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Kissinger Greets Chilean Butcher

NEWS ANALYSIS

Kissinger Greet Chilean Butcher

By Judy White

Henry Kissinger left the Santiago meeting of the Organization of American States (OAS) June 10 pleased as punch. A spokesman for the secretary of state reported Kissinger's view that "the mood of this meeting was as good as any I had ever attended."

The bourgeois press shared Kissinger's exuberance. "Good Work in Chile" was the headline on a June 10 *New York Times* editorial summing up Kissinger's contribution to the meeting.

The *Times* and others played him up as a knight in shining armor. He took a "strong stand," the *Times* said, giving the United States "the opportunity, effectively seized by Mr. Kissinger, to return to a traditional stance in defense of human dignity."

The reference was to Kissinger's statement that "the condition of human rights [in Chile] as assessed by the OAS human-rights commission has impaired our relationship with Chile and will continue to do so."

To offset criticism of Washington's role as the mainstay of the Pinochet dictatorship, Kissinger felt compelled to publicly take some distance from what is one of the most brutal and repressive regimes on the planet. But the fact that the OAS meeting was held in Chile, that Kissinger himself attended it and was photographed shaking hands with Pinochet, did far more to bolster the regime than Kissinger's mild criticisms did to discredit it.

The 109-page document of the OAS human-rights commission accused the Chilean junta of issuing their own "human rights" decrees "for the purpose of tranquilizing or confusing world opinion." It reported the cases of 20 political prisoners who were killed, 133 arbitrary arrests in April and May of this year alone, 100 cases of torture, and "several hundred" disappearances of persons who had been detained.

One case described was that of Oscar Arrow Yáñez, a lathe operator from Concepción. Yáñez was arrested September 26 and returned to his home the following day.

"My husband was emaciated, pale, talking incoherently," his wife told the commission. "I helped him wash, he could not do it by himself, and I saw his beaten body. I asked him why it was that way and he said they had hit him a lot."

Yáñez was then taken away again. His body was found September 28 in Alto Lota,

a town near Concepción. The death certificate issued listed the cause of death as "acute anemia"—as a result of bullet wounds.

Such cases are merely examples of a much wider phenomenon, the commission stated.

The OAS report substantiated the findings of a United Nations Commission on Human Rights document issued February 4. Investigators who drew up that document, dealing with the period from September 1975 to January 30, 1976, concluded there had been "no substantial change" in the systematic violations of human rights that began in Chile with the September 1973 military coup.

"Contrary to what has been repeatedly stated by the Chilean authorities," the UN report said, "torture and cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment continue in Chile on a large scale."

Such facts did not stop Kissinger from lauding the Pinochet junta's response to the OAS charges—almost in the same breath as he took his "strong stand." It "sets forth a number of hopeful prospects," he said.

What these "hopeful prospects" might be is not clear. Summaries of the junta's reply in the *New York Times* and *Washington Post* described the document fundamentally as an attempt at justifying the regime's conduct. "It is necessary to maintain legal and administrative measures that limit the freedoms and rights of man in order to protect precisely the most important right of all, the right to a secure life," the junta said.

The reply assailed the OAS commission for relying on "declarations by persons without scruples" or who are "badly informed."

In addition, it spelled out the regime's opposition to the church-sponsored Committee for Cooperation and Peace, which had provided legal aid to prisoners and their families until it was forced to disband in late 1975.

Kissinger had no comment to make on the position expressed by Jamaican Foreign Minister Dudley Thompson that the OAS should pass a resolution calling for the release of all political prisoners in Chile as well as for freedom of the press and political activity.

Nor did the secretary of state make any statements about cutting off economic aid to the Pinochet dictatorship. This is one area where relations are not "impaired." Such aid now totals more than \$1.8 billion.

The OAS conference opened the same day that the International Monetary Fund voted Chile an additional \$90 million loan, bringing the country's debt to the fund up to a record \$530 million.

Predictably, Kissinger took a "stronger" stand on an OAS report on human rights in Cuba: "An initial review confirms our worst fears of Cuban behavior. We should commend the commission for its efforts—in spite of the total lack of cooperation of the Cuban authorities—to unearth the truth that many Cuban political prisoners have been victims of inhuman treatment."

He said nothing about Pinochet's refusal to cooperate in human rights investigations.

Nor did he mention the status of human rights in other countries of Latin America. Not a word was mentioned about the military dictatorship in Argentina, responsible for the murders of hundreds of trade-union activists, foreign refugees, and political dissidents and for official policies denying all rights to political and trade-union association. Not a word about the Uruguayan regime, which holds 1 out of every 450 citizens behind bars. Not a word about Brazil, Paraguay, Haiti . . .

And, finally, Washington was undoubtedly overjoyed to keep discussion on Cuba off the topic that has made the United States squirm at recent meetings of the OAS—the question of the full normalization on the economic and diplomatic levels of U.S. relations with Cuba. □

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Washington's Overture to Vorster

To the delight of the apartheid regime in Pretoria, Washington has announced that Secretary of State Henry Kissinger will meet with South African Prime Minister John Vorster in West Germany on June 23 and 24. The talks will be the first such high-level meeting between Washington and Pretoria since 1945. According to State Department officials, its purpose will be to discuss how the two imperialist powers can avoid a "race war" in southern Africa.

At the top of the Kissinger-Vorster agenda will be the question of how the two regimes can dampen or derail the struggles of the Black masses in Zimbabwe (Rhodesia) and Namibia against white minority rule. There is little doubt that the potential for widespread opposition to Pretoria among the twenty million Blacks within South Africa itself will be another topic of discussion.

The meeting comes just two months after Kissinger's tour of several Black African countries, during which he pledged increased U.S. pressure on the Rhodesian regime to reach a settlement with the Zimbabwean nationalist leaders. American officials indicated that Kissinger's scheduled conference with Vorster is a logical sequel to that tour.

By agreeing to hold the talks, Washington is seeking to reassure Pretoria that the tactical shift on Rhodesia will not fundamentally alter American imperialism's long-standing alliance with the South African regime itself. The meeting will represent a public reaffirmation of Washington's intention to continue—and even strengthen—its ties with the apartheid regime, which is the most powerful bastion of imperialist rule on the African continent.

In this regard, Kissinger's occasional expressions of disapproval of the racist apartheid system are nothing more than a demagogic bid to deflect criticism from Washington's actual aid to Pretoria, which has included the sale of millions of dollars worth of military aircraft and other equipment.

The South African news media immediately recognized the significance of the meeting and hailed it as a diplomatic breakthrough for the Vorster regime. The Johannesburg *Star*, for instance, published a banner headline proclaiming the announcement of the talks as a "South African victory." □

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Syrian Troops Step Up Attack in Lebanon

By David Frankel

With a determination that he has never shown in confronting Israeli aggression, Syrian President Hafez al-Assad is moving forward step by step with his attack on the Palestinian liberation movement in Lebanon.

Assad's Baathist regime poses as the vanguard of the Arab nationalist movement, the defender of Arab independence and especially of the rights of the dispossessed Palestinian people. Like many capitalist regimes in the colonial world, it also claims to be socialist.

The civil war in Lebanon has cut through Assad's rhetoric. The government-controlled radio in Damascus can charge—as it did June 8—that Fatah, the largest Palestinian guerrilla organization, is "serving Zionism and imperialism." But such monstrous lies cannot conceal the fact that it is the Syrian army that is fighting in Lebanon for objectives supported by Tel Aviv and Washington.

In a June 3 editorial, the *New York Times* commented on the "convergence of interests [that] has appeared between Syria, the United States and Israel," calling attention to the possibilities opened for Israel and its imperialist backers:

First priority must go to the urgent task of pacifying a land torn by murderous civil war for an entire year; but it is no less urgent for world diplomats to bring their ingenuity to bear in exploring how the new lineups can be used for softening the wider Arab-Israeli conflict.

... A little discreet and imaginative diplomatic footwork, combined with a lot of luck, could turn this moment into the catalyst for new negotiations toward a longer-reaching Syrian-Israeli accord.

However, Assad has encountered unexpected difficulties in "pacifying" Lebanon. Since May 31 he has sent an estimated 13,000 Syrian troops, backed by 350 to 400 tanks, into that small country. The scope of Assad's military buildup was indicated by Geoffrey Godsell in the June 11 *Christian Science Monitor*. He said:

According to Monitor contributor William Blakemore . . . there is massive Syrian military might behind the most advanced Syrian positions inside Lebanon. He spoke on the phone of heavy Soviet-built tanks and units of rocket-launchers barely concealed behind knolls and hillocks in the mountains. On the Syrian side of the border, he saw a mile-long line of tank-transporters parked by the roadside after bringing Syrian tanks up to the Lebanese border. . . .

All signs point to the Syrians being still determined to move militarily to crush Palestinian and Muslim leftist opposition to the kind of

Protests Denounce Syrian Invasion

Palestinians in the West Bank town of Nablus took to the streets June 9 to protest the Syrian invasion of Lebanon. The protesters, who carried placards denouncing Syrian President Hafez al-Assad, were supported by some merchants, who closed their shops. Israeli troops attacked the protest, wounding three persons.

Protests also took place in the United States. Seventy Arab students sat in at the Arab Information Center in Washington June 7 to voice condemnation of Assad's policies. A picket line was held outside the Syrian mission to the United Nations in New York that day as well.

solution Syria wants for Lebanon's 14-month-old civil war.

In addition to regular units of the Syrian army, an estimated 7,000 troops—many of them Syrian regulars—are operating in units of Saiqa, the Palestinian guerrilla organization set up and controlled by the Syrian regime. Another 3,000 men in the Palestine Liberation Army have also been operating in Lebanon under Syrian orders.

Although a cease-fire between Assad's invading army and the Lebanese leftists and Palestinians confronting it was agreed to June 12, all indications are that this precarious truce will only mark a pause in the battle.

New York Times correspondent James M. Markham reported the assessment of one official of Fatah in a June 12 dispatch from Beirut. "What the Syrians are doing is changing tactics, changing gears, if you will," the official said. "They're digging in, clearing out pockets of resistance in the Bekaa Valley, pulling out of Tripoli, cutting their losses where their positions are hopeless."

Another Palestinian told Markham two days later: "There is no pullback, there is no cease-fire. There is a war, a filthy war."

In the mountains east of Beirut, Syrian and right-wing Christian forces were reported to be coordinating shelling and ground attacks on leftist and Palestinian positions. Meanwhile, Syrian tanks and infantry continued to push into southern Lebanon despite the supposed truce, capturing two Palestinian guerrilla bases.

The Syrian forces in the south, including mobile artillery and rocket units, were

operating only fourteen miles from the Israeli border. Military officials in Tel Aviv indicated June 13 that they were not concerned as long as the Syrians were killing Palestinians.

Assad's troops have taken heavy casualties in their attempt to occupy Lebanon. Palestinian sources claimed that in two days of fighting, June 12 and 13, the Syrian force in southern Lebanon lost seven armored vehicles. This column is heading toward Saida, Lebanon's third largest city.

Earlier that week the Syrians had tried to occupy Saida and failed. *Washington Post* reporter Douglas Watson described the aftermath of the battle in a June 9 dispatch. "The burned-out wreckage of seven Syrian tanks and armored personnel carriers, destroyed in a vicious street battle here yesterday, litter a three-block stretch of this city's main street."

Saida's defenders also captured nine Syrian tanks, Watson reported.

The invading Syrian troops encountered fierce resistance elsewhere in Lebanon as well. In Tripoli, the country's second largest city, house-to-house fighting was reported June 9, and Syrian forces pushing on Beirut were stalled in the mountains east of the capital.

One tactic adopted by Assad has been to try to starve Beirut. Markham reported in a June 10 dispatch:

... the Syrians have prevented food and gasoline from entering the city.

Western Beirut is in a sharpening state of siege. Black-market gasoline, which is extremely hard to find, sells for as much as \$8 a gallon. Supplies have been officially rationed for fire fighters and ambulances.

There has been a run on supermarkets for canned goods since frequent and lengthy power cuts have caused frozen meats and other foods to spoil. There is no bread since there is no flour, and some hospitals are running into their reserve stocks of medication.

According to Markham, the blockade on gasoline and flour was continued by the Syrian forces following the announcement of the June 12 truce.

