting and political firings was highlighted by the ouster of four members of the KFML [Kommunistisk Forbund Marxister-Leninister—Communist League, Marxist-Leninists] from B&W Motor. It became known that they had been fired at the request of the union-local leadership, which is dominated by the DKP [Danmarks Kommunistiske Parti—Communist

party of Denmark] because they distributed sectarian leaflets.

The reasons given by the union for demanding that these workers be fired have changed somewhat after the fact. At the start, the KFML members were charged both with disobeying a union decision that all leaflets had to be submitted first to the union leadership and with attacking the union leaders as class collaborators in the leaflets themselves. Subsequently, the second charge was dropped and only the first was officially maintained. Up to now the union leadership has not been very consistent in explaining its grounds for demanding the firing of these workers.

Protests arose against these firings, and this prompted a diplomatic move by the DKP's trade-union secretary, Preben Henriksen. In *Land og Folk* [the Danish CP paper], he wrote that the party considered these firings incorrect. It became clear, however, that the party had no intention of doing anything to rescind the firings. And the DKP shop stewards at B&W Motor and the president of Metalworkers Union Local No. 12, Tage Olsen (who is also a DKP member), continue to defend the firings through thick and thin. By shifting a little from side to side, the DKP opportunists are trying to avoid getting their noses skinned.

Naturally, the RSF came out in support of the demand that the four be rehired. We supported the demonstration in Christianshavns Torv on February 23 called by the "Solidarity Committee for the Four Workers Fired at B&W Motor." The RSF is for freedom of tendencies, for democracy in the trade-union movement. We support the freedom of speech of the KFML also, despite the nonsense they say.

"A Struggle for Every Worker's Right to Express His Opinion," the headline said in the special issue of the KFML's paper *Kommunist*, which was devoted to the firings. "Defend freedom of expression in the unions, down with censorship," said a correct slogan at the February 23 demonstration. The RSF agreed with this. But the hypocrites in the KFML did not really agree with it.

These statements are nothing but words they need to use while they are trying to get support for their sectarian war on the DKP. Who fought hardest against the right of tendencies in past May Day demonstrations? And what kind of freedom of tendencies was there that afternoon on Christianshavns Torv, when

several hundred persons demonstrated for the reinstatement of the four workers fired, under slogans calling for freedom of expression in the union movement? There was no freedom of expression there. Organizations that wanted to distribute leaflets were asked to wait until after the demonstration was over.

All the reformists and opportunists are hypocrites. The DKP says that it is for freedom of expression in the union movement. Then it gets four KFML members fired because they expressed what was on their mind. The KFML says it is for freedom of expression in the union movement. Then it prevents other organizations from expressing their views in the February 23 demonstration.

The Social Democrats, of course, are also for freedom of expression in the unions. In an editorial in the March issue of *Metal* they gave the following explanation of the firings at B&W Motor: "There was no question of exclusion at the motor factory. What was involved was that an insignificant minority had difficulties in working together with the work force as a whole." (The union local still refuses to call a meeting so that "the work force as a whole" can discuss the matter.)

In most cases of political firings and blacklisting, the local unions have not intervened. Shortly after the B&W case, Per Longren was fired from the Nilfisk vacuum-cleaner factory in Copenhagen. The official reason was that the company needed to lay people off. In fact, he was ousted because of his political activity on the job. Especially after the big strike last summer, this became a thorn in the side of the management.

There are many other examples. In the Alborg shipyards, the president of the apprentices association was fired, even though his apprenticeship had a year and four months to go. Two others were fired who, along with him, had built up the apprentices association from a membership of about 20 to where it included 220 of the 270 apprentices in the yard.

When the Labor Exchange sent Flemming Beyer, who had been active in Local No. 4's strike and boycott at B&W's shipyard last summer, for a job at B&W at the start of this year, he was rejected by the yard. The management gave various contradictory reasons. And the bosses at the yard were able to get the Labor Exchange to cooperate with them, when it became clear that the Exchange's officials had acted against the company's wishes.

At the Ringsted plant of Forenede Sjællandske Andelsslagterier [United Zealand Slaughterhouses], a strike was brutally crushed by firing all eighty strikers. The majority were soon reinstated. But the management tried for a long time to keep a small group of workers out.

At the Arhus floating dock, a worker was hired. When he came to start, he was told that he had been hired by mistake. No

one was needed. But everyone knew that at this time several vacancies for the floating dock were posted at the Arhus Labor Exchange. It was the metalworkers union committee on unemployment in Arhus that publicized this case.

When a postal worker returned to the Vesterbro post office from the armed forces, he was told there was no job for him, even though military service is supposed to be considered legitimate leave.

We could continue this list indefinitely. What can be done to stamp out this vicious practice? After the four firings at B&W Motor, there is no use in calling for unconditional reinstatement when you are as isolated as these four KFML members in fact are in the factory, although they try to give the public a different impression.

It would have been more correct to do as the KAML [Kommunistisk Arbejderforbund Marxister-Leninister—Communist Workers League, Marxist-Leninists] proposed in the ongoing discussion and polemics between the two organizations. That is, make clear that your intentions were honorable. Take the union leadership at its word. Say that from here on out, you will observe the local's decisions, and let them keep their word about getting you reinstated, so that you can oppose this resolution in the factory. But no. The KFML members got what they wanted. They got fired and could present themselves as martyrs.

Strikes such as those at Nilfisk when Per Longren was fired, and actions like those at Alborg when the president of the apprentices association was fired, are quite another matter. In neither case were these successful in getting the persons fired reinstated. To win the fight against political firings and blacklisting, you have to get the union leadership involved in the struggle. In individual cases, victories can be won by a fight actively involving the workers on the job, especially if the union leadership backs up the struggle with sympathy actions.

However, if this practice is to be rooted out, there has to be a struggle to regain union control over hiring. There has to be a struggle against the institution of the Labor Exchange, which functions as a service agency for the bosses, weakening the position of the unions. Control over hiring by the unions will assure that whenever a boss manages to get rid of a politically inconvenient worker, the only substitute that can be sent to fill the vacancy is one who will continue the struggle of the person who has been fired.

Chrome-Plated Well Water

Four persons living near a metal plant in Kusatsu, Japan, were diagnosed May 15 as suffering from chronic skin disorders caused by drinking contaminated water from wells near a metal plant. The water contained as much as 7.5 parts per million of hexavalent chromium, 150 times more than the permissible standard.

Police Accounts 'Received With Some Skepticism'

Twenty-One Dissidents Gunned Down in Iran

By Majid Namvar

At least twenty-one dissidents have been reported killed in more than half a dozen shooting incidents with the Iranian police. The clashes were said to have occurred in four different cities on May 16 and May 18.

In the series of shootouts on May 16, eleven "guerrillas" and four policemen were reported killed in Tehran. In the May 18 shootings, police said, another ten "guerrillas" and four passersby were killed when police units raided several "terrorist hideouts" in the provincial cities of Karaj, Qazvin, and Resht, all northwest of Tehran.

According to Western correspondents, the latest clashes were among the fiercest in many years. They brought to more than fifty the number of political dissidents executed or killed in gun battles with the police since the start of the year.

A dispatch from Tehran in the May 23 *New York Times* reported that the accounts of the shootings provided by the police were "received with some skepticism here in the capital, where, in an atmosphere of cynicism fostered by Government control of the press and broadcasting it is widely believed that terrorist activities have been somewhat more widespread and successful than the official reports indicate."

Despite the shah's savage campaign of repression, clashes with police have increased in recent months. An additional indicator of the extent of dissidence

against the dictatorship is the continued imprisonment of an estimated 100,000 political prisoners.

In an apparent attempt to provide cover for the government's inability to meet its proclaimed goal of smashing all expression of dissent, *Rastakhiz*, the newspaper of the only legal political party, asserted in its May 22 issue that substantial amounts of money and weapons are being channeled into Iran by "foreign countries and foreign terrorist groups."

The only country named was Libya, which *Rastakhiz* said had given \$100,000 to unidentified Iranian guerrillas. The alleged Libyan support was confirmed, according to the shah's press, by documents seized in recent police raids. However, no such documents have been made public.

The shah's press has also charged the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, headed by George Habash, with links to Iranian dissidents. Before the recent shootings, Habash had been accused of providing arms and military training for antishah guerrillas.

Initial press accounts of the shootings did not disclose the names of those killed, stating merely that they belonged to "Islamic Marxist" groups. A subsequent report in the May 26 airmail edition of the Tehran daily *Kayhan* listed the names of fourteen of the victims, including three women. □

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Palestinian Political Prisoners Fight for Rights

[The following article, signed by Ziyad, appeared in the February issue of *Matzpen-Marxist*, the newspaper reflecting the views of the Israeli Trotskyists of the Revolutionary Communist League. The translation from the Hebrew is by *Intercontinental Press*.]

* * *

Every New Year's Eve is celebrated by Palestinians as the "Festival of the Palestinian Revolution."

The stormy events at the Kfar Yanah jail were touched off during the afternoon hours of December 31, 1975, after a political prisoner and a regular convict became embroiled in a quarrel and were thrown into punishment cells. Immediately following this encounter, all the political prisoners were split up into two groups. One of the groups was rehoused in Wing C of the jail, while the rest remained in Wing B.

At about 7:30 that evening, the prisoners in Wing C began singing Palestinian festival songs. One of the warders ordered them to stop singing. The prisoners refused.

Shortly after, Mr. Nagar, the jail's security chief—and at the time also the acting governor—arrived on the scene. With curses and yells, he ordered them to stop singing. The prisoners still refused to obey. He then gave orders that canisters of tear gas be thrown into the cells of Wing C. However, within a short period of time, the cell inmates brought the gas under control with the aid of water and continued their singing.

The security officer's next step was to send for soldiers from a neighboring military camp. Inciting the soldiers, he told them that the prisoners were the terrorists of Ma'alot, Kiryat Shmona, and the Savoy Hotel. He explained that the prisoners were rebelling and planning to escape, and that it was necessary to crush them with force. The soldiers stormed Wing C and threw dozens of smoke bombs into the cells. The fumes produced suffocation, tears, vomiting, and screams of agony among the prisoners.

The yells of the prisoners reached the inmates of Wing B, who began to shout back in support. The soldiers, wearing gas masks, replied by including Wing B in the general bombardment.