Assad has also resorted to indiscriminate terror attacks. Both Saida and Beirut have been bombed, rocketed, and shelled by Syrian forces. A June 9 Associated Press dispatch reported: "... Beirut radio said that Syrian jets had twice bombed and strafed Palestinian refugee camps near Sidon [Saida] . . . killing 12 persons and wounding five."

Markham reported in a June 8 dispatch that "a huge cloud of black smoke rose from the Palestinian camp of Bourj Brajne [in Beirut], which has been shelled by pro-Syrian forces." Sabra and Shatila, two other refugee camps on Beirut's southern outskirts, were also shelled.

In the past, it has been the Israeli regime that has mounted terror attacks on precisely these Palestinian refugee camps.

By attacking the Palestinians, Assad is undercutting not only the struggle of the oppressed Palestinian people for its rights, but also the possibility of Syria winning back the Golan Heights from Israeli occupation. A defeat for the Palestinian liberation movement in Lebanon will strengthen Israel's grip on all the occupied Arab land it holds.

This was the case after King Hussein—currently Assad's closest ally—carried out his ferocious attack on the Palestinian liberation movement in Jordan in September 1970. Hussein thought this would open the way for him to regain the Israeli-occupied West Bank along the lines of a plan raised at the time by then-Secretary of State William P. Rogers. But the "Black September" massacre only increased Hussein's dependence on Washington and destroyed the biggest factor pressuring Israel to make a deal.

However Assad, like the other Arab leaders, is more afraid of the Arab masses than of Israel and its imperialist backers. By intervening in Lebanon against the Palestinian and Lebanese masses, he has already dealt a heavy blow to the Arab cause. Pressure that had been building up against Israel as a result of the mass Palestinian protests on the West Bank and in the Galilee area has been considerably relieved.

While Assad attempts to "pacify" Lebanon, the other Arab regimes are maneuvering to gain whatever advantage they can out of the changing situation. The Iraqi regime, for example, has reportedly moved additional troops up to the Syrian border. The Syrian Baathists engaged in similar troop movements in 1970—even sending tanks into Jordan—during the Black September massacre. The object in both cases was to win acclaim as the champion of Palestinian rights without going so far as to actually help the Palestinians under attack.

Egyptian President Anwar el-Sadat has also sought to take advantage of the developments in Lebanon. Sadat and Assad have been engaged in a sharp polemic since the Egyptian-Israeli accord on the Sinai was signed in September 1975. The Palestine Liberation Organization joined in the attack on Sadat for dividing the Arab ranks in the struggle against Israeli aggression.

Now, Sadat is trying to claim the mantle of defender of Palestinian rights. On June 6 he announced that the Voice of Palestine—which he closed down for criticizing his regime in September 1975—would be allowed to resume broadcasting from Cairo.

The Libyan and Algerian regimes have also entered the situation through a proposal for a joint Arab peace-keeping force. But Assad has made clear that while he would welcome such a force, it would be only a token presence that would serve as a cover for the continued Syrian occupa-



Oilphant/Washington Star

tion of Lebanon. "Obviously," *Monitor* correspondent Godsell pointed out June 10, "his [Assad's] intention is that they [troops of the joint Arab force] should help him by giving Libyan and Algerian blessing to the Syrian military presence—while he continues to call the shots."

A show of such support would help bolster Assad, who faces growing opposition at home. The British *Guardian* pointed out in a June 9 editorial comment:

All is not well back in Damascus. . . . Assad stands accused of collusion with Washington and Jerusalem; of making a mockery of Ba'athist militancy by bashing Palestinians; of dragging the country into an expensive fiasco; of having renewed the UNDOF [United Nations Disengagement Observer Force] mandate meekly, and of neglecting the Israelis on Syria's Golan Heights in favor of attacking Arabs in another Arab state. Above all, he has exposed Syria's prestige to the risks of a crushing defeat. In 1970, Syria intervened ineptly in Jordan, and in the fallout Assad ousted President Atassi and General Salah Jadid. Unless President Assad finds a way out soon (or is helped out) he may have set up in Lebanon an identical device for his own self-destruction.

An additional factor that must be taken into account is the role of the Soviet regime. Moscow has not been enthusiastic about the Syrian invasion, but has refused to take a stand against Assad's murderous attack on the Palestinians.

A joint communiqué issued June 4, as Soviet Premier Aleksei Kosygin was ending a visit to Damascus, reaffirmed the "determination" of the two regimes "to continue to facilitate the ending of the bloodshed and the restoration of security and peace in Lebanon, and to ensure her integrity, independence and sovereignty."

A Soviet statement on June 9 took note of the fact that following Assad's invasion "bloodshed continued" and now "flows in even greater streams." But again, Moscow refused to call for the withdrawal of Syrian troops or to condemn the bombing and

shelling of the Palestinian refugee camps.

The following day the Syrian National Progressive Front, which includes the Syrian Communist party, issued a statement supporting Assad's policies. This was in line with Moscow's policy. When Kosygin was in Damascus, the June 8 issue of *Soviet News* reported, "leaders of the Syrian Communist Party spoke of the activities of their party aimed at strengthening the progressive regime in the Syrian Arab Republic. . . ."

While refusing to denounce Assad's intervention in Lebanon, Moscow has warned against intervention by the imperialist powers. The Soviet government's June 9 statement pointed out that the possibility of French intervention had been raised and that the Pentagon had sent troops into the area aboard ships of the Sixth Fleet. It noted that "the Middle East is much closer to the Soviet Union than to those who issue such threats."

The U.S. Sixth Fleet has forty-four ships, according to the Pentagon. Bernard Gwertzman reported in the June 10 *New York Times* that Washington has ordered "the aircraft carrier America and two escort frigates into the eastern Mediterranean to be available for evacuation and to show American interest."

Gwertzman reported the following day that "the United States wants to keep the Arabs aware of the possibility that if fighting flares up again, there is always the risk that either Israel or other Arab states might become involved."

As this barely concealed threat indicates, the situation in the Middle East remains explosive. The interests of the Lebanese and Palestinian people demand that Syria get out of Lebanon now, that the other Arab regimes stay out, and that any moves by Tel Aviv, Paris, or Washington to capitalize on the situation be opposed. □

Growing Tension as Italian Elections Approach

By Gerry Foley

Tensions are building up as the June 20 elections near in Italy. Since May 28, when bodyguards of a fascist deputy in Sezze opened fire on hecklers, killing a young bystander, shooting incidents have multiplied. On June 8, a commando group gunned down the Genoa prosecutor and two aides.

Persons claiming to speak in the name of "left" guerrilla groups, as well as of the fascist National Vanguard, called the press claiming responsibility for the attack. However, the statement most publicized was attributed to the "New Partisans." It was suspiciously provocative:

"The execution of [Prosecutor] Coco by the armed proletarians is part of the normal activity of our commandos. They have declared war on the parliament of this state, which is starving the Italian people."

On June 4, fascist goons opened fire on supporters of left groups in Rome. In its June 13 issue, the Roman weekly *L'Espresso* ran a picture of the fascist deputy Michele Marchio, waving a revolver. It speculated that the fascists were trying to create an atmosphere reminiscent of the 1936 Spanish elections, when a left victory also loomed.

While the Italian bourgeoisie is not yet as desperate as that, capitalist political control over the masses is weakening.

The main bourgeois party, the Christian Democrats, has lost its credibility. The bourgeoisie gave impetus to the Catholic party after the war because its old formations were discredited. Christian idealism was supposed to unite progressives and "decent" conservatives, workers and "productive" capitalists. Now, after thirty years in power, the Christian Democrats stand exposed as having no program for solving the country's problems.

The big bourgeoisie itself is discouraged by the unwieldiness and corruption of this demagogic party, by the collapse of its Catholic ideology. That is why Fiat trust head Giovanni Agnelli tried to promote a new secular party to begin to take some of the weight off the Christian Democrats.

But the small "middle-of-the-road" parties Agnelli's attempt was based on do not have the strength or cohesiveness to accomplish such a project. That was why a demagogic party was necessary in the first place, and why it remains irreplaceable, even when it is clearly in decline.

Because of the opportunism of the workers parties, the collapse of the Christian Democrats' credibility among the

masses has been slow. But it has been inexorable, and now the point of no return seems to have been reached. In the June 13 *Washington Post*, the anti-Communist correspondent George F. Will indicated the problem the bourgeoisie now faces:

The Vatican is still resolutely anti-Communist. But, then, as recently as 15 years ago confessional booths were adorned with lists of Communist and Communist-supporting organizations (including the largest trade union federation), and Catholics could be denied the sacrament until they repented any support of such organizations. Such opposition never halted the party's growth.

And now the arrival of the party at the threshold of power has startled the Western world, which is like a homeowner who is surprised one morning by a glacier at his back porch. The glacier didn't come all the way over night.

The advanced rot of the bourgeois political system poses problems for the CP as well. It does not want to push too hard for a share of power lest the whole setup collapse, precipitating a confrontation between the workers and the capitalist rulers. CP leader Berlinguer made that clear in an interview with representatives of the U.S. weekly *Time*, published in the June 14 issue of the right-wing magazine:

We haven't become more impatient. It's the events—unfortunate events—that are pushing ahead faster. I say unfortunate because we are not enthusiastic about entering the government at the present time, not only because we have no particular personal ambitions, but because it would mean going into the government in a very difficult moment for Italy, with a heavy inheritance from past governments.

Berlinguer said explicitly that he did not want a CP victory in the elections. The "ideal outcome," he said, would be the following: "A certain advance by the party, in order to make it clear and irrefutable that there is no way of doing without Communist participation in the leadership of the country."

In fact, the CP tried to avert taking responsibility for the government in advance by including a large number of "independents" on its ticket who are not under its discipline.

In Naples, the CP is running twelve independents out of a total of thirty-nine candidates. One of these, Judge Terranova, has already served in parliament as the representative of a Sicilian district. He voted with the government majority on key bills, in particular those having to do with "public order."

Unless there is a marked improvement in the economy soon, the capitalists will

have to cooperate with the CP leaders if they are going to continue ruling Italy by parliamentary means. It is the only party that has a chance to get the majority of the workers to accept class collaboration.

Both Washington and the Italian capitalists are reluctant, however, to let down their anti-Communist defenses.

A columnist close to the liberal wing of the State Department, Joseph Kraft, indicated in the April 26 *New York Post* the way Washington looks at this problem:

"... big opportunities are ... opened up by the potential entry of Communist parties into the existing political systems of Western Europe. They can play a constructive role in holding down strikes and unrealistic wage claims."

Kraft said he had originally favored official warnings about the dangers of a CP take-over:

My notion was that such statements, by underlining the risks ahead, might help rally European voters to anti-Communist parties and government.

I also believed there was no risk of alienating the European Communists. They sought the blessing of Washington to legitimize themselves in their own countries. Warnings about NATO would only make them more careful and accommodating.

However, on seeing how much such statements tended to damage the pro-U.S. parties, Kraft came to the conclusion they were counterproductive.

The fact that such considerations are on the minds of State Department officials is indicated by the statements of administration representatives reported in the June 13 issue of the *New York Times*. They said the threats were made in the first place at the request of Christian Democratic politicians and then dropped on their advice.

The Ford administration probably decided to divulge this to counter right-wing Republicans backing the Reagan campaign who charge that the White House is not following a hard enough anti-Communist line in the Mediterranean. The effect, of course, will be to further discredit the Christian Democrats.

In a situation where the Italian bourgeoisie's own political representatives are so weak, it will be difficult to find the delicate adjustment necessary for both the CP bureaucrats and capitalists to preserve the political deceptions both need to survive. But as the crisis deepens, the CP tops have already shown that they do not want to lead the workers to apply a socialist solution. □

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Strike Wave Sweeps Angolan Cities

By Ernest Harsch

Luanda and other cities in Angola have been swept by labor unrest since early May. Industrial workers have staged strikes, slowdowns, and other actions to back demands for higher wages and better working conditions.

The May 30 *New York Times* reported that "industry and transportation in the large cities are at a near-standstill because of strikes for higher wages."

Among the enterprises affected by the strike wave are the sisal and textile companies, Siga and Textang. Speaking at the headquarters of the Rangel Neighborhood People's Commission in Luanda May 9, Interior Minister Nito Alves admitted, "We have serious problems at Textang, and beyond that we have other industries affected in exactly the same way." According to the May 20 issue of the Lisbon daily *Jornal Novo*, the Textang workers are demanding a minimum wage.