The protests, screams, and fury of the prisoners were to no avail. Even under normal circumstances the cells are poorly ventilated. At that moment they served as efficient traps. Many of the prisoners vomited, fainted, and experienced great

difficulty in breathing.

The next day all the Arab prisoners and several of the Jewish prisoners went on strike. They refused to eat, shave, wash, or participate in the daily exercise walk in the courtyard. They also refused to see relatives who had come to visit them.

The governor of the jail returned from his vacation with the intention of calming things down. At first, although the prisoners had elected representatives, he was willing only to speak to a few prisoners of his own choosing. However, those invited refused to talk and simply referred the governor to their chosen representatives.

Left without any option in the matter, the governor called in Yetshak Mararah, who had been elected to represent the prisoners. The dialogue that took place between the two is particularly interesting.

The governor's main complaint was that the singing of the prisoners hurt his feelings as a Jew. Mararah replied that the governor was hurting the prisoners' own feelings by his very presence in the jail. Furthermore, Mararah reminded the governor that he, Mararah, originally came from a nearby house, in fact, the very site of the prison.

At that point the governor proceeded to expound upon his philosophy of life. "Outside the jail, in Israel, we have democracy. But here, inside, we have a

dictatorship, and I am the dictator."

Mararah replied that in fact outside the jail no democracy existed and that, perhaps, since there would be nothing to lose, it would be a good idea to introduce democracy into the prison itself.

The essence of Mararah's argument was that no one had the right to prevent prisoners from singing or discussing political issues, and that they, the prisoners, would refuse to accept any such restrictions.

On this point, the governor was forced to retreat. He ended up agreeing that the prisoners had the right to hum *quietly* and that they also had the right to discuss politics *quietly* provided that no more than two persons were involved in the discussion.

The governor's authorization constitutes a decisive victory for the prisoners, since beforehand every political discussion was subject to spying, punishment, and forced seclusion.

The prisoners also demanded that four of their comrades who had been thrown into punishment cells following the events of New Year's Eve be returned to their regular cells, and that the splitting up of the prisoners be ended by bringing back all those sent over to Wing C of the jail.

These demands were backed by the refusal of the prisoners to see their relatives on the next visiting day. It was in fact this action that first brought the whole matter to the attention of the public. The governor promised to fulfill all the demands on condition that the prisoners end their strike. After consultation, the prisoners agreed to do so. □

FBI Exposed in Rosenberg Cover-up

In June 1953 Ethel and Julius Rosenberg were executed as atomic spies, although they continued to maintain their innocence to the end. The executions, carried out at the height of the cold war witch-hunt in the United States, have gone down in history along with the case of Sacco and Vanzetti as a particularly gruesome example of capitalist "justice."

The frame-up of the Rosenbergs was carried out by the federal government, and recently disclosed documents detail the thought-control methods used by the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) to keep the frame-up from unraveling.

For example, an October 1965 memorandum written by William C. Sullivan, a former assistant director of the FBI, mapped out a campaign against the book *Invitation to an Inquest* by Walter and Miriam Schneir. The Schneirs had attempted to get their book exposing the Rosenberg frame-up discussed on a television talk show.

Sullivan recommended that the FBI "take careful steps to secure the cooperation of friendly television stations and prevent this subversive effort from being successful. It should be kept off television programs and smothered and forced out of the public eye."

The FBI enlisted Judge Irving R. Kaufman, the judge who condemned the Rosenbergs to death, in its effort to discredit the book. Kaufman was supplied with material by the FBI, and the memorandum reported that he "is having a lengthy letter written to the editor of *The New York Times*" on the case.

A "syndicated columnist" was also enlisted in the FBI's smear campaign, according to the memorandum, which added: "A number of Catholic publications will also assist in this matter."

The Sullivan memorandum was obtained under the Freedom of Information Act by Michael and Robert Meeropol, the sons of the Rosenbergs. □

Capitalism Fouls Things Up



57 Cases of Cancer at DuPont Plant

Three workers at the DuPont chemical plant in Belle, West Virginia, lost eyes because of cancer, according to Earl McCune, the vice-president of the union of laboratory technicians at the plant. He also found that fifty-four other workers developed cancer over the past ten years.

McCune said the cases of cancer may have been linked to contaminated drinking water. He said the drinking fountains at the plant had twice been closed after spills of untreated chemicals into the river.

In addition, an Environmental Protection Agency study, obtained by the *Washington Post*, and cited in its May 28 issue, showed the presence of nitrosamines, a potent cancer-causing agent, in the air around the plant's hot waste water stream.

3,955 'Problem Welds' in Alaskan Pipeline

A report by the Alyeska Pipeline Service Company, a consortium of eight oil companies building the \$7 billion Alaskan oil pipeline, said in a report that it had

discovered twenty-eight welds in the pipe that had cracks and would need to be replaced. The cost of replacing twenty-eight welds would be \$5 million to \$10 million.

Officials of the Interior Department said May 21 that 3,955 "problem welds" should be reviewed for possible replacement. The chairman of two House Commerce subcommittees said in a May 18 letter to Interior Secretary Thomas S. Kleppe that waivers of technical standards should not be granted to Alyeska, since Alaska's environment could be endangered. Alyeska has contended that nearly all the "problem welds" pose no danger.

Since the oil in the pipeline is to flow at 140 degrees Fahrenheit, an oil spill could cause thawing, heaving, and subsidence of the Arctic tundra. A break at a river crossing could threaten fish and wildlife for scores of miles downstream.

FDA Whitewash

A panel of government investigators concluded May 23 that the Food and Drug Administration's investigation of itself last year had been "inadequate."

The FDA report, undertaken at a cost of \$196,000, was released in October 1975 by Commissioner Alexander M. Schmidt. It was designed to whitewash charges by FDA employees that the agency is controlled by the drug industry.

The employees said that the drug industry influenced the FDA's drug approval process, that files had been altered, and that they had been harassed and transferred when they attempted to keep questionable drugs off the market.

Health Standards Too 'Costly'

The White House "inflation fighting" agency, the Council on Wage and Price Stability, has recommended that the Labor Department scrap its pending standards controlling worker exposure to coke oven emissions because compliance with the standards would be too "costly" for the steel industry. Workers employed at the top of coke ovens have a lung-cancer mortality rate ten times that of other steelworkers.

The council estimated that the steel industry's compliance with the new rules would cost \$241 million a year. Conceding the steel bosses the "right" to pass this cost onto the consumers, the council said that steel prices would rise about 1 percent to 2 percent as a result.

The United Steelworkers of America denounced the proposal to scrap the standards, criticizing the council for "putting dollars ahead of human values" and for telling the Labor Department that "the lives of coke oven workers aren't worth saving." James Smith, assistant to union President I.W. Abel, said, "Its almost total disregard of the extensive disabling effects of coke oven contamination, as well as its readiness to sacrifice more human lives, is despicable."

275 Plutonium 'Accidents'

At least 275 American workers have been accidentally exposed to high levels of plutonium, one of the most toxic substances in existence, according to a report presented to the Energy Research and Development Administration May 13 by two public-interest groups and the Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers Union. In one case, a worker was exposed to 800 times the legally permissible plutonium level. The exposures took place from 1965 to 1975 at sixteen government facilities. Sixty-nine percent of the cases involved contamination of the lungs, where treatment for plutonium exposure is the most difficult.

PCB Diet Not Recommended

Almost all of Japan's 487 different kinds of wildfowl are suffering from environmental diseases, according to Tatsuo Kazama, a government ornithologist. The diseases were caused by consumption of grain, insects, fish, rats, and other small animals contaminated with polychlorinated biphenyl (PCB) and other chemicals.

During his six-year study, Kazama examined about sixty birds that he found dead in Niigata Prefecture. He said the intestines, livers, and kidneys of all the birds showed the presence of PCBs.



Herblock/Washington Post

Selections From the Left

Bandera roja

"Red Flag," monthly newspaper of the Internationalist Communist League, a sympathizing organization of the Fourth International in Mexico.

The May issue reports that at a conference held April 17-18 two Trotskyist organizations in Mexico—the Internationalist Communist Group and Rojo (Red)—reached agreement on a fusion. The new organization is named the Internationalist Communist League (LCI).

The delegates pledged to work toward unification with the two groupings in the Socialist League, the other sympathizing organization of the Fourth International in Mexico.

The LCI plans a campaign to build solidarity with the struggle of university workers in Sonora.

A report on work in the trade union at the Autonomous National University of Mexico opened a lively discussion on that subject.

Also discussed was the LCI's stand in the Mexican presidential elections. It was decided to cast a write-in vote for Campa, the candidate of the Mexican Communist party, but to include the letters "FIR" (Frente de Izquierda Revolucionaria—Front of the Revolutionary Left) to indicate disagreement with Campa's reformist electoral platform.

Besides calling for a "FIR-Campa" vote, the conference approved undertaking various regional campaigns in behalf of independent workers candidates in Baja California, Colima, Oaxaca, Zacatecas, and Ciudad Juárez.

RÉVOLUTION!

Revolutionary Communist weekly published in Paris, France.

The May 28 issue reports rising uneasiness over the construction of a nuclear plant in Flamanville scheduled to be one of the world's largest. It will have a capacity in 1985 of 5,200 megawatts—four times the needs of the region.

A river of water is required as a coolant. The discharge, varying from about 75 degrees Fahrenheit in winter to 88 degrees in summer, will raise the temperature of the sea for twenty square kilometers or more.

A still worse problem is the use of chlorine to counteract plankton and

molluscan growths in the tubing. At Vandellos, Spain, chlorine used in this way has destroyed all marine life within an area of ten square kilometers. The area at Flamanville will be much larger.

At first about 60 percent of the people living in the vicinity favored the project. They hoped it would lead to an increase in the number of jobs available locally. Now the realization is spreading that this will not be the case. Opposition to the nuclear plant is thus rising. Antinuclear committees are spreading, and opposition to selling land for the plant is mounting.

At La Hague, near Flamanville, a nuclear plant of rather unusual nature is situated. It is designed to dispose of nuclear wastes from other plants in France and countries as distant as Japan.

It extracts plutonium, which is used in the manufacture of atomic bombs and super generators. It also separates out less radioactive materials, stocking them until they become less poisonous.

The dangerous stuff is kept in acidic polls until it becomes vitrified, when it can be moved to mines for storage for several centuries. "La Hague is Europe's nuclear garbage can."

Accidents on the job and diversion of profits to private enterprise are the rule at La Hague. This has led recently to a number of strikes and mobilizations, which have received union backing.

libération

A socialist monthly published in Montréal. Presents the views of the Ligue Socialiste Ouvrière/League for Socialist Action.

As the Parti Québécois comes closer to becoming the ruling party in Québec, less and less is heard of its former nationalist verbiage.

"The show of intransigence that [PQ leader René] Lévesque conducted in 1967, saying that he would proclaim independence once the PQ took power, has been transformed into a much milder position enumerating certain 'stages' that must be passed through before arriving at independence," Suzanne Chabot comments in the June issue.

Much more characteristic of the PQ's current stance is a statement Lévesque made in an April 17 interview: "As we come closer to power, as we are increasingly seen as an alternative to the present government, we cannot promise the moon. We cannot allow ourselves to lead people to believe that the world is going to change from top to bottom the day after the election."

Postponed even further in the PQ timetable, Chabot says, is the fight for such important reforms as the adoption of a policy of French unilingualism to counter the privileged position of the English-speaking minority. Lévesque and the PQ "tell us that independence is the only solution to the language problem, and that we have to wait until it arrives."

revolution socialiste

Weekly publication of the "Socialist Revolution" Group, Antilles section of the Fourth International.

No. 123 reports the arrest on April 14-15 in Georgetown, Guiana, of members of the Working Peoples Alliance. These included Ellsi Kwayana, Clive Thomas, Walter Rodney, Moses Bhagwan, and Brintley Benn.

Clive Thomas and Walter Rodney are internationally known socialist economists, specializing in African and Caribbean affairs. Thomas is the author of *Dependence and Transformation, the Economics of the Transition to Socialism*. Rodney is the author of *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa*.

Dayclean, the newspaper of the Working Peoples Alliance, was recently banned because of its sharp criticisms of the fake socialist program of Forbes Burnham, the head of the government of Guiana.

The editor of *Dayclean*, Flawger Moses Bhagan, a leader of the "Indian Revolution" movement, one of the four organizations making up the Working Peoples Alliance, was sentenced to three and a half years in prison. He was released on bail.

Socialist Action

Published twice monthly in Wellington, New Zealand.

Writing in the May 28 issue, George Fyson reports the reaction of the Maoists in New Zealand to the royal welcome given by Peking to Prime Minister Robert Muldoon during his recent visit to China.

While in China, Muldoon openly supported the ANZUS military alliance, which was put together by the American imperialists against the revolutionary aspirations of the people in Southeast Asia and Oceania. The People's Republic of China was one of the main targets of the alliance.

Muldoon's speeches were delivered in the

spirit of Richard Nixon, a similar recent guest of the Maoist bureaucracy.

Muldoon said Hua Kuo-feng, the successor to Chou En-lai, agreed with him on the importance of moves by New Zealand and Australia to "strengthen their defences" and hoped the United States would join on an equal basis in dealing with the "polar bear" (the Soviet Union).

The *People's Voice*, the newspaper of the pro-Peking New Zealand Communist party, was so embarrassed over the way Peking played up the reactionary prime minister that it was reduced to picturing the reports as distortions. The May 3 issue, for instance, asserted that invitations extended to figures like Nixon and Muldoon are merely "normal diplomatic procedure."

Thus the local Maoists evaded taking up such items as Mao's indirect approval of Muldoon's current attacks on the living standards of the workers as reported by the May 2 *Evening Post*:

"The Prime Minister said he and Mr Hua had discussed Chairman Mao's saying, 'Dig tunnels deep, store grain everywhere and never seek hegemony.' We've decided that means we must prepare our defence, improve the economy and never seek domination of others," Mr Muldoon said. "That is precisely the policy of the present New Zealand Government. We are exactly on the same wavelength."

Fyson is of the opinion that the New Zealand Maoists will begin to shift in their attitude toward Muldoon, at least by remaining "strangely silent" on some of the worst aspects of his forthcoming budget.

DIRECT ACTION

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

In the May 13 issue, Jill Jolliffe and Jon West expose an Indonesian government pamphlet that purports to document "Fretilin atrocities" in East Timor. The pamphlet contains photographs of a mass grave allegedly containing "victims of Fretilin."

However, details in the photographs themselves indicate "that the graves in fact contain bodies of Fretilin supporters."

The photographs correspond, moreover, to information reported by Australian journalists last September. A woman they met in a group of refugees told them of a mass execution of Fretilin supporters jailed following the coup of the Timorese Democratic Union (UDT) last August.

"According to the woman's account, 39 prisoners including her husband were taken from the jail, bound back-to-back in pairs, shot with one bullet and then run through with the traditional Katana knife. This description tallies with photographs from the Indonesian booklet."

Similar atrocities are continuing in East

Timor. A Fretilin cable dated April 6 states that the "Indonesian army is still bombarding from planes and heavy artillery many villages across the country and [such] massacres as burning people alive including women and children are still on."



"Socialist Word," an organ of workers and students news published in Lima, Peru.

Since his return from exile last October, Hugo Blanco has been kept under continual surveillance by the police, the May 8 issue reports. By this type of harassment, the Peruvian government counts on making it more difficult for the former peasant leader to gain a hearing among the masses.

Recently the Maoists have added their bit to trying to keep Blanco isolated.

He was scheduled to speak to students at San Marcos on April 2 and at the UNI on April 8. His topic was "The Character of Our Revolution."

This was the first time since his return from exile that Hugo Blanco had the opportunity to speak on campus. A big crowd turned out on each occasion.

But at San Marcos, Blanco was unable to speak. The Maoists organized an active "boycott," blocking the meeting from being held.

At the UNI they repeated the tactic but this time they were unable to succeed. In his speech, Blanco included a denunciation of the reactionary foreign policy being followed by Peking.

He also analyzed the Maoist theory that in countries like Peru the national bourgeoisie is revolutionary and should be depended on in the anti-imperialist struggle. He attacked the theory of the Maoists that the central task is to forge a "bloc of four classes" led by the bourgeoisie as a stage in the revolution.

At the close of the meeting, the Maoists sought to use physical violence against the Trotskyists who were present.

labor Challenge

Twice-monthly newspaper published in Toronto, Canada.

A project to build a pipeline in the Mackenzie Valley that would bring natural gas from the Arctic Ocean to southern Canada and the United States is running into trouble.

Phil Cournoyer reports in the May 24 issue that the Dene and Inuit peoples, who comprise the majority of the population of the Northwest Territories, oppose the project and any further northern develop-

ment schemes until their Native land claims are settled.

The Canadian government is pressuring the Native peoples to give up their aboriginal land rights in return for miserable cash settlements. The model is the James Bay Agreement signed last November. Under this agreement, the Inuit and Cree aboriginal land rights in northern Québec were ceded for a cash payment spread over twenty years that works out to an average of \$1,125 a year for each person.

But the Dene and the Inuit in the Northwest Territories state: "Our land is not for sale."

"The militant stand of the Dene and the Inuit in defense of their land has become a significant political factor in Canada," Cournoyer reports. "The ruling class and the federal government fear the radical thrust of this struggle for the land. They hope to mobilize Canada's non-Native population against the Native movement with the oil shortage scare as they drive for more oil exploration in the North."

THE MILITANT

A socialist weekly published in the interests of the working people. Printed in New York City, New York.

An editorial in the June 11 issue takes a strong stand against the invasion of Lebanon by the Syrian army.

"By invading Lebanon, Syria's president Hafez Assad has not only struck a blow against the struggle of the Lebanese workers and farmers for their democratic rights, he has also sharply increased the threat that the civil war might escalate into a wider war by providing a pretext for an Israeli invasion."

The purpose of the invasion is "to prop up the sagging minority government" in Lebanon. This is evident from the deployment of the invading forces and by the efforts of Syrian troops "to reconstitute a nucleus of the deeply split Lebanese army—one that would be reliable in carrying out moves against the Palestinians and the Moslem leftists."

The editorial notes Washington's approval of Assad's move. "The U.S. rulers hope the current Syrian invasion can deal blows to leftist Moslem and Palestinian forces."

The invasion represents a considerable gamble. It can sharpen the internal struggle within Syria, where protests have recently been lodged against Assad's anti-Palestinian course. It can also pave the way for an Israeli invasion of Lebanon, which Washington would prefer to avoid for the moment, since it might require "direct U.S. military intervention to back up its settler-colonial client."

"What is needed now," the editorial concludes, "is an outcry from all supporters of the Arab revolution: Syria out of Lebanon! No Israeli intervention! U.S. hands off the Middle East!"

AROUND THE WORLD



Bandaranaike Arrests Tamil Leaders

The Sri Lanka regime of Sirimavo Bandaranaike arrested five Tamil nationalist leaders on May 21 for allegedly distributing "subversive" literature. One of those arrested, M. Sivasithamparam, the joint secretary of the Tamil United Liberation Front (TULF), was released a few days later.

The other arrested leaders were V.N. Navaratnam, K.P. Ratnam, and K. Thurairatnam—all members of parliament from the Federal party—as well as A. Amirthalingham, a former Federal party MP.

At a May 23 rally in Dambulla, Bandaranaike lashed out at the Federal party, charging that it was "attempting to create disharmony in the country." She said, "We have been tolerating for a long time this anti-social, subversive propaganda of the Federal Party. . . . It is our bounden duty to maintain unity in this country."

The TULF, which is composed of the Federal party, the Tamil Congress, and the Ceylon Workers Congress, has demanded the creation of a separate state for Sri Lanka's three million Tamils, who have been oppressed for centuries by the country's dominant Sinhala nationality.

Thai Regime Denies Washington Use of Ramasun Spy Base

The Thai government rejected a U.S. request June 1 that Washington be allowed to keep the electronic eavesdropping station at Ramasun in northeastern Thailand. The regime of Prime Minister Seni Pramoj also reaffirmed Bangkok's previous order that American military forces be out of Thailand by July 20. The evacuation order, however, allows 270 American military advisers to remain.