In the May 18 *Washington Post*, reporter David B. Ottaway described the situation in the plants:

Workers no longer necessarily accept orders from their would-be bosses—be they state or private managers—and sometimes hold meetings to decide whether to obey or refuse. Conflict between workers and management even in recently nationalized factories here [Luanda] has become of such concern to the government that party and labor union leaders are now going from factory to factory to explain why discipline and production must be the order of the day.

The recent strike actions are the most significant in Angola since the massive workers upsurge that began after the April 25, 1974, coup in Portugal and lasted for about a year.

Although workers won higher wages in many industries during that strike wave, their gains have since been whittled away by inflation. Many basic food items are often scarce or unavailable in the capital, with a head of cabbage selling for as much as \$5. Unemployment has increased sharply.

The current labor unrest has also been partly fueled by the rising expectations of the population since the end of the civil war. *New York Times* correspondent Marvin Howe noted in a May 12 dispatch from Luanda that much of the ferment in the factories "is attributed to trauma among people who find themselves freed from colonial oppression and the immediate dangers of war and now expect a better life."

The MPLA (Movimento Popular de Libertação de Angola—People's Movement

for the Liberation of Angola) regime has responded to the legitimate demands of the Angolan workers as it has to every other sign of opposition—with repression. According to the May 20 *Jornal Novo*, dozens of workers accused of taking part in the strikes have been arrested by the MPLA's political police, the Direção de Informação e Segurança de Angola (DISA—Angola Directorate of Information and Security).

The MPLA, which claims to favor "socialism," had already established its strikebreaking credentials well before the current unrest. When it participated in a coalition regime in early 1975 with the Portuguese imperialists and its two main nationalist rivals, the FNLA and UNITA,* the MPLA issued appeals to workers to halt their strikes and even sent troops against striking dock workers in Lobito.

Later, when the MPLA became the dominant force in Luanda, it took over the independent unions and workers committees, arrested workers leaders who did not knuckle under, instituted speedup, and lengthened working hours—all under the slogan of a "battle for production."

In its efforts to break the current strike wave, the MPLA leaders have relied heavily on "socialist" demagoguery to persuade the workers to return to their jobs.

In a policy statement on the MPLA's "Socialist option," Prime Minister Lopo do Nascimento claimed that the labor demands were "unrealistic" and called on the workers to make "immense sacrifices." When he visited nationalized factories in Dondo, about 100 miles southeast of Luanda, "his theme was sacrifices for national reconstruction," according to Howe.

Officials of the MPLA's trade-union formation, the União Nacional dos Trabalhadores de Angola (National Union of Angolan Workers), have also toured the factories in an attempt to talk the workers into giving up their struggles.

The MPLA has tried to justify the arrests of those workers who remained unconvinced by the calls for economic "sacrifice" by charging that the strikes were fomented by "leftists," "saboteurs," "traitors," "servants of imperial colonial-

*Frente Nacional de Libertação de Angola (Angolan National Liberation Front); União Nacional para Independência Total de Angola (National Union for the Total Independence of Angola).

ism," and agents of the FNLA and UNITA. On May 11, Minister of Labor David Aires Machado accused some workers of "opportunism" and of "resisting socialism."

The May 15 issue of *Jornal de Angola*, which is controlled by the MPLA, claimed that the "incidents" at the Siga and Textang factories had been caused by "undisciplined elements, with no ties to the MPLA, and other agitators who infiltrated the working class to create a counter-revolutionary climate. . . ."

Jornal de Angola then went on to defend the Stalinist concept that socialism in Angola can be achieved only by first passing through the stage of a "people's democracy" that includes the so-called patriotic bourgeoisie. It noted, however, "Some elements within the working masses have shown dissatisfaction with the concept of stages, which must objectively be gone through, and have opened themselves up unthinkingly to all types of ideological subversion—the first step toward even more extreme actions."

Although the MPLA's crackdown on the left began in 1975, it reached a new stage in April, when the DISA arrested more than 100 members and leaders of the Revolta Activa (Active Revolt, a dissident tendency within the MPLA), the Organização Comunista de Angola (OCA—Angola Communist Organization), and other groups.

One of the most well known figures arrested was Joaquim Pinto de Andrade, a former honorary president of the MPLA and a leader of the Revolta Activa. In an interview with *Jornal Novo* published in the May 6 issue, Andrade said that he was released after a few hours.

Other imprisoned dissidents were not so fortunate, however. Gentil Viana, a former adviser to MPLA President Agostinho Neto, has gone into a coma. According to prison authorities, Viana's condition was caused by a hunger strike. But according to an acquaintance of his, it was the result of his treatment in prison.

The MPLA also appears to be preparing a new offensive against the continued guerrilla activities of the UNITA, according to Howe in a June 3 dispatch from Huambo, UNITA's former stronghold in the central plateau region. Howe reported that the Benguela Railway had been attacked twice in two days by UNITA guerrillas and that at night "firing can be heard on the outskirts of the city. . . ."

Although the MPLA has administered Huambo for nearly four months, Howe said, MPLA officials "concede that Unita still has wide support, particularly in outlying villages." □

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1,600 at Women's Liberation Conference in Barcelona

By Joanna Rossi

BARCELONA—Fifteen hundred women and about a hundred men assembled in Barcelona May 26 for the opening session of a four-day Catalan women's liberation conference. A large Catalan flag inscribed with the words "Las Jornades Catalanes de la Dona" (Catalan Women's Days) hung at the front of the large hall in Barcelona University.

The conference, organized by the Catalan Commission of Nongovernmental Organizations, was legal and had broad participation. Women of all ages came from about 100 organizations, including such groups as the Association of Friends of the United Nations, neighborhood women's groups, the World Union of Catholic Feminist Organizations, the Association of University Women, and several women's liberation groups. Also participating were women from the illegal left and opposition political parties and trade-union organizations.

The conference was conducted, with simultaneous translation, in both Spanish and Catalan.

During the opening session, Ana Vela, president of the Women's Department of the Friends of the United Nations, expressed confidence that the conference would lead to a new resurgence of the women's liberation movement.

She pointed out that the conference itself was the fruit of previous struggles for democratic rights, in which women had fully participated.

Journalist Anna Balletbó provided some background information. The victory of Franco in the civil war, she explained, represented a huge loss for Spanish women. Under the Second Republic of the 1930s women had won legal equality with men. Abortion and divorce were legalized. But these gains were liquidated by the fascist regime.

The conference participants discussed a wide range of topics, including the legal discrimination against women in Spain; discrimination on the job and in education; the role of the family; and the lack of adequate public facilities such as child-care centers, laundries, and restaurants. Other themes discussed were women and the media, women and sexuality, and the problems of unmarried mothers and rural women.

At times the discussion was heated. The family was denounced as an economic unit used by capitalist society to keep women in unpaid drudgery. One woman took the floor to defend the family structure and



Joanna Rossi/Militant

At the podium of historic women's conference.

woman's role within it, but this caused such an uproar she left the hall without finishing her remarks.

A paper on "Women and Politics" evoked wide debate. The paper urged women to become more active in political parties and to pressure these parties to take women's needs into account. It advocated the "competitive intervention" of women in political life and called on the parties to give women leading positions in proportion to their weight in the population.

This thesis was opposed by the two best-known feminist groups in Barcelona, ANCHE (Asociación Nacional para la Comunicación Humana y la Ecología—National Association for Human Communication and Ecology) and the Barcelona Feminist Collective (Colectivo Feminista de Barcelona, commonly called the "Collective"). Two of the most prominent leaders of the latter are author-lawyer Lydia Falcón and her daughter Regina Bayo.

Women in ANCHE have been widely identified with the call for a non-exclusionary, united, and democratic women's movement, independent from political parties. They assailed the position paper,

charging that its direction was to subordinate women's needs to parties that have never shown themselves responsive to women. They called on women to break "with the typically masculine values of leadership and competitiveness" to build their own movement around their own demands.

The radical feminists in the "Collective" also denounced what they called the manipulation of women by the traditional political parties. "Collective" women are opposed to women belonging both to a political party and to a women's group. They call on women to leave the parties and construct their own political party. They see the primary antagonism in society as one between women and men.

The mood throughout the conference, in spite of the considerable dissension, was one of elation and excitement. "It's just fantastic," one woman told me. Her arms were filled with pamphlets and women's liberation posters being sold in the lobby outside the meeting hall. "We always had to whisper about these things. Here it's out loud. It's out in the open at last."

A former political prisoner took the floor to speak about women prisoners who face extremely harsh conditions in the Franco-

ist jails, including vicious acts of sexual torture. As she took up the microphone, the assembly rose in a single body, shouting, "Amnesty! Liberty!"

On the final day of the conference reading and approval of "conclusions" took place. These included in part:

The right to work without discrimination in training, choice of occupation, pay, or promotion. An end to domestic work.

Abolition of all discrimination on the job for reasons of sex, civil status, or pregnancy.

For household workers (maids, cleaning women), access to all rights of other workers, including union rights and Social Security benefits.

Socialization of domestic work through collective services, financed with public funds and democratically run by those who use them.

Compulsory, public, lay education, free and antiauthoritarian, with no discrimination against women. Coeducation; revision of present textbooks; abolition of discrimination in sports, art, culture.

General amnesty, especially for those who have committed acts considered criminal by a legal system that discriminates against women.

Abolition of all laws that discriminate against women.

Revision of the nuclear family, the divorce law, the stipulations giving men total rights over the family. Free, twenty-four-hour child care. Recognition of all rights for single mothers and equal rights for all children, "legitimate" or "illegitimate." Abolition of laws that regard adultery and common-law living relations as crimes.

The right of women to control their own bodies. Sex education, free contraception for both women and men, legalization of abortion and its inclusion under Social Security. Abolition of laws labeling homosexuality and prostitution as acts "that are dangerous and requiring social rehabilitation."

The final part of the conference was a street demonstration. Women poured from the conference building and began marching toward the center of town. Chants of "Long live the struggle for women's liberation" resounded in the street. But the action was short-lived. Within ten minutes and only three blocks from the university, cars and vans loaded with riot-equipped police closed in. The demonstrators vanished within minutes. No arrests were reported.

The daily papers covered all aspects of the conference, including reprinting its conclusions. They spoke of the beginnings of a powerful feminist movement. It was clear many women felt that way.

One of the most moving parts of the conference took place toward the end, when an elderly woman from Andalusia took the floor. She began by speaking of

March 8, 1938, "the first time I remember celebrating International Women's Day in Spain.

"Since that time," she went on, "there have been forty years of silence and suffering. We shed our blood in the civil war; we spent our time in the prisons of

this country. We fought against the boss and the union bureaucrat. We fought for everyone's rights and for our own." Tears streaming down her face, she concluded, "I am already finished, but I can see here in this conference the ferment of the new movement. It makes me very happy." □

Spanish Women and the Law

The following outline of Spanish law in regard to women is taken from an ANCHE pamphlet entitled *Law—Oppression, Repression, and Prison*.

Family and Marriage

A woman can be punished for leaving the "family home" before twenty-three years of age unless she gets married. When a woman marries, she loses many of her civil and political rights.

The father is the head of the family. He has authority over the woman and the right of "*patria potestad*" (parental rights) over children after they reach the age of seven. Women are responsible for caring for children under seven years of age.

Article 57 of the Civil Law stipulates: "The husband must protect the woman and she must obey the husband." The article states that there must be an individual responsible for decision making within the marriage. This, "nature, religion, and history give to the husband."

A married woman needs the authorization of her husband to testify in trials or to enter into judicial proceedings. When she is the accused, this stipulation is lifted.

In 1975 a law was passed giving a woman the right to control the property or assets she brings into the marriage. However, a woman still has no legal say over goods acquired after marriage, nor can she bequeath anything without her husband's permission.

If a woman has a child by a man other than her husband, the legal husband still has full parental rights over the child. Moreover, the husband or father has the power to decide whether a woman can live with the companion she chooses.

Adultery is a crime carrying a possible sentence of up to six years in prison. A woman can be accused of this "crime" by her husband, and cannot receive bail unless he withdraws the charge. A man can be charged with adultery only if he brings his "mistress" into the family home. Extramarital relations by men are considered normal.

Articles on rape penalize the man, but also degrade and humiliate the woman, as well as limit her freedom.

Contraception and Abortion

The manufacture, advertising, prescribing, and sale of contraceptives are illegal—although their use is not.