Puerto Rican Socialist Party Slandered As 'Terrorist'

Charging that advocates of Puerto Rican independence pose "a constant threat to the system we have," Governor Rafael Hernández Colón claimed May 19 that the Puerto Rican Socialist party (PSP) was receiving money from Cuba and engaging in terrorist activities in Puerto Rico.

Speaking in Washington, the chief of the colonial government in Puerto Rico complained that Prime Minister Fidel Castro had "sponsored pro-independence activities for Puerto Rico in Cuba." Hernández Colón also claimed that "terrorist activi-

ties in Puerto Rico are being sponsored" by Castro.

He insisted that there was "a clear tie" between the PSP and Cuba, asserting that "the officers and leaders of the party travel continuously to Cuba; they receive training in Cuba."

Hernández Colón was not able to offer a shred of proof for his slanderous charges of terrorism. However, he did note that Cuban efforts to plead the cause of Puerto Rican independence in international organizations was causing "all sorts of embarrassment" for Washington at the United Nations. He also took note of the instability in the Caribbean resulting from "economic trouble and political ferment."

Jakarta Annexes East Timor

The former Portuguese colony of East Timor was formally integrated into Indonesia May 3 as the country's twenty-seventh province. The decision was approved by the Indonesian-backed People's Assembly in Dili, the capital of East Timor.

The official annexation of the country by Jakarta's military rulers came six months after Indonesian troops invaded East Timor and overthrew the independent government of the Frente Revolucionária do Timor-Leste Independente (Fretilin—Revolutionary Front for an Independent East Timor). According to Fretilin, the Indonesian forces launched a brutal repression against the civilian population, which in its majority favored independence, not integration with Indonesia.

Social Democrats Feuding, Postpone International Congress

Congresses of the Socialist International are supposed to be held every two years, but the last one was held in Vienna in 1972. The congress scheduled for Geneva in late July was recently postponed for "organizational and political reasons." November is the new target date.

The European Social Democratic parties are divided on the issue of whether to collaborate with the Communist parties, and with elections coming up in Italy, West Germany, and Sweden, they are not eager to discuss the question in public.

The state of comradely relations among the European Social Democratic parties has not deteriorated as far as they did during World War I, when Social Democrats in opposing countries were urged to kill each other. However, French Socialist

leader François Mitterrand recently established a French Socialist committee "for the defense of civic and professional rights" in West Germany.

Mitterrand's move, in belated reaction to the West German regime's 1972 establishment of a screening process to exclude "extremists" from all government jobs, indicates that relations between the ruling German Social Democratic party and Mitterrand's group are deteriorating.

Capitalist and Stalinists Hail Gandhi's Economic Program

S.P. Mandelia, the president of the All-India Manufacturers Organisation (AIMO), pledged May 18 that the capitalists organization would support Prime Minister Indira Gandhi's twenty-point economic program, which was announced shortly after she declared a state of emergency and arrested thousands of political opponents in June 1975. According to the May 18 *Times of India*, Mandelia said that AIMO's work in the coming year would be directed toward achieving the main objectives of Gandhi's program.

The Indian dictator also received support for her economic policies from her Stalinist allies. According to the same issue of the *Times of India*, "The Communist Party of India will shortly launch a nation-wide peaceful movement for effective implementation of the 20-point programme of the Prime Minister."

Australian Rail Unions Strike in Dispute Over Uranium

Australian railway workers went on a twenty-four-hour strike May 24 following the firing of a railway supervisor who refused to load chemical supplies going to a uranium mine. The supervisor had acted in line with a union ban, enacted after a campaign by environmentalists and the labor movement against continued development of Australia's uranium deposits. These deposits are the largest in the world.

The strike, which brought virtually every train in Australia to a halt, according to London *Guardian* correspondent Christopher Sweeney, was settled when the rail unions agreed to lift their ban on shipments to the uranium mine involved and the bosses agreed to reinstate the supervisor. However, it remains to be seen what further action the unions will take. The ban was lifted pending a conference by the Australian Council of Trade Unions on uranium mining.

BOOKS

SWP Suit Reported From Coast to Coast

Reviewed by Ernest Harsch



On July 18, 1973, in the midst of the Watergate scandal, the Socialist Workers party (SWP) filed a \$27 million damage suit in federal court, seeking to bar government burglary, mail tampering, bugging, wiretapping, and other harassment of party members and supporters.

In the nearly three years since that time, the SWP and its attorneys, Leonard Boudin and Herbert Jordan, have forced the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), and other government agencies to release

The Nation's Press Views the Landmark Suit that is Uncovering FBI and CIA Crimes. 1976. 40 pp. A copy may be obtained by writing Political Rights Defense Fund, Box 649 Cooper Station, New York, New York 10003.

thousands of pages of secret documents disclosing some of the disruption programs directed against the SWP and Young Socialist Alliance (YSA).

Documents released in connection with the SWP and other suits also described FBI and CIA disruption programs against the anti-Vietnam War movement, the Black movement, and student groups. They showed beyond a shadow of a doubt that one of the main functions of the FBI and CIA was to suppress dissenting political views.

The exposures of the illegal spying and disruption brought out by the SWP suit were published month after month by newspapers throughout the United States. For the first time, millions of Americans were given a glimpse of how the government really operates against domestic political dissidents.

The Political Rights Defense Fund (PRDF), which publicizes and raises money for the suit, has just released a forty-page pamphlet entitled *The Nation's Press Views the Landmark Suit that is Uncovering FBI and CIA Crimes*. It contains a sampling of the hundreds of articles that

have reported on the suit and the revelations.

The disruption programs against the SWP, YSA, and other groups were reported in such major dailies as the *New York Times*, *Washington Post*, *Los Angeles Times*, and *Chicago Tribune*, as well as by those in smaller towns throughout the country, such as the *Lewiston Tribune* from Idaho and the *Sun-Bulletin* of Binghamton, New York.

Some of the revelations were considered important enough to merit front-page coverage. The *New York Times*, for instance, has carried four front-page articles about the FBI's campaign against the SWP. The FBI's recent admission that its agents broke into SWP offices in New York City ninety-two times between 1960 and 1966 was reported in banner headlines on the front pages of newspapers from coast to coast.

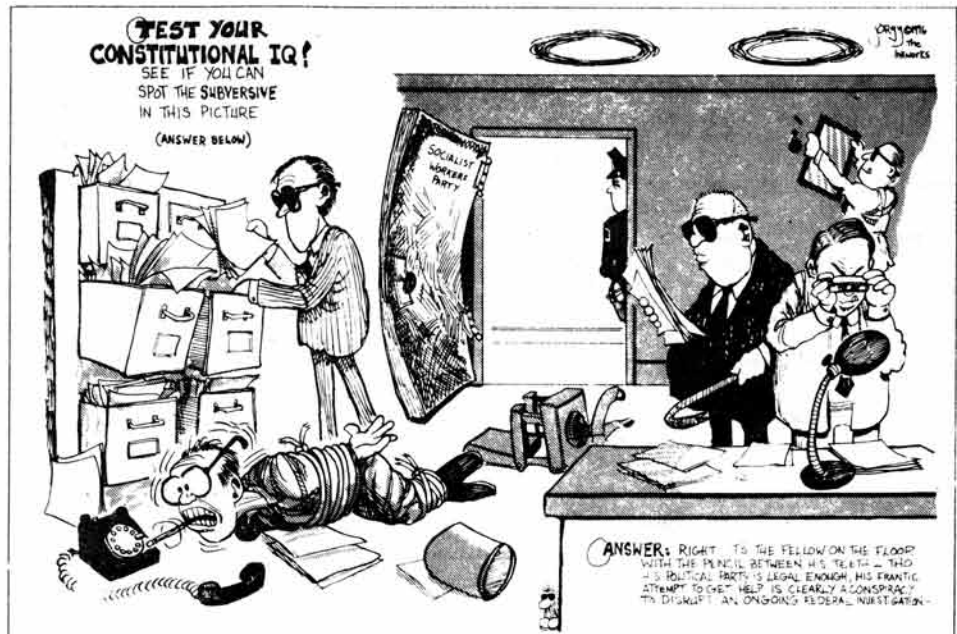
The FBI and CIA violations of democratic rights, particularly the FBI's Cointelpro (counterintelligence program) operations, also drew editorial censure across the country.

"The FBI may have called it counterintelligence, but it reads a lot like lies and libel . . . like a mixture of the late Joseph McCarthy and the worst of Watergate," Bruce Morton said in a commentary on a CBS television news broadcast March 19, 1975.

The *Washington Post* said in a March 24, 1975, editorial, ". . . the agency harassed the members of the Socialist Workers Party . . . from all the available evidence, the agency's power has been frequently put to the task of abusing the rights of Americans."

After the revelations of the burglaries of the SWP's New York offices, the *Miami Herald* stated in a March 30, 1976, editorial, "A break-in at the offices of the Socialist Workers Party is just as alien to the American system of constitutional law as a break-in at the offices of one of the major parties."

The *Herald* then concluded that "there must at least be a complete and open airing of the federal government's unconstitutional activities against a legitimate political party, with fair recompense for any damages done." □



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Philadelphia Drummer

The Italian Elections and the 'Proletarian Democracy' Bloc

By Anna Liberu

[The following articles outlining the positions of the three major components of the Democrazia Proletaria electoral bloc appeared in the May 28 and May 29-30

issues of the French Trotskyist daily *Rouge*. The translation is by *Intercontinental Press*.]

There is a strong left-wing tendency in the PdUP (around Foa and Miniati; it won 47 percent of the vote at the last congress), which criticizes the majority's orientation but fails to counterpose a clear strategic alternative.

PdUP—A 'Gradual' Conquest of State Power

The PdUP¹ (which resulted from a fusion between il Manifesto—a split from the PCI² in 1970—and the PSIUP³) has been increasingly attracted to the Communist party. In the 1972 legislative elections il Manifesto ran candidates with rather modest results (270,000 votes) in comparison with what it hoped for. It then began to carry out a rapprochement with the CP, a move that was concretized by an ambiguous and gradualist concept of taking power, and by the conviction that revolutionists could persuade the CP to modify its fundamental positions.

At its January 1976 congress, the majority in PdUP (the grouping that came out of il Manifesto) put forward the following concept in its resolution: In the present context in Italy, the CP's coming to power will pave the way for a "transition to the transition," that is, to a phase of prolonged struggle during which the working class will gain the bases of power one by one. We will see a gradual transformation of the bourgeois state institutions as they come under the dominance of the working class. The entire question of dual power in a perspective of revolutionary crisis is simply glided over. A peculiar concept of the restructuring of the workers movement goes along with this orientation: Any possibility of winning the reformist masses to the revolutionary party is excluded. What should be envisioned, Rossana Rossanda explains, is restructuring in the context of the existing workers movement "without a rip in the unitary fabric." If revolutionists intelligently utilize the pressure of mass struggles, the CP will find itself constrained to adopt their revolutionary strategy.

This concept leads to a policy of tail-

ending the CP and the trade-union leaderships. Accordingly, in the municipalities and regions where the PdUP has deputies, they back the orientation of the CP without differentiating themselves. The same is true in the unions. Members of the PdUP, who frequently hold positions at a very high level in the hierarchy, do not differentiate themselves on either forms of struggle or partial demands.

In the view of the PdUP majority, a political line or alliances that risk launching a new tendency to the left of the Communist party are to be avoided. Hence its refusal to unite with Lotta Continua [The Struggle Continues] and its opposition to unification with Avanguardia Operaia [Workers Vanguard].

The two tendencies call publicly for a government of the left, but the Foa tendency has not made clear how it differs from the majority in respect to such a government. For example, in the May 7 issue of *il Manifesto*, Vittorio Foa said: "A left government, obviously, will be a government with progressive intentions in a capitalist framework, in a system in which the enemy holds power. Two suicidal temptations exist—to support such a government unconditionally or to fight it solely because it remains in a capitalist framework. It should be supported to the hilt each time it opposes the centers of capitalist power, and we should put pressure on it, through struggle, each time it accepts these centers of power as unchangeable, or worse, supports them."

In short, the question is posed; but the logic remains that of applying pressure.

AO—For Uniting Reformists and Revolutionists

Following the June 15 [1975] elections, Avanguardia Operaia [Workers Vanguard] took up in a more systematic fashion than any other organization the question of what relations to maintain with the reformist organizations and how to win the reformist masses over to a revolutionary perspective.

In those elections the AO ran, along with the PdUP, on the Democrazia Proletaria [Proletarian Democracy] list. The AO explained clearly that there was no possibility of bypassing the reformist workers movement. A left government (seen as a CP-SP-DP government) would be the result of a modification of the relationship of forces between the classes on the one hand, and a modification of the relationship of forces between the reformists and revolutionists inside the workers movement on the other.

"To sum up the balance sheet of the last few years, it can be said that the general political impact of the revolutionary left was accomplished above all (even if not exclusively) through its capacity to put forward demands and experiences of

struggle in an independent way and with a sharpness that impelled the reformist sector of the workers movement to take them up as their own, thereby transforming them into goals and struggles of the entire movement. If these orientations had not become the unifying heritage of the entire movement, their political influence would have been extremely limited. What emerged in practice from the experience of the last few years, despite what the ideologues say, is a relationship of struggle and unity between revolutionists and reformists in the workers movement." (*Politica Comunista*, monthly magazine of the AO, February-March 1976.)

In the municipalities where they have won offices, AO's elected candidates have carried out a consistent political line. In Turin they participate in and promote a mass movement to occupy housing (with independent organization of the occupiers, and so forth), and fight to force the "red" (CP-SP) local government to recognize occupations requisitioning empty housing. In Milan, they organized "red markets" (at the time of the big jump in prices in

1. Partito d'Unità Proletaria (Party of Proletarian Unity).

2. Partito Comunista Italiano (Italian Communist party).

3. Partito Socialista Italiano d'Unità Proletaria (Italian Socialist party of Proletarian Unity).

March), selling produce directly from the producer to the consumer. The success of this action forced the CP and the FLM (the metalworkers federation) to repeat it on a mass scale.

In an editorial in its May 23-24 issue, *Quotidiano dei Lavoratori* [the newspaper reflecting the views of the AO] explained its call for a left government in the following way: "There is only one force capable of confronting this [the governmental crisis], that of the reformist parties; but as long as they retain their working-class character it is impossible for the power of the bourgeoisie to be exercised through them. This brings us back to the question of the nature of the reformist parties, of the class interests they represent, of their strategy. But we return with a political subject capable of acting upon this working-class character. This subject is the movement of struggle in all its complexity (relationship of forces, autonomy, organized strength, struggle between the two lines in the unions, and so forth). . . ."

Thus, the AO makes clear that reformist

collaboration cannot proceed without taking into account existing social forces, but also that there will be no automatic break, on the political level, between the reformist masses and their political parties.

Avanguardia Operaia is also carrying out a policy of unity, with a perspective of the unification of revolutionists. For more than a year it has conducted a debate along these lines with the PdUP, while systematically following a course in practice to advance unity. This debate implies a firm fight against the gradualist position still held by the PdUP majority (AO does not exclude a split by the right wing of PdUP during unification). But the AO also includes Lotta Continua in its unity plans, in a more long-term perspective: It is necessary to "fight the ultraleft line of Lotta Continua" through joint work in the Democrazia Proletaria support committees and discussion of revolutionary strategy vis-à-vis a left government, with the aim of putting forward, eventually, the bases for a revolutionary party capable of leading the fight to win the reformist masses over to a revolutionary perspective.

negates nor contradicts an institutional stage that we believe remains necessary—a government of the left. To the contrary, it implies an initiative that not only ratifies but strengthens the tendency toward autonomy, both in regard to the CP and in the form of a future government of the left."

The Battle for Unity

The change in the relationship of forces between reformists and revolutionists in the workers movement is viewed in a linear and mechanistic fashion: The CP in power fails to satisfy the needs of the masses, who then break from it and join the revolutionists.

In practice, this concept of Lotta Continua is reflected in its direct opposition to the traditional workers movement. "Lotta Continua is the only organization in the revolutionary left that has never held illusions in the possibility of winning the reformist trade-union organizations over to a position of class autonomy, nor placed its hopes in the possibility of their undergoing an internal fissure. We know that for class autonomy to assert itself and win, self-organization on the level of both the masses and the party is required, and we have no intention of subordinating the tempo of this process to the gradual extinction of trade-union and revisionist hegemony—to the contrary, we intend to speed up its stages. Our concept of tactics and of winning the majority impels us to look mainly toward the movement and its mass organizational forms as the place where revolutionary leadership and hegemony will become a reality." Lotta Continua's entire orientation is marked by an overestimation of the conscious political level of the masses and an underestimation of their ties to the reformist parties.

LC's political line has put it at odds with the PdUP and the AO this year, isolating the group somewhat in the far left. The discussion that has now opened will encourage Lotta Continua to be more specific about its strategy and its concept of unity among revolutionists.

Following the governmental crisis in January, the possibility of elections being called was discussed by the three organizations. At a February 3 meeting of its Central Committee, Lotta Continua first put forward the idea of a common slate, without programmatic agreement. The PdUP was violently opposed to any agreement with the LC, proposing instead that the AO and PdUP run on the Democrazia Proletaria slate. Initially, the AO Central Committee proposed that local agreements be worked out between the PdUP, AO, and LC.

Throughout April, considerable pressure for unity came from the ranks of the three organizations and from broader formations. The daily newspapers of the three groups were inundated with joint motions signed by cells of LC, AO, and PdUP rank-

LC—Bypass the Reformist Workers Movement

The June 15, 1975, elections posed the question of the left parties taking power. A discussion began inside and among the revolutionary organizations over what stance to take toward a left majority, the demands to be put forward, and the fight to be conducted to win over the reformist masses. We have seen above how Avanguardia Operaia and the PdUP approached the question.

The way in which Lotta Continua approached the new period opened by the electoral gains of the CP is marked by what remain the continued preoccupations of this organization—encouraging workers autonomy and bypassing the reformist workers movement.

Nonetheless, in the June 15 elections Lotta Continua called for a vote for the CP (while the AO and the PdUP ran candidates on the Democrazia Proletaria list). Why this position? LC began with an analysis of the contradictory situation of the workers movement at this stage in Italy: the weakening of the reformists' control over struggles in a number of sectors, combined with the growing political and electoral influence of the Communist party. Lotta Continua on the one hand correctly analyzed the CP vote as a class vote but its slogan "CP in the government" (which was not exempt from ambiguity, since it encompassed the possibility of an SP-CP-DC⁴ government) was aimed at "unmasking the revisionists."

In view of the contradiction between the

CP's program of capitalist restabilization and the needs of the masses, the latter will increasingly break away from reformist politics, "regaining their autonomy" with respect to the CP. The road would be open for the "development of workers autonomy." "Increasingly significant forces in the working class will free themselves of dominance by the revisionists and take a resolute stand on the side of class autonomy."

The description Lotta Continua gives of this process indicates that it sees a link between the radicalization of forms of struggle and disaffection from the reformist political project. It thus underestimated the necessity of presenting an alternative strategy to a vanguard that had in fact begun to question reformist perspectives (which would have involved calling for a vote for the AO and the PdUP, and for the CP wherever the AO and the PdUP were not running candidates).

Lotta Continua says today that the slogan "vote CP" was correct for the June 15 elections, but is no longer satisfactory because the situation has changed. In the first place, a "government of the left" is now a "mathematical" possibility, seen as credible and widely discussed on a mass level. "The situation of the last few months can be defined in two ways. Either as a situation in which the DC is not yet defeated, or as a situation in which there is already a growing class opposition to a government of the left dominated by revisionism." If one takes the second point of view (which LC does): "An independent electoral effort [by revolutionists] neither

4. Democrazia Cristiana (Christian Democracy).

and-filers. Motions were also received from neighborhood committees, tenants committees, and factory councils. Under the combined pressure of this movement for unity, the offensive by the AO, and the battle waged by the PdUP minority, the PdUP agreed to the compromise.

In the beginning of May, Adriano Sofri, the leader of Lotta Continua, explained in an interview in his own newspaper that his organization was prepared to make the sacrifice of running on the Democrazia Proletaria slate, as independent candidates, under conditions put forward by the DP. The AO and the PdUP minority supported this proposal, but the PdUP

majority at first rejected it, by a vote of 65 percent. Finally, under the threat of a split by the minority, Lucio Magri called for a vote on a motion agreeing to a united slate.