It is estimated in Spain that about 800,000 women use contraceptives. But the absence of information and legal sale leaves women, especially the most exploited and oppressed, subject to unwanted pregnancies.

Only contraception for women is illegal. Contraception for men is not, because it is viewed as protecting the man from possible disease, not as protecting the woman from possible pregnancy.

Abortion is a crime. Women who have abortions and those who perform them are subject to criminal charges.

The woman who has an abortion is liable to up to six years in prison. The same penalty can be applied to parents who cooperate in the abortion.

It is estimated that there are as many abortions in Spain as births. Official organizations put the figure at 400,000 abortions a year. This does not include the abortions of women who go to extremely costly clinics (these are illegal but tolerated) or of women who go outside the country.

At the present time there are women serving sentences in Spanish prisons both for adultery and for abortion.

Prostitution

Prostitution "does not exist" in Spain, according to a decree-law of 1956. Nevertheless, trials continue to take place. The prostitute can be sentenced, but the men involved have total immunity.

Women and Work

Contradictory laws apply in this area. One, seldom enforced, calls for equal pay for equal work. But a large number of labor laws establish and justify discrimination in salaries and work categories. One piece of legislation, covering a branch of the steel industry, explicitly stipulates a lower salary for women.

The worst jobs and typically "feminine" tasks are still the domain of women. For example, male nurses are forbidden to wash the sick or care for children.

Some female occupations are not in-

cluded under any legislation. Domestic workers, for example, receive no Social Security benefits and have no fixed hours of work or vacations.

Women and Education

The Government Education Law stipulates that teaching methods "will be adjusted in relation to sex." Different criteria exist for training men and women. There are different textbooks for boys and girls as well as separate study classes and games. Women are barred from entering some professions, because of the lack of training schools. Only two technical schools exist for women compared with fifteen for men.

Women and Prisons

When a woman is arrested, she not only undergoes the same harsh treatment and tortures that men face, but is also treated as a "whore" and a "degenerate." Sexual tortures and rape of women prisoners are common. Threats against children are also utilized to terrorize women.

Semipenal, so-called beneficial, institutions for women, intended as centers for "rehabilitation" and "reeducation," have been set up.

One institution of this kind is the Patronato de Protección a la Mujer (Association for the Protection of Women). It was established for women who have committed "crimes" not considered serious enough to warrant jail terms, but whose conduct or situation is called a "disturbance of the public order."

Women can be confined to these institutions for prostitution, alcoholism, drug addiction, sexual promiscuity, or leaving home, among other reasons. —J.R.

UN Conference on World Crisis

A United Nations Conference on Human Settlements opened in Vancouver, Canada, May 31. The problem, a document prepared for the conference said, is that "in rich and poor countries alike, human settlements are failing to meet people's needs."

The document pointed out: "Symptoms of the crisis are visible everywhere. Poverty and unemployment; the mass exodus from rural areas; urban slums and squatter settlements; a worldwide shortage of housing; air pollution, traffic jams, noise, ugliness and the inability of governments to provide such basic services as water, sewage and electricity."

Nearly half the cities of Latin America do not have piped water or sewage systems. In some parts of Africa and Asia, only 20 percent of dwellings have piped water. Shantytowns pieced together from scrap lumber, sheet metal, and cardboard house a growing percentage of the world's population.

Chinese Workers and Peasants Have the Right to Intervene in the Affairs of the Nation

[The following editorial appeared in the April 15 issue of *October Review*, a Trotskyist monthly magazine published in Hong Kong. The translation is by Jerry Chow.]

* * *

In the context of the sharp internal struggle being waged inside the CCP [Chinese Communist party], large-scale mass demonstrations broke out in China's capital, Peking, in early April. The most important took place on April 5. A large number of persons had placed wreaths around the Monument to the People's Heroes in the center of Tien An Men Square to honor the late Premier Chou En-lai and Mao's [first] wife, Yang Kai-hui, who was executed by the Kuomintang in 1935. The masses had also put up wall posters expressing their deep dissatisfaction with the way the Party Center has handled the internal struggle. On April 5, angered by the overnight removal of the wreaths, tens of thousands of persons gathered in Tien An Men Square to stage a protest demonstration. Some demonstrators went so far as to set fire to several vehicles and to a building believed to house an office of the Public Security Bureau [political police]. According to an estimate made by a foreign correspondent, about 100,000 persons massed in the square on that day.

There is no doubt that this was a spontaneous mass action on a large scale.

There is no doubt that a new awakening has begun among the revolutionary workers and peasants of China.

A vast number of people have come to realize that they must independently intervene in the internal struggle in the CCP, and go on to intervene in national affairs.

How did the Peking regime treat the masses? It mobilized troops and "worker-militiamen" to disperse the crowd. The mayor of Peking, Wu Teh, tape-recorded a message that boomed out over loudspeakers on the square, attributing the mass action to the work of "a small minority of ambitious, evil men taking advantage of the Ching Ming festival [in honor of the dead] to create a political incident." The April 6 editorial in *People's Daily* declared: "We should direct the spearhead of the struggle at the party capitalist-roader who has refused to mend his ways" and "it is necessary to stop the class enemies from spreading rumors, creating disturbances. . . ." It condemned "the handful of class enemies who fabricate political rumors in an attempt to confuse and poison people's minds and attack and split the party Central Committee headed by

Chairman Mao Tsetung." The editorial proposed to "track them down sternly and deal resolute blows at them."

The Peking regime headed by Mao Tsetung totally ignored the just demands raised by the masses and has forbidden them to intervene in national affairs. If the masses dare to intervene, they are branded "class enemies creating disturbances" and are to be "tracked down sternly and dealt resolute blows." According to foreign reporters, several hundred persons were arrested after the demonstration!

But the masses will not be intimidated. In point of fact, the internal struggle in the CCP has fundamentally shaken the rule of the Peking regime. We can expect that in the future the masses will utilize various forms of struggle in a creative and bold way to continue their fight. The CCP can temporarily contain the masses, but as long as the contradictions within the country remain and the internal struggle within the party continues, the masses will be impelled to attempt to intervene.

The intervention of the masses into national affairs is the only way to solve the current political crisis. Therefore we say:

Workers and peasants of China, arise! Stand up in your great numbers and in full force! Wage a determined struggle to win what is your right and duty—to be the masters of the nation. If the bureaucrats dare to suppress you, redouble your efforts!

Soldiers, militiamen, do not suppress the people. Stand on their side, because only they are your brothers and sisters, while the privileged bureaucrats are the enemies of the workers and peasants.

April 7, 1976

Béjar Outlives Usefulness for Peruvian Junta

Former Peruvian guerrilla leader Héctor Béjar was fired from his job at the Lima daily *El Comercio* May 25. Even though *El Comercio* was already controlled by the Morales Bermúdez regime, the Peruvian head of state is on a campaign he calls the "second phase of the Peruvian revolution," which entails—among other things—removing "excess" personnel from state-run enterprises and liberal critics of the regime from various posts.

Béjar had provided the Peruvian junta with left cover since his release from prison in 1970, when he accepted an important post in Sinamos (Sistema Nacional de Apoyo a la Movilización Social—National Network for Supporting Social Mobilization).

Labour Government Under Fire From Student Teachers

By Skip Ball

LONDON—When the Labour government announced its massive cuts in social expenditure in February, 25% of all the cutbacks were in education. An article in the *Sunday Times* analysing how the areas for cuts were chosen speculated that education was singled out because the Labour cabinet assumed education cuts would cause the least stir.

The cabinet's assumption has misfired. When students in Scotland's teacher-training colleges found out in May that the cuts meant that more than two-thirds of the 3,000 student teachers eligible to qualify this year would have no jobs, they occupied all ten teacher-training colleges in Scotland to demand jobs for all qualified teachers.

The action by the Scottish student teachers quickly spurred similar action throughout Britain. By May 29 more than 35,000 students were occupying 95 of Britain's 140 teacher-training colleges. The students called for an end to the government cuts, jobs for all qualified teachers, and a reduction in class size to no more than thirty. The actions are the most widespread and sustained in the history of the British student movement.

The government fueled the growing wave of protest by announcing May 27 that it was increasing student grants only 17%, less than the 21% inflation the previous year and half the 33% increase the National Union of Students (NUS) was demanding. An NUS delegation to the Department of Education and Science was told the same day that no money would be forthcoming to meet any of the student teachers' demands. The actions quickly spread to education departments of polytechnics and universities. The Executive of the NUS called for a national demonstration against the cuts and for the right to work, and called for a national conference of those involved in the struggle against teacher unemployment.

The conference, attended by more than 300 delegates, was held in Manchester June 5. The NUS Executive's motion was defeated in favour of a motion from colleges supporting a resolution put forward by the International Marxist Group (IMG). This motion called for joint action with trade unionists lobbying the Trades Union Congress (TUC) conference June 16 and focused the struggle on the Labour government and its policies on cuts and unemployment. The resolution called on students to broaden their local struggles to win support from the labour movement.

Student teachers do not have a record of militant struggle in Britain. But the severe unemployment the government is holding over their heads as well as the direct link this has with the social-service cuts has put them in the forefront of the struggle to mobilize opposition to the cuts. Of 40,000 teachers who will qualify this year, the government estimates at least 15,000 will not find jobs.

In addition to the cutbacks in teacher hiring, the government is threatening to cut drastically the enrollment of student teachers. A confidential report prepared by the Department of Education and Science disclosed by the *Times Higher Education Supplement* calls for reductions that "will mean that 69,500 places in England and Wales will have to be shed over an eight-year period from 1973 to 1981" in teacher-training colleges. This could mean the closure of 37 colleges and polytechnic education departments by 1981, the May 28 *Times* said, adding that "16 colleges are definitely to close."

Secretary for Scotland Bruce Millan said the enrollment in Scotland would be reduced by 28%. For teachers going into primary education this would be a reduction of 42%.

Demand for teachers, however, is far from low. NUS President Charles Clarke reported that in the Strathclyde region of Scotland, which includes Glasgow, 14,000 children are sent home from school for some part of the week as a result of understaffing.

In order to cut across the government's strategy of dividing the victims of cuts in different social services and pitting them against each other, the student teachers have broadened their demands to include opposition to all cuts. Also, they have decided to call for the right to a job for all, explaining that their fight is part of the overall fight against unemployment.

The students have also called for the teachers union to give unemployed teachers full union rights upon qualifying.

Education Minister of State Gerry Fowler told a delegation from NUS that reduction of class size and jobs for all teachers qualifying this summer were ruled out "by decisions already taken by the Government on public expenditure," the *Guardian* reported. Fowler went on to say that "the teachers are in a better position than most people," and urged students who have just spent three to four years training to be teachers to look for other jobs.

The spread of support for the occupations and other actions has been quite rapid. Labour support has risen steadily. "The impact of the student occupations is on a *different level* from the relatively passive response of the labour movement to previous student action," the IMG Student Commission said in the June 3 *Red Weekly*. "The students' struggle has struck a chord in the working class, rekindling the belief that it is possible to fight back against the Labour Government's anti-working class policies."

On May 28, the Scottish TUC demanded the government create 2,000 teacher jobs in Scotland. The president for the South Wales miners, Emlyn Williams, sent a letter of support to an occupied college in Bristol, England. The National Association of Teachers in Further and Higher Education, which includes most of the lecturers in the teacher-training colleges, passed a motion of support for the students at its national conference.

The leadership of NUS that calls itself the Broad Left was not behind the initial occupations in Scotland. It came in only after they had already swept across Scotland. On the other hand, members of the IMG led the first occupation in Moray House in Scotland and helped spread the first occupations. The IMG has campaigned for the occupations to be "organising centres. Control the college—but don't stop there; tour the other colleges, the union and Labour Party branches—win massive support for the struggle," one of its leaflets said.

IMG leader Val Coultas, who is a member of the NUS Executive, has travelled up and down the country. The issues she is most often called upon to speak about are the need to link up the fight against cutbacks in education with the trade unions and the fact that education is not a special case which can be spared from the cuts.

The IMG is supporting a march on the Department of Education and Science as part of the June 16 day of action called by the Manchester conference, and is organizing a tour by a leader of the recent student occupations in France. One lesson of the French student struggles the IMG supported at the June 5 conference but which was not adopted was a call for a national coordinating committee elected from the conference delegates and including NUS leaders in addition. □

New Evidence of Use of Torture in Iran

By Majid Namvar

In a report released May 28, the International Commission of Jurists charged that imprisoned opponents of Shah Mohammad Reza Pahlavi are subjected to "psychological and physical torture."