Lotta Continua agreed to the conditions set down by the DP: 15 percent of the candidates, little in the way of television time, and no national leader on the slate. It agreed, in part, because it was forced to—it could not run the risk of putting forward its own slate, which would not only appear divisive but leave open the possibility of an electoral defeat. But it also agreed because it was very sensitive to the pressure for unity, which compelled it, in the words of Sofri himself, to temper

somewhat its “organizational patriotism.” The third reason was the fact that it plans to become involved in the unity process between the AO and the PdUP, hoping to shift its axis to the left.

Accordingly, the agreement is quite limited and points toward the development of two campaigns (a logic strongly supported by the PdUP). But it unleashes an objectively unifying dynamic that should not be underestimated and that has been reflected already in the formation of Democrazia Proletaria support groups (more or less “united,” according to the region). □

Italy—The Communist Party in the Government?

[The following article is from the May issue of *Class Struggle*, a bilingual publication of Lutte Ouvrière, a French organization that views itself as Trotskyist in orientation.]

* * *

Italy's parliamentary crisis, which started in January 1976, took a decisive turn with the dissolution of the Parliament and the preparation of the early general election to be held on 20 and 21 June next.

The thirty-year old Italian Republic has indeed experienced numerous parliamentary crises. But the issue at stake in the present crisis is a crucial political question for the Italian bourgeoisie: namely, that of the integration of the strongest Communist Party in Western Europe into the Italian government. The dissolution of Parliament and the early general election are proof that at least a fraction of the bourgeoisie has chosen to accept the possibility that the Italian Communist Party should enter the government.

That a sizeable section of the Italian bourgeoisie now supports such a solution was clearly exemplified by statements made by members of the Agnelli clan, who own the huge Fiat trust, and can be regarded as good representatives of the country's leading capitalists. Giovanni Agnelli issued numerous reassuring statements about the Italian Communist Party, and declared “absurd” the panic of part of the bourgeoisie at the thought it might come into power—a panic which resulted in massive flight of capital. He was somehow vouching for the Italian Communist Party when he praised its “excellent managers” and when he declared that it should not in the least be feared, on the contrary. What should be expected from such a government was explained by another member of the Agnelli clan, Umberto: “For the Italian economic situation to recover, we would need a 10 to 15 percent increase in productivity.” Added

Umberto Agnelli: “But enforcing such an increase in productivity requires that the political forces in power be credible.”

The development of the parliamentary crisis revealed both this choice made by a section of the bourgeoisie, and the resistance offered by the parliamentary apparatus, especially by the Christian Democrats. With the present balance of power between the Italian parties, the Italian Communist Party cannot join the government except within the framework of the “historic compromise” cabinet encompassing parties from the Communist Italian Party to the Christian Democratic Party. This is due to the fact that, contrary to its French counterpart, the Italian Socialist Party by itself would be too weak to compensate adequately for the influence of the Communist Party if a left-wing government was to be set up. So the parliamentary crisis is the result of the Christian Democrats' refusal of the “historic compromise.” In fact their main concern is that they should not appear in the eyes of part of their reactionary electorate as the party which opened the way for the Communists; being bogged down in internal struggles and above all hostile to the idea of sharing the power they have held for the past thirty years, the Christian Democrats have repeatedly put off making a decision in this respect. More precisely, the “left” and the center of the party, i.e., Premier Aldo Moro's supporters, were unsuccessful in their attempts to make the right accept the idea of possible arrangements with the Communist Party.

The results of the regional elections held in June 1975 prompt the prediction that the Italian Communist Party is most likely to achieve a sizeable success in the forthcoming general election. In this situation, its participation would be necessary for a parliamentary majority to exist. But it seems that the Christian Democratic Party prefers to go to the country before forming a coalition with the Communist

Party. It chose to stand before the electors as a rampart against communism rather than stand together with the Communists, as might have been the case if it had waited until the end of the normal term, that is, until 1977. This maneuver will no doubt enable the Christian Democrats to appear after the election as compelled to cooperate with the Communist Party against their will—as a result of the Communist Party's electoral progress—and with the aim of preserving what is most important.

So this early general election enables the bourgeoisie to compel its representatives to make the political decisions it wishes.

But at the very moment when the “historical compromise” is being laboriously set up, the Italian Communist Party has good reason to be worried. That they are worried is shown by their lack of haste in coming to power and their persistent desire to find a formula such as an “end of legislature contract” which would avoid resorting to anticipated elections. Finally, the Italian Communist Party can have no illusions about the difficult conditions in which it will finally make it into government.

As a matter of fact the Italian Communist Party has been preparing for this occasion for a long time. For years it has offered time and time again to serve the Italian bourgeoisie. It was the first of all the European Communist Parties to break away from the USSR in order to curry favor with the national bourgeoisie and be admitted as one possible manager of capitalism. Togliatti called this “polycentrism.” Since then, and long before its French counterpart, the Italian Communist Party has issued numerous critical analyses of the USSR so as to assert itself as a really “national” party. On the other hand it has proved its skills in managing the country. The regional governments set up since 1970 have enabled the Communist Party to demonstrate its abilities on a

regional scale, wherever the regional "government" had a Communist majority.

But the economic crisis was what put on the agenda the proposal that the Communist Party should participate in the government. The world economic crisis reached crucial proportions in the country owing to the relative weakness of Italian imperialism.

The precipitous fall of the lira makes the balance-of-payments deficit worse every day. To cope with the situation, the Italian bourgeoisie needs to cut down the living standards of the working class drastically and to reduce consumption in the laboring masses in order to curb imports. On the other hand, it will try to increase productivity in order to gain advantages on the foreign market. It would like to recover the former advantage of the Italian industry over its European competitors: namely, its cheap labor. In order to be in a position to follow this policy, it has to find the political means to break the resistance of the working class. This political means may well be the Communist Party's cooperation.

The French and the Italian Communist Parties already exemplified this type of policy when they had government seats between 1944 and 1947. At the time, these "Communist" parties called on the working class to "roll up their sleeves" in order to rescue the nation's economy—in other words, to save capitalist profit. Italy's severe economic crisis makes it necessary to resort to the same political solution again.

Once in the government, the Communist Party would find it easier than any other party to urge the working class not to indulge in strikes, but on the contrary to roll up their sleeves and increase productivity. It will also fight against whatever reactions the policies imposed by capital may arouse in factories. Using its influence on the working class in this way, the Italian Communist Party would be fully responsible for making workers pull in their belts to enable capital to thrive.

In fact, not only will the living standards of the working class have to decline before the Italian economy is competitive again. So will those of the whole population, including small retailers and farmers. The owners of small or medium-sized firms, who will be first hit by the crisis, will have to accept being ruined; once they are suppressed, economic concentration and profitability will develop for the benefit of large-scale capital. At present, these social layers hold the Christian Democratic government responsible for their economic difficulties. If the Italian Communist Party comes to power and follows the same policy, they will shift the blame on it and on the working class. So they will turn against the Italian Communist Party, and their anger will no doubt be stirred up by the demagoguery of the

right-wing parties, from the Christian Democrats to the fascists.

Thus one of the benefits the Christian Democrats will draw from the "historic compromise" will be that the dissatisfaction now focussing on them will be redirected toward the Communist Party. Before this coalition even comes into being, one of the main concerns of the Christian Democrats and of the other right-wing parties is to get ready for a swing of the pendulum back to the right, which they expect, and for which the whole policy of the Communist Party begging to become the manager of the capitalist economy is paving the way.

By agreeing to play this role, the Italian Communist Party is taking responsibility for the whole world capitalist crisis. Only a decisive improvement in the world economic situation could enable the Italian bourgeoisie to improve its own lot and thus to do without the drastic measures it considers enforcing against the working class and the laboring masses.

The leaders of the Italian bourgeoisie are of course aware of this. They also understand the consequences such a situation would imply. Unless there is an unexpected improvement in the economic situation, the Italian Communist Party itself will be powerless in preventing the lira from falling. (In fact, the Communist Party's coming to power would perhaps frighten part of the bourgeoisie and increase the flight of capital—as is feared by Agnelli himself.) They could not either straighten out the country's situation in the export market. The most they could do—and this is what the bourgeoisie expects of them—would be to demoralize the working class, to tie it down, and to prevent its fighting back. They would also have the petty bourgeoisie's discontent focus on them and so prepare the conditions for a comeback of the right wing. The Italian bourgeoisie today extends a friendly hand to the Communist Party. But at the same time, it gives itself the means to kick it out of office, in the short or middle term.

So, the bourgeoisie is well aware that, should the crisis deepen—which seems likely today—it will have to resort to still more drastic measures against the popular masses' living standards. In order to do that, it will have to attack working-class organizations, instead of seeking their collaboration. The problem for the bourgeoisie is to give itself the political means of doing just that. Collaboration with the Communist Party in the government would then be excluded. The solution being either governments leaning on Parliament's right and extreme-right wings, or governments headed by army men and fascists. In the first case, the Italian bourgeoisie would probably have, as a fringe benefit, the opportunity to solve its old institutional problem: it would be able to impose on the Communist Party a

constitutional reform of the type established by the French Fifth Republic—greater power to the president of the republic and lesser seats for the Communist Party. In the second case—military or fascist dictatorship—the problem of parliamentary institutions would not even be raised. The choice between these two solutions solely depends on the depth and rhythm of the economic crisis.

So it is that at a time when the Italian Communist Party is nearing power, the other political forces are busy preparing themselves to cope with the possibility of a comeback of the right wing. This explains why Christian Democracy is so eager to constantly appear as the best rampart against communism. As for the fascist movement, in view of the role it feels it could be playing soon, it is training its troops and is once again developing a "strategy of tension" made up of assassinations and raids, coupled with solemn calls for a "return to law and order" and with denunciations of "communist chaos."

Indeed, the working class is facing an immediate danger. Because there is still another political alternative: namely, that the bourgeoisie will do without the interlude of a Communist Party stay in power and will swing to the right from the outset. For example, a military coup could intervene either before or just after the elections to prevent the Communist Party from assuming power. The military and the police force, both closely linked to the fascist movement, might then be tempted to play right away the role they feel they ought to play anyway, in the long run. They might be tempted to put the bourgeoisie before a *fait accompli*. If, today, the bourgeoisie does not seem to favor such an outcome, it is not out of principles. But rather, because an attempt such as this would risk sparking off a huge working-class reaction—as the working class today is neither demoralized nor beaten down. Moreover, the military right wing presently lacks political credibility. This is why perhaps a left-wing interlude will be necessary, during which the reactionary forces will develop their impact and their chances.

Even though this is not a very likely possibility in the near future, it is not to be totally excluded. The danger remains and the working class must prepare itself to face it. In the middle term, it will have to be faced anyway. The bourgeoisie is currently giving itself the political means of making the working class pay for the economic crisis and even the political crisis. And the political line of the Italian Communist Party, far from arming the working class against these dangers, disarms it and ties it down.

Italian revolutionaries will be bearing a heavy responsibility in the coming period. They, and they only, can show the working class the way out. □

Los Obreros Mexicanos Necesitan su Partido

[El artículo siguiente apareció en la edición de mayo 15-31 de *Clave*, publicación quincenal mexicana.]

* * *

La Primera Conferencia Nacional de la Insurgencia Obrera, Campesina y Popular, convocada en primera instancia por la Tendencia Democrática del Sindicato Único de Trabajadores Electricistas de la República Mexicana (SUTERM), discutirá como aspecto central de sus actividades un proyecto de "Puntos de Programa." Este "Proyecto" fue trazado por una comisión creada en la llamada "Coordinadora" que funciona en la Ciudad de México.

Esta primera conferencia reviste un valor en tanto que intentará reunir a corrientes que se encuentran en el campo de la democracia para los oprimidos.

Bien dice el dicho que "la unión hace la fuerza." Los charros, los patrones y los políticos venales que los representan en el Gobierno se encuentran bien organizados: no sucede así con la oposición anticharra y antipatronal.

Algunos de los aspectos más generalizados de las luchas de esta oposición están contenidos en el proyecto de "Puntos del Programa; esto es: el derecho de los trabajadores a poner al frente de su sindicato o de su sección a la dirección que sienten que representa sus intereses, y la lucha por mejorar las condiciones de vida y de trabajo que a cada paso es obstaculizada por los charros y las direcciones vendidas.

Pero hay varias cuestiones fundamentales que no deben ser descuidadas, y que el proyecto no toca. Estas cuestiones son de vida o muerte para la conferencia, así como para las corrientes de oposición y para los sindicatos combativos.

En primer lugar, está la lucha por la independencia política de los trabajadores. Este es el problema central, que corre el peligro de ser ignorado.

Qué Quiere Decir Independencia Política

Para explicar esto, primero pongamos un ejemplo: el fraude en las elecciones al interior del sindicato ferrocarrilero a principios de 1974.

El apoyo al Movimiento Sindical Ferrocarrilero (MSF), que representaba la oposición a la camarilla de Mariano Gómez Villanueva, era abrumador, al grado que en algunas secciones—como la de Matías Romero, Oaxaca—los charros no contaron

con las firmas necesarias para poder integrar una planilla.

Sin el apoyo abierto del gobierno federal, que incluso envió tropas para acallar a los ferrocarrileros combativos, los charros no hubieran tenido la oportunidad de "ganar."

Este problema no se sitúa sólo al nivel sindical. La responsabilidad de los fraudes, de la antidemocracia, de los cotidianos asesinatos y de la violencia ejercida contra trabajadores, campesinos y estudiantes recae fundamentalmente en el gobierno del PRI [Partido Revolucionario Institucional].

Todavía hay quienes creen que en estas luchas hay tres campos: el enemigo, representado por los patrones y los charros; las masas de trabajadores y sus aliados que luchan por sus derechos; y un "árbitro" por encima de los anteriores, representado por el Gobierno.

Mas no sucede así. Lo que han ganado las masas ha sido gracias a su resistencia y por medio de su organización, y no por la benevolencia de los representantes patronales en el Gobierno. De éstos no hemos obtenido nada más que represión tras represión.

Si los trabajadores contaran con su propio gobierno, un gobierno de los trabajadores y campesinos que defendiera a ultranza sus derechos e intereses, no sucederían masacres como la del 2 de octubre de 1968, la del 10 de junio de 1971, o las matanzas de campesinos que acaecen con regularidad en este país.

Los asesinatos y la violencia contra los trabajadores y sus aliados han sido inspirados directa o indirectamente por el Gobierno del PRI.

Muchos nos dirán que la lucha por un gobierno de los legítimos representantes de los trabajadores y campesinos es a largo plazo. Aun aceptando eso, podemos decir que la lucha por democracia sindical y por mejores condiciones de vida y de trabajo sólo la podemos ganar a cierto plazo. El problema que no debemos evadir es que la lucha sindical y la lucha política van íntimamente ligadas.

¿No es pecar de inconsecuencia luchar al nivel del sindicato por una dirección que represente a los trabajadores, y al nivel del Gobierno votar por un representante de los intereses de los grandes banqueros?

La lucha por la independencia política de los trabajadores no es para el día de mañana. Esta lucha es para hoy, si no queremos que el día de mañana los favores que les dé el "Señor Presidente" o los ofrecimientos de diputaciones y puestos públicos acaben por corromper a las direcciones que están naciendo.

Este es el punto central, que se encuentra ausente del proyecto de "Puntos de Programa," que contiene toda una serie de reivindicaciones sociales, políticas y económicas.

Estas son imposibles de conquistar sin explicar y educar en torno a la respuesta de la siguiente pregunta: ¿Quién debe gobernar, los políticos corruptos, o los representantes de los trabajadores y sus aliados?

La respuesta a esta pregunta es tanto más inminente cuando los compañeros organizadores de la Primera Conferencia han explicado a través de la revista *Solidaridad* que el encuentro tiene un carácter político. El problema político central, ante el cual no hay otro que se le equipare, es el del Gobierno, la conducción del Estado.

Cómo se Puede Comenzar a Resolver Este Problema

El problema político del Gobierno comienza en una cuestión por demás sencilla: la definición con respecto a los partidos políticos.

¿Se puede hablar de política combativa en México sin plantear el rompimiento con el PRI? Creemos que no. El mayor mal que aqueja al movimiento de los trabajadores y campesinos es la *colaboración* con el enemigo, tanto a nivel sindical (conocida como charrismo), como al nivel político, con el PRI o con el PAN [Partido de Acción Nacional].

Para dar los primeros pasos firmes en cuanto a la acción política independiente se requiere que los trabajadores comiencen a construir su propio partido político: un partido de los trabajadores, en base al movimiento laboral y en las luchas de las grandes masas oprimidas.

El principal artículo editorial del número de abril del presente año de *Solidaridad* dice en la página 6: "La tendencia democrática de los electricistas juega el papel de centro de la insurgencia obrera y popular, llenando el vacío correspondiente a un partido obrero que no se ha sabido construir."

Ese vacío tiene que ser llenado, y no hay mejor ocasión que el período electoral.

Los Obstáculos

Es obvio que para formar un partido político así existen innumerables obstáculos; pero éstos no son exactamente los mismos que impiden la realización de la democracia sindical: el grado de organización de los patrones, de los charros y de los gobernantes corruptos, que cuentan incluso con instituciones armadas.

Pero estos obstáculos no bastaron para frenar la potencia del movimiento de los trabajadores y trabajadoras telefonistas en la huelga pasada. Nuestro problema no consiste en explicar a los trabajadores la fuerza con que cuenta el enemigo; eso lo

saben de antemano, más bien, consiste en clarificar la idea de la fuerza que tiene el movimiento laboral mexicano, que bien podría borrar del mapa a todas las lacras que lo aquejan si estuviera sindical y políticamente organizado.

Aquí puede surgir una pregunta en torno al obstáculo que presentan los estatutos sindicales antidemocráticos que hacen obligatoria la afiliación al PRI a todo trabajador miembro de un sindicato controlado por éste. Este es uno de los recursos de patrones y charros para victimizar a los trabajadores combativos.

La mayoría de los trabajadores organizados no tiene el derecho a escoger a qué partido desea pertenecer; a cambio del derecho a ganarse la vida con su trabajo, no con el de algún parásito ladrón en el gobierno, el charro, la empresa y el gobierno le obligan a perder su derecho a pensar como él quiera.

Pero exigir el derecho de los trabajadores a afiliarse al partido de su preferencia no constituye un delito desde ningún ángulo en que se le vea.

Estos puntos están debidamente enfatizados en el proyecto presentado ante la Primera Conferencia: ganar el derecho de los trabajadores a pensar como ellos quieran, sin restricción ideológica alguna.

¿Cómo implementar en la práctica la lucha por un partido de las masas trabajadoras? De la misma manera en que muchos trabajadores se han salido con la suya a pesar de que organizar corrientes y tendencias sindicales está formalmente prohibido por los antidemocráticos estatutos charros. Cuando es posible lo hacen abiertamente, cuando no lo es—porque la relación de fuerzas no lo permite—lo hacen de otra forma. Esto no es algo nuevo para el movimiento laboral.

Cómo Empezar

El primer paso hacia la constitución de un partido laborista de las masas trabajadoras, sería el lanzamiento de un candidato a la presidencia de la República en la Primera Conferencia.

Creemos que la candidatura del compañero Rafael Galván* podría inspirar un inmenso apoyo entre la descontenta población mexicana, a pesar de que el tiempo con que se cuenta para la campaña es escaso.

En base a los comités, organismos o formaciones en apoyo a esta candidatura, así como en base a la Primera Conferencia, surgirían los embriones de un partido de los trabajadores.

El paso es gigantesco y por ello no es fácil: se trataría nada menos que del nacimiento de una corriente con apoyo masivo que cuestionara el poder de los

grandes capitales y de los charros en el campo de la independencia política de los trabajadores.

Creemos que mientras más aprieten las fuerzas conjuntas del imperialismo, los patrones, su Gobierno y sus líderes charros, la urgencia de este paso apremia día a día. De otra manera, el proyecto de "Puntos" se queda corto al atacar los efectos y no las causas de la opresión que sufren los trabajadores.