The report, written by William J. Butler, head of the New York City Bar Association's Committee on International Human Rights, adds to a growing list of recent revelations of torture of Iranian political prisoners.

"... there can be no doubt," the two-year study concludes, "that torture has been systematically practiced over a number of years against recalcitrant suspects under interrogation by the SAVAK [secret police]."

The report further points out that the shah has "personal control" over SAVAK, whose members are "expertly trained by the Israeli Secret Service, the CIA and AID agents." SAVAK officers, the report documents, are empowered by legislation to act as "military magistrates" and are "accountable to no-one except the Shah."

The most detailed account of the ongoing torture in the SAVAK dungeons was given to Butler by the well-known poet and former political prisoner, Reza Baraheni. He spent more than three months in jail in 1973, and was released after a successful international campaign in his defense.

In his statement Baraheni told of having been threatened, beaten, whipped, and forced to listen to the screams of prisoners being tortured. The commission's report quoted him as saying: "They hang you upside down, and then someone beats you with a mace on your legs, or uses the electric baton on your chest or on your genitals, or they lower you down, pull your pants up and one of them tries to rape you while you are still hanging upside down." (For a more detailed account by Baraheni of the treatment of political prisoners, see *Intercontinental Press*, December 8, 1975, p. 1716.)

In a section titled "The Suppression of Political Opposition," the report outlines the use of mass detentions and political trials, covering the period since the downfall of the Mossadegh government in a CIA-sponsored coup in 1953 up to January 1974. It provides a partial list of names of more than 500 political prisoners, of whom 195 have been either executed by firing squads or killed in their cells, and the rest sentenced to terms ranging from one year to life imprisonment.

Although the International Commission of Jurists' seventy-two-page report is a

blow against the shah's dictatorial rule, it is unfortunate that it supports some of the shah's false claims of progress in such areas as women's rights and the country's educational system.

The section of the report under the heading "Some Achievements of the White Revolution" is based on government statistics concerning the shah's "land reform" program and "anti-illiteracy campaign." According to these statistics, about two million peasants obtained unspecified amounts of land over a period of ten years ending in 1972. However, this token land reform—which was not coupled with necessary measures to equip and train the peasantry—has resulted in an actual decline of about 75 percent in agricultural production.

"For this reason," the report says, "many contend that the entire redistribution system has been a failure, except from the point of view of the landlords, who were compensated handsomely by money payments or by taking shares of stock in lucrative government corporations."

Despite this fact and the government's own admission "that it will take years, if not generations" for the land-reform program to be successful, the report projects a positive picture of this aspect of the "White Revolution."

The report also attempts to cast the shah's "anti-illiteracy campaign" in a favorable light. However, the attempt runs into a contradiction with statistics provided elsewhere by the government. For example, in a report prepared for last summer's "Ramsar Educational Conference," one of the shah's many annual shows, the vice-minister of the court admitted: "On an average yearly basis the Literacy Corps has been able to produce 138 thousand literate persons. But because of the country's increasing rate of population growth, there has been an annual increase of 156 thousand illiterate persons."

Another unfortunate and misleading point of the commission's report is its portrayal of the regime as a defender of women's rights. This is based on some statistics on the number of high-ranking women in government—two senators, eighteen members of parliament, twenty-eight lawyers, and so on.

Thus, the report fails to point out that women in Iran, especially those of working-class and peasant families, are among the most oppressed members of society.

Economic and social discrimination against women by law, religion, and tradition is widespread. For example, an Iranian woman agricultural laborer, in some parts of the country, earns half the amount a man earns doing the same work. Concerning inheritance, a daughter receives half as much as a son. And in a court of law, it takes the testimony of two female witnesses to be equal to that of a single male witness.

The report also contains an inaccuracy concerning Reza Baraheni's release from prison. Baraheni was released after 102 days, not 120 days as the report indicates, because of a worldwide effort by writers, artists, and intellectuals in his behalf. The report mistakenly suggests that Baraheni was released from prison "after agreeing to make a television recording condemning Communism."

This charge was fabricated by the shah's regime to discredit the courageous poet, and sow disunity in the ranks of the movement to oppose repression in Iran. In a letter to *Harper's* magazine, January 1975, Mohammad Falsafi, the national secretary of the Committee for Artistic and Intellectual Freedom in Iran (CAIFI), took up this issue in detail and refuted the charge.

The release of the commission's report received wide publicity in the United States and Europe. The *New York Times* carried a front-page article on the commission's findings in its May 29 issue. Another article, by the syndicated columnist Jack Anderson, was printed May 29 in many newspapers across the United States. Anderson said that "Butler's most sickening information came from a courageous Iranian poet, Reza Baraheni, who at great personal risk furnished a statement on his own observations in a Savak dungeon." The result of Butler's investigation was the subject of the ABC national television's May 29 news commentary.

To counter the impact of recent defense activities abroad publicizing the plight of Iranian dissidents, the deputy director of SAVAK, Parviz Sabeti, invited the *New York Times* Tehran correspondent, Eric Pace, to a "prison tour."

"The interview and the prison tour were apparently granted," Pace reported May 28, "largely in a response to recent criticism abroad."

"At a prison run by the secret police, several inmates were produced who said as security officials stood by that they had not been tortured."

The shah's increasing dependence on his political police to keep him in power has, in turn, further alienated him from the people of Iran. This has apparently reached such proportions that Jack Anderson said, "Intelligence reports claim . . . he is dangerously isolated and aloof." □

American Primaries Stir Little Enthusiasm

By David Frankel

Since February, thirty Democratic and Republican party presidential primary elections have been held in the United States. Television time and newsprint have been lavished on coverage of what is variously dubbed "Campaign '76," "Decision '76," and "The Picking of the President '76"—but the media campaign has failed to spark much excitement among the American people.

Although small turnouts in the primaries are not unusual, the consistently low level of voter participation this year has led to extensive comment by analysts in the capitalist media. "In no election since the last World War," *New York Times* columnist James Reston said June 9, "have the party, labor, business, or intellectual leaders seemed so uncertain about the voters as they do this year."

'Democracy on the Skids?'

The combined Democratic and Republican party vote in the primaries has averaged less than a third of the voting-age population.

Some commentators have tried to blame the electorate. Harriet Van Horne said in the liberal *New York Post* April 7:

It cost New York State \$2 million to hold a presidential primary yesterday and a mere 20 per cent of the eligible voters turned out for it. If that statistic doesn't scare you, it should.

It's shaming to admit it, but a democracy in which 80 per cent of the voters do not give a damn is a democracy on the skids.

A more sophisticated view was given by Reston May 28. He asked, "Does it really matter between Ford and Reagan, or between Carter and Humphrey, Udall, Church, and Brown? All of them would be bound by the commitments of the past at home and abroad, but it *does* matter about getting the White House and the Congress together on policies the American people can respect and support."

Reston's point is well taken. Both the capitalist candidates and the two capitalist parties are virtually interchangeable; they can all be depended on to carry out the basic policies of American imperialism. The problem facing the ruling class is that none of their candidates seems to be doing very well in inspiring "respect and support" for capitalist policies.

Two big roadblocks stand in the way of this enterprise. The most obvious is the distrust and alienation caused by Vietnam and the revelations—beginning with Watergate—about the government's viola-

tions of democratic rights. This distrust has been compounded by the attempts of most of the candidates to avoid discussing what policies they would follow if elected.

In an article in the June 2 issue of the *New York Times*, Leonard Silk reported a recent public opinion poll which found that only 2 percent of those asked expressed "a great deal of confidence" in politicians.

"These results," he said, "have caused the candidates on both the Republican and Democratic sides to focus their campaign efforts on convincing voters that they themselves can be trusted—and that they will repair America's battered institutions."

'Trust in the Lord'

Carter, the Democratic party front-runner, has campaigned on the basis of his smile and his supposed sincerity and honesty.

California Governor Edmund Brown, Jr., another Democratic party hack, also urges people to trust him. "I have no goals," he says. "They will evolve as I go along."

President Ford, explaining his policies to a Christian group in California, mentioned the biblical advice to "Trust in the Lord with all thine heart and lean not unto thine own understanding."

Speaking in Charlotte, North Carolina, Ford assured one group of women, "I think homemaking is good for America."

This type of inane rubbish has not helped alleviate the widespread cynicism inspired by the capitalist candidates. This mood was captured in a recent article by *New York Times* columnist Russell Baker, who said:

On the hunch that Carter might be changing Carters in the middle of the campaign, I checked with Campaign Techtronics Inc., the political construction company which produced 17 new Richard Nixons between 1953 and 1972. Lee Jerbil, their brilliant chief of new politician design, insisted that the company had not been approached by Carter and, in fact, was so busy putting finishing touches on its brand new Jerry Brown that it couldn't produce a new Carter before the Democratic convention if it got the contract.

He agreed, however, that Carter was desperately in need of a new Carter. . . .

In the jargon of political handicappers, Carter has lost his momentum. It isn't surprising. In the old days, it took the public two or three years to get tired of a politician. Jerbil built a new Nixon in 1954 that didn't have to be replaced until 1958. Nowadays, however, the public's rate of politi-

cian consumption is terrifying. A new Presidential candidate is lucky if he lasts longer than a cake of bath soap.

Those who would like to restore the "respect and support" of the American people for the Democratic and Republican parties also face another stumbling block. To the extent that the capitalist candidates do address the issues that concern the masses of people, their policies are more openly reactionary than in the past.

Reagan's campaign to rally those right-wingers who are still smarting from the American defeat in Vietnam has received the most publicity in this regard. However, the shift to the right among the major capitalist candidates has been universal. On the economic front, for example, no candidate is using the rhetoric of Lyndon Johnson's "war on poverty."

Carter and Brown describe themselves as "fiscal conservatives," and make clear that they favor cuts in spending for social-welfare programs, as do Ford and Reagan.

Morris Udall has run as the liberal alternative in the Democratic party race, but his positions are frequently indistinguishable from Carter's. Both Carter and Udall favor wage controls. Both have endorsed the phony Full Employment Act. This act does not even pretend to aim at full employment. As Udall explained in a recent interview, "The target is 3 percent [unemployment], from 8 percent to 3 percent within four years." And, it contains no provisions to achieve even that figure.

When the misnamed Full Employment Act was amended to exclude teen-agers from consideration as unemployed, Carter endorsed it too. Hobart Rowen reported in the April 12 *Washington Post* that Carter "stressed that the 3 per cent 'adult' unemployment goal now in the bill . . . is about equivalent to an unemployment rate of 4 to 4.5 per cent for the economy as a whole, which he says is a reasonable goal."

"Jimmy Carter is committed to full employment, but it needs definition," one of his advisers explained.

In the realm of foreign policy as well, there is little difference between Carter and Udall, although Carter's image is more right-wing because he was one of the most persistent supporters of the war in Vietnam. After mass murderer William Calley was convicted in 1971 for his role in the Mylai massacre, Carter condemned the result as "a blow to troop morale," and

declared American Fighting Men's Day in Georgia to back Calley.

Udall himself was no crusader against the war, but during the primaries he insisted that he would not get involved in "brush-fire wars" and that he would cut the Pentagon budget while maintaining a "lean and efficient" military.

In an interview in the March 15 issue of *Time* magazine, Udall said he favors "having spies in the Kremlin, in the P.L.O. [Palestine Liberation Organization], and in the Portuguese army. We need a professional CIA and we should give back its dignity."

"I would be very tough in our negotiations with the Soviet Union," Carter promises, while Udall says, "I think we must be tougher bargainers, and we must insist on using whatever leverage we have."

On Israel, Carter has sharpened his call for the survival of the Zionist settler-colony as "a viable and peaceful nation," promising U.S. might would be used to guarantee that Israel be maintained "as a Jewish state" if he were president. Udall says, "I think we [must] make it clear to the Arabs that Israel is going to survive and that it's not negotiable, that we will supply them [the Israelis] with the means to defend themselves."

Rallying the Racists

Although the capitalist candidates have sought with all their skill to avoid discussing the real issues facing the American people, there has been one question they have addressed. They have concentrated their fire against the busing of schoolchildren in desegregation plans. Moreover, Ford, Reagan, and Carter have all vied with each other in sending signals to the racists on how they view the issue of Black rights in general.

Early in March, Senator Henry Jackson won the Democratic party primary in Massachusetts by campaigning as the "respectable"—and effective—alternative to Alabama Governor George Wallace. Then Carter made headlines with his statement in defense of the "ethnic purity" of urban neighborhoods.

"I see nothing wrong with ethnic purity being maintained," the Georgia racist said April 2. In an April 6 statement defending this view, he added: "I'm not going to use the Federal Government's authority to circumvent the natural inclination of people to live in ethnically homogeneous neighborhoods."

Ford followed Carter April 13, saying that although he would never use a term like "ethnic purity," he agreed that "ethnic heritage" should be preserved. "Ethnic heritage is a great treasure of this country, and I don't think that Federal action should be used to destroy that ethnic treasure."



Mauldin/Chicago Sun Times

Ford had already declared his solidarity with the antibusing bigots in Boston and other cities. After making clear that he, like Carter, would do nothing to enforce the laws against discrimination in housing, he returned to the attack on school desegregation.

The White House announced that it was seeking a legal case as a vehicle for asking the Supreme Court to review the question of court-ordered busing. The possibility of federal intervention in favor of an antibusing suit brought by the racists in Boston was publicly raised. Ford backed down on that in face of protests from labor and civil-rights forces. But on June 4, he said he planned to send legislation to Congress that would limit the authority of the courts in remedying segregation in public schools.

Finally, on June 6 Ford came out for the "right" of white parents to send their children to segregated schools, as long as they were private. The president explained that "individuals have rights," and that parents "willing to pay whatever the cost might be" had the right to send their children to segregated academies.

Reagan, whose racist positions are well known, reaffirmed them June 2. He called on Congress to outlaw "forced busing." As Reagan sees it, segregation is really a matter of "freedom of choice." He promised that if elected he would tell the federal government "to get off the back of state and local school systems, to leave the setting of policies and the administration of school affairs to local boards of education."

Udall was the only candidate in the primaries who argued that "the Constitu-

tion has to take priority over the disruption and the inconvenience busing causes." But his emphasis was against busing.

"Busing is not the most desirable way to integrate schools," Udall said in an interview in the April 2 *New York Times*. "It is not the most desirable way to move toward equal education. . . . I want to do all I can within the confines of the Constitution to reduce and minimize the amount of busing that's necessary."

The atmosphere being fostered by the Democratic and Republican parties is not the same as when Lyndon Johnson was sponsoring civil-rights bills and promising that "we shall overcome."

Why the Shift?

It is no accident that the capitalist candidates are no longer promising anything to Blacks. The attack on Black rights is the cutting edge of a broader offensive by the ruling class against the living standards of the American people as a whole.

For example, from most of the primary campaigns one would never know that American cities are being hit with devastating cutbacks in social services. William E. Farrell commented in the *New York Times* April 1:

The problems of older American cities, which played a role in the political campaigns following the urban riots of the mid-1960's, have been muted in this year's Presidential campaign. . . .

The situation has provoked suspicions among some civil rights advocates, as well as some politicians, that the term "big cities" may be becoming a euphemism for "poor and black," the way [the] words "law and order" did in previous election campaigns.

On June 3, Carter said he hoped the Democratic party platform does not "become just a wish-box or Christmas tree of promises no administration can fulfill."

"I want to be sure the American people will not be misled by promises that cannot be delivered," he said. As examples of such promises, Carter cited "the promise of instant answers to all the fiscal needs of state and local government . . . instant national health insurance . . . and instant federalization of welfare programs."

Some commentators in the capitalist media have made the false claim that the shift to the right in the arena of capitalist electoral politics is a reflection of the mood of the American people. There has been talk about the "new conservatism" supposedly sweeping the country.

The fact is that any attempt to use the capitalist primary elections as a barometer for the political situation in the United States is doomed to failure. In these elections a small percentage of the population tries to express its views by looking for nuances among the capitalist candidates. Their votes are frequently divided

among eight or ten different contenders and are rarely cast on the basis of clearly stated positions.

Newspaper headlines proclaimed a Reagan landslide after the Republican primaries in Georgia and Texas, for example. But the real proportions of the landslide were less than impressive. The Reagan vote accounted for 2.56 percent of the population in Georgia, and about 2.2 percent in Texas.

Moreover, the minority of the population that does vote in the primaries is heavily weighted toward more conservative layers in the society. Whites vote more heavily than Blacks in proportion to their numbers, and voter participation rises with age. The average age of those Americans who vote is about forty-five.

Finally, the outcome of the primaries is largely determined by money. Jackson spent \$400,000 in Massachusetts and \$650,000 in New York, the two states he won.

Senator Birch Bayh and former Senator Fred Harris, two of the early liberal contestants, dropped out of the race, largely because they found they could not raise enough money to keep their campaigns going. The capitalists did not want too many liberal promises in this campaign.

The same corporate interests that bankroll the Republican party also back the Democrats. Columnists Rowland Evans and Robert Novak gave the example of one fund-raising meeting for Carter:

"Saying yes were presidents and executive vice presidents of U.S. Steel, Westinghouse, Allegheny Ludlum, Alcoa, National Steel, the Mellon Bank, Jones & Laughlin, Koppers and other corporate giants—about 20 executives in all, only two of whom were Democrats."

Carter spent \$800,000 just on radio and television in one two-week period near the end of the primaries, the *New York Times* reported June 5.

Other factors must also be taken into account in looking at the primaries. Many of those running are not aiming for the nomination. Some are being groomed for future elections, others are trying to amass delegates who can be traded at the party conventions for future posts. The influence of local party machines is also considerable. They can organize to get out the vote for a particular candidate with promises of jobs, government contracts, and cash bribes from the public till.

Even in countries where the working class has a mass party of its own, the capitalist electoral system continues to distort the real sentiment of the masses. In the United States, where there is no mass workers party of any kind, every aspect of the electoral setup maximizes the degree to which real issues are obscured and the real desires of the masses are frustrated.

Large numbers of Americans have not yet begun to break from the Democratic

and Republican parties. But dissatisfaction with the capitalist parties is growing. One reflection of this is the wider support being gathered by the Socialist Workers party (SWP) presidential campaign this year compared to the past.

While still modest given the political

monopoly wielded by the twin parties of U.S. imperialism, the socialist campaign of Peter Camejo and Willie Mae Reid for president and vice-president is the biggest, most widely publicized and widely supported campaign in the SWP's history. It is a sign of things to come. □

In Tribute to Arturo Gomes

By Andrés Romero

[The following article appeared in the June 2 issue of *Combate Socialista*, the weekly newspaper of the Portuguese Partido Revolucionário dos Trabalhadores (PRT—Revolutionary Workers party, a group that has declared its adherence to the Fourth International). The author is a European correspondent for *Revista de América*, a monthly magazine that was published in Buenos Aires before the March 24 military coup. The translation is by *Intercontinental Press*.]

A few days after it happened, I received a telephone call informing me of the death of Comrade Arturo Gomes, a leader of the Partido Socialista de los Trabajadores [PST—Socialist Workers party, a revolutionary-socialist organization in Argentina], who suffered a fatal heart attack.

Arturo joined the Trotskyist movement in 1958 as a student leader in the midst of the big student mobilizations that were then sweeping Argentina. He fought to link up these struggles with the heroic battles being waged simultaneously by the proletariat, which culminated in the great general strikes of 1959.

After he joined the *Palabra Obrera* group (the organization of the Argentine Trotskyists in that period), he rapidly became one of its principal leaders. In fact, he was the cadre who, through long and patient work, played the leading role in establishing the party in the La Plata region, not only among the large student population there but also in the strong concentrations of workers employed in the packing houses, heavy metalworking complexes, textile plants, and service industries.

The effectiveness of his work is reflected by the solidity of the PST organization in La Plata, where, despite the murder of about ten comrades over the last year, there has been no retreat in building the party. On the contrary, after every blow, the influence of the Trotskyists has been extended by their tireless work in the schools and factories.

However, several years ago the demands of the class struggle obliged Arturo, a member of the Central Committee, to take on additional responsibilities in the day-to-

day leadership of the party. Thus, in the last period of the Onganía-Levingston-Lanusse dictatorship, during the electoral campaign in 1973 when the PST challenged Peronism, and in all the great struggles that helped the PST develop a working-class base on the national level and qualitatively increase its forces, Arturo was a member of the Executive Committee and the Secretariat of the organization. For more than a year, continuing as a member of the Executive Committee, he was the political editor of the party's organ, *Avanzada Socialista*.

Arturo was a member of the Argentine delegation to the Tenth World Congress of the Fourth International. At that time, he was elected to the International Executive Committee of the Fourth International with consultative status (reactionary Argentine legislation prevents the PST from affiliating to international organizations).

Death came upon him unexpectedly, as our comrade was beginning a new and difficult struggle in the underground against the repression of the military dictatorship, the same kind of fight he fought so many times before, a fight in which the party continued its work among the masses, and on a higher level than before, organizing the resistance and gaining strength as an alternative political leadership to the fading Peronists.

This is a loss we feel deeply, because it will be hard to fill the place he left. His loss is also deeply felt by those who knew him, because of the extraordinary human and moral qualities that made him a comrade who was always approachable and ready to deal patiently and good-humoredly with the most difficult problems. He corrected the errors of others without giving offense and without pointless rebukes. He always taught us that building the party is the task of a team in which we all have an important and necessary place.

An Argentine Trotskyist has died, a militant supporter of the Fourth International, a Bolshevik leader, a beloved comrade. We take leave of him with a fond farewell and a promise to carry on the revolutionary endeavor to which he contributed so much and through which he will remain with us. □

Nicaragua—The Mounting Pressure From Below

By Cecilia López

In most of Latin America the organizations following a political strategy of guerrilla warfare are in full retreat. In Nicaragua, where no guerrilla movement had previously been able to consolidate a firm base, a guerrilla struggle began in late 1974, which the repressive Somoza regime still has not succeeded in crushing.

In its earlier guerrilla efforts, as for example in Bocay in 1963, in Pancasán in 1967, in Yaosca in 1969, and so on, the Frente Sandinista de Liberación Nacional (Sandinista National Liberation Front) was not able to sustain combat in the mountains for more than a few months at a time. At present it has carried out sporadic fighting for a year and a half, and the sole fact that it still remains in the mountains is a record in itself.

The savage response by the Somoza regime has forced the greater part of the peasantry to flee the combat zones, abandoning their land and crops. The guerrillas have fallen back toward more and more sparsely populated regions, where there is little access by road. The United States, meanwhile, is funding the Instituto de Bienestar Campesino (Peasant Welfare Institute), which is promoting cooperatives in the region and opening access roads.

Guerrilla struggle is nothing new in Nicaragua. As far back as 1928-32, Gen. Augusto C. Sandino led a successful guerrilla campaign against American intervention. The heroic example of his struggle against American imperialism helped inspire a broad antiwar movement in the United States and won enormous sympathy and support from various progressive sectors throughout the Americas.

Somoza, the Batista of Nicaragua

The Somoza regime itself has its historical roots in the Sandino struggle against American imperialist intervention. When domestic pressure against the intervention and the military defeats it suffered forced the American government to withdraw from Nicaragua in 1933, it left a local army in place of the marines. This army, the Guardia Nacional (National Guard), was trained and equipped by the marines and put under the command of a puppet general, a reliable servant of the imperialist interests. This general was Anastasio Somoza, the man who in 1934 assassinated Sandino and unleashed a pogrom against the peasants in the northern region, the center of Sandino's operations.

In 1956, when Somoza was assassinated by Rigoberto López Pérez, he was no longer simply a national puppet representing American interests. In the intervening years, using his control over the army as a base, he amassed a considerable personal fortune. His family became one of the most powerful and dynamic sectors of the national ruling class, establishing financial alliances with virtually all the dominant sectors in the national economy. In short, his dictatorial use of political power enabled him to fully integrate himself into the ruling class and make his family one of its most powerful sectors. This created a contradictory situation. On the one hand, Somoza's use of political power for his private economic benefit weakened other sectors of the ruling class, who would have preferred the ordinary laws of capitalist competition. This created enormous tension and opposition in these sectors. On the other hand, Somoza's use of his monopoly of political power for his own economic ends also encouraged a strong tendency toward financial association with him, so as to share in the privileges made possible by the arbitrary use of state power.