Dos Puntos para el Programa

De la carencia política del proyecto "Puntos" se desprende la visión que presenta a las luchas de los trabajadores. Estas luchas y sus conquistas pueden ser hechas añicos si no se cuenta con un panorama de lo que significa la lucha de los trabajadores.

En la lucha en pos de los mismos puntos que son enumerados en el proyecto, surgirían dos cuestiones centrales más, que al igual que la necesidad de la independencia política, no mencionan los "Puntos."

DOCUMENTOS

Crece el Fermento en las Fábricas Argentinas

[El siguiente artículo apareció en la segunda edición de *Adelante*, con fecha de mayo 12.

[*Adelante* comenzó a publicarse en Buenos Aires luego del golpe militar del 24 de marzo y se describe a sí mismo como "una tribuna de opinión" que "no responde a ninguna organización política. Su finalidad es contribuir al esclarecimiento de los grandes temas nacionales y del contorno internacional."]

* * *

El golpe militar del 24 de marzo pasado (lo hemos señalado en el número anterior de *Adelante*) abrió una fase de ofensiva del capital contra el conjunto de los trabajadores, de características francamente impresionantes. Esta modificación en las relaciones de fuerza pudo operarse gracias a que la burguesía logró poner la capacidad bélico-política de las fuerzas armadas contra un proletariado en pleno proceso de combate y de reagrupamiento pero aún carente de unidad política de clase; esto es, de su partido.

La ofensiva capitalista está a la vista y fue sentida como tal desde el primer día del nuevo gobierno. Lo que pareció menos evidente, empero (aunque *Adelante* lo señaló como un rasgo fundamental de la

El primer problema que surgiría al reclamar los trabajadores sus derechos es la cuestión de quién debe controlar la industria, quién determina los aumentos de salarios, los aumentos o bajas en la producción, los despidos y los aumentos de personal.

El segundo problema es sobre el derecho de los trabajadores a defenderse contra sus agresores: los trabajadores y campesinos constituyen una mayoría de la población y tienen el derecho a defenderse de los ataques perpetrados por minorías charras o patronales. Como lo ha mostrado la lucha con el SUTERM, estas agresiones son reales, existen y se multiplicarán si no son denunciadas y frenadas a tiempo. La única respuesta a las agresiones es la movilización masiva.

Los trabajadores mexicanos necesitan dirección. La están buscando, y la Primera Conferencia se la podrá brindar en la medida en que levante un programa consecuente.

No nos quedemos a medias; los trabajadores mexicanos necesitan un partido político propio. □

nueva situación), es que el conjunto de la clase obrera no había pasado a un estado de real desmoralización y que conservaba intactas sus fuerzas. En estrecha relación con esto, indicábamos otro aspecto sustancial: la unidad gubernamental está asentada en el manejo de un precario equilibrio entre las distintas fracciones de una burguesía dividida, en el cuadro de una monumental crisis financiera que amenaza catastróficamente la totalidad de la evolución económica.

Las manifestaciones de la ofensiva antiobrera prosiguieron a gran ritmo en los últimos quince días: se han producido cesantías masivas en las administraciones del gobierno nacional y de las provincias, en los bancos oficiales y en varios privados, en algunas fábricas, al punto que Ford concretó 800 despidos (que presentó como una "depuración política" de la planta). Pero lo sustancial del ataque se dirigió, en definitiva, sobre los empleados públicos, contra quienes fue lanzada, con antelación, una monumental campaña de publicidad que los presentaba, prácticamente, como el arquetipo del parásito nacional. Esto se dice del trabajador peor pago del país, quien debe sufrir todas las consecuencias de la infernal corrupción de todos los gobiernos que pasaron por la administración del tesoro público. Para los sectores oficiales, lo que resulta ejemplar, en

* Líder central de la Tendencia Democrática del SUTERM.

cambio, es el capitalista que juega en la Bolsa y que, sin ningún desgaste físico, realiza beneficios del orden del 17 por ciento ¡diario!

Sí, la ofensiva patronal marcha a gran ritmo. Sin embargo, se ha producido un primer repunte obrero.

El pasado 8 de mayo, el gobierno resolvió un aumento salarial, francamente irrisorio, del 15 por ciento, incrementos de las asignaciones familiares en un promedio del 50 por ciento y una elevación del salario mínimo (del que no se olvidó de excluir al personal doméstico).

La pregunta es: ¿qué necesidad tuvo el gobierno de anunciar una medida que recién se hará efectiva 42 días después, es decir, con el cobro, el día 20 de junio, de la primera quincena de ese mes? Por qué esta "primicia," este adelantamiento, que en la jerga de la economía burguesa entraña el peligro de suscitar "expectativas inflacionarias?"

Una parte de la respuesta la tenemos en el comunicado del Ministerio de Economía relativo a este aumento salarial. Allí se señalan las "consideraciones (por las que) el gobierno nacional ha dispuesto un incremento general en el nivel de las remuneraciones." La principal de esas "consideraciones" es ésta: "pese a la expresa indicación hecha por el ministro de economía en su discurso del 2 de abril y posteriormente del de trabajo el día 30 del mes pasado, algunos empresarios dispusieron aumentos salariales." Estas "consideraciones" que, insistimos, son sólo una parte (y la menos importante) de la verdad, nos señalan una obligada primera conclusión: el gobierno no tuvo nunca la intención de dar un aumento salarial (así lo reiteró en los días previos el equipo de [Ministro de Economía José] Martínez de Hoz), pero fue obligado a otorgarlo apresuradamente debido a los aumentos que se habían obtenido en las distintas fábricas. ¿No recuerda esto el comienzo de la disgregación del "pacto social" Cámpora-Rucci-Perón-Gelbard,* votado por el congreso nacional (PC incluido)?

La parte de la historia omitida por el Ministerio de Economía es que esos aumentos salariales no fueron una decisión unilateral de las empresas, sino el resultado de la movilización en las fábricas. En IKA Renault hubo un quite de colaboración durante alrededor de 45 días, se obtuvieron algunas categorías, la movilización obrera creció en energía y, estamos seguros, fue un factor principal en apresurar la decisión del Ministerio de Economía.

Pero no fue sólo Renault. En Ema de

Vicente López se arrancó un 30 por ciento de aumento salarial y otro 15 por ciento en concepto de presentismo; no sólo esto: se produjo un paro total contra la intervención del ejército en la planta, obteniéndose así la liberación de obreros detenidos. En Yelmo se desarrolló un quite de colaboración que cesó por la intervención militar, pero que continúa en las secciones de obreros calificados. En Mercedes Benz estaba circulando un petitorio firmado por la totalidad del personal, demandando un 40 por ciento de aumento. En Chrysler San Justo se estaban eligiendo delegados (frente a la desertión de los burocráticos), para presentar los reclamos a la patronal; en la planta de Monte Chingolo hubo una paralización total en repudio al despido de un obrero, la interna burocrática renunció (con planteos de que no está dispuesta a actuar sin la plenitud de los derechos gremiales—¡pero para esto hay que seguir luchando!) y había comenzado la inquietud por presentar un petitorio salarial. En CBS, de Capital, se había obtenido un 15 por ciento, en Cifa, de la Plata, un 15 por ciento, y también se arrancaron mejoras en Kaiser y Ofa. No creemos haber presentado con esto una información completa de la situación en las fábricas (nos ha llegado la versión de aumentos en Molinos, así como de movilizaciones en los metalúrgicos de Avellaneda), pero constituyen la manifestación neta de un definido repunte inicial. El centro de este repunte estuvo, nuevamente, en el gremio del SMATA: en Peugeot, masivos petitorios por aumento salarial; en GM, quite de colaboración por un 50 por ciento; en Eximia, cese de horas extras, también por el aumento, y lo ya mencionado de Mercedes y Chrysler.

Se impone una advertencia fundamental: no existe ninguna posibilidad inmediata de modificar la situación. La clase obrera no puede actuar con mayor audacia—a pesar de la brutal caída del salario—porque está muy desarticulada, lo que daría éxito a una furibunda represión. La iniciativa sigue en manos del gobierno. Pero hecha esta aclaración, señalemos sí lo esencial, lo medular, lo que tiene fenomenal importancia: hay un primer repunte obrero, aún débil y que será zigzagueante y vacilante por mucho tiempo, que conocerá derrotas, pero que marca el esfuerzo iniciado por poner un límite a la amplia ofensiva patronal, límite que constituye de por sí (aunque se obtenga a un nivel de importantes pérdidas de conquistas que no se pueden recuperar en lo inmediato), un importante factor de confianza y de reagrupamiento de la clase obrera y de crisis en la política gubernamental.

Es que esta primera configuración de resistencia obrera se da en el cuadro de una catastrófica situación de la política económica de Martínez de Hoz: su inclinación total y absoluta a los intereses del gran capital (evidenciada no sólo en la reducción del salario real, sino también en

los colosales beneficios otorgados al capital que pasó del mercado de dólares al de los bonos públicos) está desquiciando aún más (¡si cabía!) el sistema financiero, lo que ha llevado las tasas de interés al 300 por ciento anual. ¡Qué régimen de producción puede tolerar semejante sangría! El equipo económico, para salir de esta situación, está preparando un monumental endeudamiento con el exterior, con las consiguientes concesiones al capital extranjero, lo que sólo significaría un desplazamiento en el tiempo de la crisis económica.

El activismo obrero debe comprender que la derrota del gobierno militar requerirá mucho tiempo. Como nunca antes en la historia del país, una derrota gubernamental abriría la perspectiva concreta de la instauración de un gobierno obrero y campesino.

Hay que reorganizar al movimiento obrero, esto con total independencia del Estado, cuya única política es ilegalizar a los sectores independientes y defender la aplicación de la política de Martínez de Hoz. El primer objetivo debería ser hacer elegir delegados, aun para la misma función legal que les es permitida hoy, lo que abriría el camino para un congreso de reorganización sindical. La lucha por la recuperación de los sindicatos requiere la unidad e independencia de clase. □

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* Héctor Cámpora, el representante de Perón en las elecciones presidenciales de marzo de 1973; José Rucci, uno de los burócratas más importantes de la Confederación General del Trabajo; Juan Perón; José Gelbard, ministro de finanzas durante los gobiernos de Cámpora y de Perón.