Historically, the ruling class has been subject to both tendencies. In some instances, the tendency to oppose the regime that was weakening it has been dominant. In other circumstances, the tendency has been to ingratiate itself with the regime and work with it. Most of the time the two tendencies have coexisted in various economic sectors, with the result that the coalitions opposing the Somoza regime have been weak and vacillating. Somoza was able to divide them with ease, allying with some sectors against others. Moreover, Somoza created a military bureaucracy whose principal source of income was linked to activities outside the law. These lumpen-officials secured the greater part of their income through a percentage from prostitution, a monopoly over gambling, and extortion of bribes from the citizenry. This created a fairly broad social layer with an economic interest in maintaining the Somoza governmental apparatus.

On a number of occasions, disaffected officials of a certain degree of honesty organized plots against Somoza inside the army. But the social structure of the Guardia Nacional made it impossible to find within it a social base sufficient for presenting a serious alternative.

For all these reasons, when Somoza was assassinated in 1956 his children had no great difficulty in retaining state power. It was not simply that they had control of the army, but that the army saw in them a guarantee of the continuation of their way of life, and that the bourgeois opposition as a whole did not view the regime as its enemy.

The outcome of this situation is the great stability enjoyed by the Somoza regime, despite the enormous popular discontent that surrounds it. This stability had made it the staging point for American imperialism in Central America. Nicaragua, for example, was where mercenaries under contract to the CIA were trained for the overthrow of the Arbenz government in 1954, and where the planes that bombed Guatemala took off from. In addition, Nicaraguan troops intervened in Costa Rica in 1948 and in the 1950s.

In the eyes of any Nicaraguan citizen, the Somoza dictatorship is the most painful expression of the complete absence of democratic rights, rule by arbitrary decree and abuse, and continual torture and murder, carried out shamelessly and with impunity for more than forty years. The Somoza dictatorship is almost unanimously hated and rejected by the broadest sectors of the population. However, the real opposition to Somoza is not to be found in the ruling class or in the vacillating and weak middle class, but among the most exploited and oppressed sectors in the country—the peasantry and the urban proletariat.

For decades the peasantry has been the victim of abuse of every stripe—expulsion from the land, murder, persecution and fines, and merciless police surveillance. It can be said that in the Nicaraguan countryside, to express a political opinion may cost you your life. This situation has promoted a relentless superexploitation of the peasantry, to the benefit of the ruling class as a whole, and has subjected the peasant population to grinding poverty.

In Nicaragua, the domestic accumulation and concentration of capital has taken place in the decisive period of the last forty years, in a political context of imperialist dependency and the Somoza dictatorship. However, along with this accumulation and concentration of capital and the influx of foreign investments, an urban proletariat has emerged and slowly increased in size,

attaining through its struggles some of the forms of class organization.

The Nicaraguan proletariat has had the misfortune to have been influenced from the very beginning by the treacherous ideology of Stalinism. The Partido Socialista Nicaragüense (Nicaraguan Socialist party, the local CP) was founded in the Popular Front period and came into existence as an ally of Somoza against fascism! Somoza let them use the National Gymnasium for their founding congress, obtained their support in the electoral campaign, and afterward imprisoned all their leaders, deporting them to an island off the Atlantic coast.

Never, since the founding of the unprincipled and treacherous PSN, has there been a challenge by any left organization to the Stalinists' control over the class organizations of the Nicaraguan proletariat. Nonetheless, this young proletariat has demonstrated its vigor, militancy, class solidarity, and opposition to the Somoza regime time and again. On a number of occasions its struggles have threatened to set off local general strikes and even actions of a national scope. Each time the PSN moved to hold back the struggles, negotiate quickly, and demobilize the masses. But it was also clear that on these occasions the bourgeoisie as a whole were relieved by the knowledge that the corrupt army and its cruel henchmen stood on their side against the striking workers.

This makes clear the key social factor explaining the vacillations of the bourgeois opposition to the Somoza regime. The corrupt Somoza regime is also the guarantor and administrator of certain forms of property in the countryside. It is this regime that assures and carries out the expropriation of the peasants' lands, and that defends the new property that is the product of crimes against entire peasant families, above all in the northern region of the country.

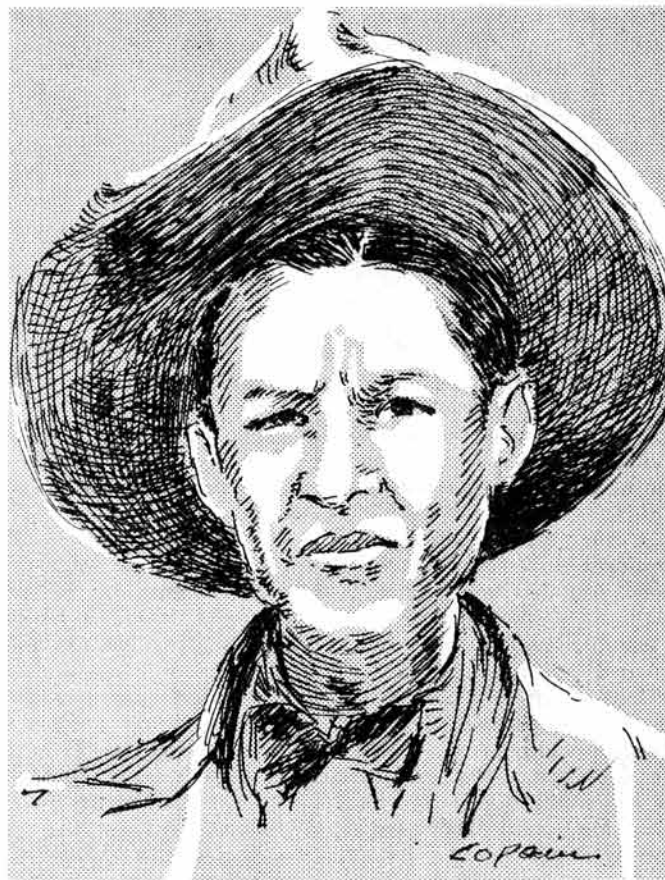
Accordingly, the very dynamic of the bourgeois opposition to the Somoza regime is completely different from that of the peasants and urban workers. For the peasantry and the proletariat, opposition to the Somoza regime is the concrete form taken by its opposition to the existing property relations. Among the exploited classes the struggle against the dictatorship and the struggle for social emancipation are indissolubly combined and linked.

That is why the bourgeois opposition has never committed the error of "mobilizing the masses" against the Somoza dictatorship. Hence the profound weakness of every bourgeois opposition current, since the possibility of mobilizing the masses is excluded from the beginning. The reason is simple. It would take the masses no time at all to discover that the capitalist or landlord most opposed to Somoza is at bottom an accomplice of Somoza, who profits from the existing forms of agrarian property—a direct product of the Somoza military jackboot—and from the existing relationship between the workers and the bosses, imposed by the Guardia Nacional.

The Student Mobilization

In the 1950s a new sector entered the national political arena—the students. Initially purely anti-Somoza, the student movement quickly became radicalized, particularly in the case of its most honest and intelligent leaders, through the participation of students coming from the oppressed class. This radicalization developed in a twofold way. The students rejected both the traditional bourgeois parties and the unprincipled PSN. At the same time, they were attracted by the Russian revolution and socialism in general, but were unable to find a concrete way of reconciling their spontaneous rejection of Stalinism with the drawing power of socialism, their revolutionary aspirations with the class-collaborationist policy of the PSN.

For this entire generation of student leaders, highly radicalized and persecuted, their main leaders in exile or in jail, and already familiar with mass mobilizations and student massacres, the victory of the Cuban revolution was an inspiring success. Logically, they turned toward Cuba, where they obtained full, steadfast support.



SANDINO

However, all the enthusiasm and honesty of these young people was not sufficient to provide them with the main instrument of struggle, a revolutionary and scientific understanding of the class struggle and a central political strategy—that is, the construction of a revolutionary party. In reality, the Cuban leaders were able to help them very little in this regard, since they themselves had not assimilated in any precise way the dynamic of the motor forces of their own revolution.

In these circumstances, the radicalized Nicaraguan leaders assimilated only the technical and military aspects of the Cuban revolution, transmitting to the youth of the country a burst of energy and enthusiasm from Cuba. The victory of the Cuban revolution signaled the beginning of a huge wave of student struggles against the regime, and served as the point of departure for an unending series of military expeditions against the Somoza government. In the course of that process, the best of this generation lost their lives in military adventures.

It would be false to think that the guerrilla movement in Nicaragua emerged only after the victory of the Cuban revolution. Prior to the Cuban triumph, dozens of guerrilla actions had been attempted and failed. What was unusual about the guerrilla movements in Nicaragua after 1959 was that those involved put forward a clear perspective of socialist revolution, although their methods of political work were linked to a technical-military schema that meant nearly total abandonment of organizing and mobilizing the masses.

The Frente Sandinista de Liberación Nacional

From that period until the present, the FSLN, which was founded in 1962, has been the organization that has played the central role in all "armed struggle" against the Somoza regime. From the beginning, the social base of this organization has consisted of students in the city and small farm owners in the

countryside. In 1964, following a number of setbacks, it briefly put forward the idea of building a mass legal party—a project that was soon abandoned. Despite its verbal combat with the PSN, the FSLN never seriously tried to become in practice a class-struggle alternative to Stalinism. Consequently, despite the enormous sympathy the Frente Sandinista enjoys throughout the country among all oppressed sectors of the population, it does not have a social organizational structure that would in any way enable it to lead the mass movement. Thus, while the FSLN called for electoral abstention, the bourgeois opposition, supported by the PSN, succeeded in drawing 80,000 persons to a campaign rally January 22, 1967, that was crushed in blood, with hundreds of persons killed by the bullets of the Guardia Nacional.

Nicaragua's recent political history can be summed up as follows: the succession in the Somoza family to state power; the establishment of coalitions with Somoza by the bourgeois opposition; pursuit of a class-collaborationist policy by the Stalinists; and adventurist actions, carried out in isolation from the masses and involving numerous defeats, on the part of the FSLN.

In 1957 Luis Somoza, the son of Anastasio, was elected president. In 1963, a figurehead occupied the post, while real power remained in the hands of Anastasio Somoza, Jr., the head of the army, who was elected president in 1967. In 1970 he formed a coalition government with the bourgeois opposition, which he left in 1972, to be reelected in 1974.

However, in 1973 the urban proletariat clearly began to press forward. One strike followed another until, at the beginning of 1974, an enormous movement took shape, with church occupations, a hospital strike, mobilizations in the poor neighborhoods, a drivers' strike, a strike by workers in the building trades, and so forth. Most political observers agreed that only the intervention of the PSN, which carried out rapid negotiations for a 10 percent wage increase and then did everything in its power to demobilize the unions it controlled, prevented an explosive expansion of the movement. The mobilization was so broad that the Guardia Nacional, which generally never hesitated to take repressive measures on the slightest pretext, found itself for all practical purposes paralyzed and powerless.

The most obvious victory of this period was the de facto expansion of freedom of the press and a tremendous easing of the obstacles to action by the working class.

Meanwhile, in the heat of these clashes, a formation emerged called the Unión Democrática de Liberación [Democratic Union for Liberation], a popular-frontist electoral grouping for which some of the bourgeois opposition parties provided the political

program while the PSN provided the masses. UDEL represented a class-collaborationist alternative to the Somoza regime, and the lack of a revolutionary Marxist alternative left the masses in a situation of ideological confusion and political dependency before the bourgeoisie.

The Frente Sandinista, meanwhile, remained outside the country's real political life. Nothing illustrates this better than the events of December 1974. Throughout 1974 the mass movement grew, new unions appeared, and one strike followed another without the regime being able to do anything to stop them. Some sectors of the working class were talking about organizing generalized strikes, and the Somoza regime vacillated over imposing a state of siege, not wishing to precipitate the events that threatened to take place.

Kidnappings a Blow to Mass Movement

In these circumstances, the Frente Sandinista carried out a spectacular action. During a party in honor of the American ambassador, the FSLN kidnapped a number of diplomats and prominent members of the Somoza regime, demanding freedom for the Sandinista political prisoners and \$1 million, as well as pay increases for the Guardia Nacional. Somoza was forced to give in, but the action was so bold that it paralyzed the workers movement with fear over the expected reprisals.

Somoza took advantage of the opportunity to decree a state of siege, impose the strictest censorship of the press the country had ever seen, and unleash a systematic campaign of repression against the unions. For months no serious blow was struck against the FSLN, and the entire weight of the regime descended on the working class. A few strikes occurred nonetheless, but they were so isolated and conducted in such onerous conditions that it was not difficult for the PSN leadership to demobilize them, sowing panic and confusion.

Politically, the FSLN has not learned much in its fourteen years of existence. During that time it has been subject to all the tendencies and contradictions of the circles in which it travels. Its close political links with the leadership of the Cuban revolution, for example, could not help but have an effect on it when in 1968 the Cubans began to move toward an opportunistic foreign policy of support to "nationalist" regimes of the Peruvian or Panamanian variety. This evolution had a strong impact on the FSLN, reinforcing its most right-wing positions to the point that at present it advocates a revolution by stages and puts forward as its immediate objectives a struggle against the Somoza regime for the establishment of a nationalist, bourgeois-democratic regime. This amounts to the well-known Stalinist formulations for the anti-imperialist struggle.

The internal life of the organization has also been hurt by a policy that completely fails to take into account the need to provide a serious political education for its members, and to integrate them into the real class struggle. The organization is completely dominated by militarist tendencies, and has increasingly adopted methods of expediency to resolve internal problems. Some cases in which its methods have become publicly known have cut deeply into its prestige.

In December 1974, for example, some Sandinista political prisoners appearing before a military court set up by Somoza made public statements disclosing a whole series of internal killings that had been carried out without any reason, being motivated by political rivalries or personal passions.

Narciso Cepeda, a heroic peasant fighter since 1961 and a man of great honesty and dedication to the struggle, turned out to have been murdered. His executioners coolly explained that "judgment had been passed" on him for "differences" with the leadership. They helped disinter his body, photographs of which appeared in the country's main newspapers.

However, despite its defeats, its lack of ties with the class struggle, the military and not revolutionary political character of its organization, and its centralist, hierarchical organizational structure, the FSLN is still seen by the country as a whole as the

Facts About Nicaragua

Area: 57,143 square miles.

Population: 2.5 million inhabitants.

Rate of Population Growth: 3% a year.

Population Distribution: 49% urban (including 20% in Managua), 51% rural.

Exports: 70% to 80% are agricultural goods (cotton, coffee, meat, sugar).

Unemployment: 40%. 60% underemployment in agriculture.

Income Distribution: The bottom 50% of the population has a median income of \$90 a year (15% of the gross national income). The top 5% has a median income of \$18,000 (40% of the gross national income).

Land Ownership: 43.2% of the landowners (holdings of under 7 hectares) hold 2.2% of the cultivated land. 1.9% of the landowners (holdings of more than 350 hectares) hold 47.6% of the cultivated land.

Illiteracy: 80% in the countryside, 60% in the cities.

Health: 6.8 doctors and 14.2 hospital beds for each 10,000 inhabitants (before the earthquake). Infant mortality rate: 20%. 60% of all deaths are children under the age of 14.

only sector genuinely opposed to the Somoza regime. Consequently, the radicalization of the country is undergoing and the growing disenchantment with Stalinism have found no other form of expression than through sympathy for the FSLN and its student organization, the Frente Estudiantil Revolucionario (Revolutionary Student Front). In few situations has the absence of a revolutionary Marxist organization been more tragic.

After forty years of dictatorship, only the exploited classes have a real interest in democratic demands. These demands are capable of mobilizing the broadest sectors of the population. However, the growing radicalization has not yet placed the regime in a hopeless situation, because the radicalized youth do not have the framework of a revolutionary organization that would enable them to understand that it is the class struggle, in all its manifestations, that attracts the masses to revolution, and not an isolated "armed struggle" waged by a small minority.

It is apparent that democratic demands are becoming increasingly charged with a content of social struggle. In Nicaragua, the

link between democratic demands and the socialist revolution is based on the fact that the only social class that is interested in and capable of winning democracy is precisely the social class for whom democracy also means overcoming their social and economic problems.

Incapable of confronting the difficult task of building a revolutionary party that will mobilize and lead the masses on the basis of demands anchored in the very life of the masses and their most immediate needs, the guerrillas struggle in the mountains in battles unknown to the masses.

Despite the great resistance offered by the Sandinistas, history will not be written in the hidden defiles of the mountains of Segovia or of Nicaragua's Atlantic coast. The decisive history of Nicaragua will be written in the countryside and in the cities, through the struggles of the masses. The fundamental problem to be solved in its development continues to be overcoming the present crisis in revolutionary leadership. □

'He Remained a Marxist of Deep Conviction'

In Memory of José Revueltas

The noted Mexican author José Revueltas died April 14. Among his many literary contributions were *Los Días Terrenales* (Earthly Days), *En Algún Valle de Lágrimas* (In Some Vale of Tears), and *El Luto Humano* (Human Sorrow)—which won the Mexican National Prize for Literature in 1943.

Born in 1914, Revueltas had been involved in the revolutionary movement since his youth—at the age of fifteen he was jailed on charges of sedition and inciting to rebellion.

Manuel Aguilar Mora reviewed Revueltas's political life and contribution to the Mexican revolutionary movement in the May issue of *Bandera Roja*, the monthly newspaper of the Liga Comunista Internacionalista (LCI—Internationalist Communist League), a sympathizing organization of the Fourth International in Mexico.

"José Revueltas," Aguilar said, "was a writer of the remarkable stock of the great artists of the 1930s. From the very first, they cast their lot with the international Communist movement. This fact and this fact alone explains the man, the artist, the politician, and—finally—the tragedy of his life."

Revueltas's political life was marked by the twenty years he spent in the Stalinized Communist party.

He began to break from the CP in 1943, but his expulsion later that year did not lead him to sever his ties with Stalinism. Instead, he became a follower of Vicente Lombardo Toledano, who represented "the most perfidious, opportunist variant of Stalinist leprosy," Aguilar said.

"Lombardoism attracted him because of its link to the working class," and because it offered "the possibility of putting into

practice with more chance of success the popular-frontist plan of the seventh and last congress of the Communist International. . . ."

Revueltas rejected Lombardoism a few years later. However, Aguilar said, his "incapacity to understand Leninism led him to confuse it with Lombardoism" so that when he broke with Lombardo, he also broke with Leninism.

The next phase of Revueltas's political evolution began with the death of Stalin. The Khrushchev revelations and the Soviet invasion of Hungary and Poland affected him, and in 1957 he began a theoretical critique of Stalinism. His article "El Partido Comunista Mexicano ante la Disyuntiva Vital de su Existencia Histórica" (The Mexican Communist Party Faced With the Fundamental Dilemma of Its Historic Existence) explained why the Mexican CP could not become the vanguard party of the Mexican working class.

At the time, Revueltas was again a member of the Mexican CP. He had rejoined in 1956, and was expelled for the second time in 1960 for attempts to transform the party.

In 1962 Revueltas published *Ensayo sobre un Proletariado sin Cabeza* (Essay on a Headless Proletariat), which Aguilar assessed in this way:

This book was one of the most serious efforts up to the present time to define Mexican reality in Marxist terms. On the question of the workers movement, and especially the Communist movement, Revueltas was tremendously innovative.

He pointed with precision to the situation and history of a left outdistanced by bourgeois nationalism and "alienated" by interests of classes hostile to the proletariat.

The student upsurge of 1968 was a turning point for Revueltas, Aguilar said, because it gave him the opportunity "to observe in practice the incipient, massive rebirth of the Mexican revolutionary movement."

This, along with the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia, impelled Revueltas to participate in the founding of the Movimiento Comunista Internacionalista (Internationalist Communist Movement)—a precursor of the present-day Trotskyist movement in Mexico.

Revueltas was imprisoned for his participation in the 1968 movement, and this experience radicalized him even more. But his commitment to the rebirth of the Mexican left remained contradictory, Aguilar said:

He remained a Marxist of deep and irreversible conviction. But his Stalinist miseducation acquired from previous experience was too heavy to allow him to rapidly find a coherent and consistent overall view that could be a concrete alternative for the new vanguard he so much admired. Revueltas died in a total theoretical and ideological impasse, having broken unconditionally from Stalinism without finding an orientation to supersede it.

Nonetheless, Aguilar concluded, Revueltas played an important role. "Without him, without his inspiring support in 1968, without all the prestige he lent decisively to the side of the forces challenging Stalinism, and without his constant criticism of philistinism in the ranks of the revolutionists, the Marxist vanguard would not be what it is today. In many ways, his fight was the precursor of ours. Although he did not resolve it, he posed well many questions that we can only clearly visualize now." □

Capitalism Fouls Things Up



Collapse of Idaho's Teton Dam Predicted 4 Years in Advance

When the Teton Dam in Idaho collapsed June 5, it unleashed a torrent of water that killed at least 7 persons, left more than 40 missing, forced 30,000 to flee their homes, washed away more than 4,000 houses and businesses, and inundated 50,000 acres of farmland.

The dam, which burst as it was being filled for the first time, was opposed as unsafe from the time the project was announced. Environmentalists pointed out that the site was located on particularly porous rock and soil, and that the area was subject to periodic earth tremors.

One government geologist was so certain of the danger that he suggested in a 1972 memo that movie cameras be set up to film the flooding that would occur when the dam collapsed.

'No Immediate Danger'

When the El Dorado Nuclear radium-extraction plant in Port Hope, Ontario, was torn down in the 1950s, rubble and other salvaged building material from the site were used for construction purposes elsewhere, including in an office building sixty miles away in Toronto.

No one bothered to check the radiation level of the rubble until a Toronto photographer complained that his film was being mysteriously fogged. A subsequent investigation revealed that dirt taken from the

Port Hope plant was contaminated with microscopic particles of radium, deposited in the soil during the process of extraction.

In Port Hope itself, the contaminated rubble was used as landfill in areas where many new homes and other buildings now stand. According to a report in the April 19 *New York Times*, "the radiation count on some of the sites, when detected last year, was high enough to necessitate the removal of six families while their homes were 'cleaned up' by a federal Government team." A local school was also evacuated temporarily.

Although 72 of the 500 building sites that have now been tested have been shown to emit "abnormal" amounts of radioactivity, officials assure that there is no immediate danger to health.

Out of Sight, Out of Mind

Industrial disposal of liquid wastes in deep wells may harm the quality of subsurface ground water, according to three government geologists.

Writing in the May issue of *Environmental Science and Technology*, they said that 278 such wells had been built in twenty-eight states and that 30 new waste wells were added each year. Among the wastes commonly injected into the wells are pickling acids, caustic soda, and a wide variety of other poisonous substances.

"Little is known about the chemical reactivity and fate of waste organic compounds" after they are dumped in the wells, the geologists noted.

Possible Health Hazard

Sixty-three beaches near Island Park, New York, were closed down June 3, and Nassau County health department officials urged "anyone who has had any contact with the water in the area to get inoculated immediately."

An explosion the day before ripped through two sewage storage tanks on a nearby island, flooding dozens of beaches in the heavily populated area with one million gallons of sludge.

Officials speculated that the explosion may have been caused by methane gas discharged by the sewage.

PBB vs. Profits

Three years ago the deadly chemical PBB was introduced into the food chain in Michigan when feed distributed by the state Farm Bureau was accidentally contaminated by the poisonous substance.

Initially, the Food and Drug Administration set standards allowing slaughter, with compensation, of animals containing as much as 0.3 parts per million of PBB. Although state authorities were unsure that these standards were sufficiently strict to ensure the safety of millions of consumers, they have only recently begun basic research to determine what doses of PBB cause harm.

The state's major effort, some residents charged, has been to play down the effects of PBB. According to a report in the April 18 *New York Times*, they testified before a Senate subcommittee that "Michigan is treating PBB as an economic problem rather than a health hazard."

Farmers who have been spearheading the protest, the *Times* report said, "contend that there may be severe effects from PBB at much lower levels and that controls are still inadequate to prevent its spread."

One farmer explained why he had shot seventy head of cattle last November, despite the fact that they had been cleared by the state agricultural department.

"I saw my cows and calves dying," he said. "My conscience would not let [them] go on the market and be put into humans."

X-Ray Vision

An estimated 1 out of every 10 Americans wears radioactive eyeglasses, according to a government study conducted by the Nuclear Regulatory Commission and the Food and Drug Administration.

The study found that 20 percent of all prescription eyeglasses contain a "measurable" amount of radioactivity from traces of thorium and uranium present in the zirconium oxides mixed into optical glass.

The Atomic Energy Commission estimated that a person wearing contaminated eyeglasses sixteen hours a day would receive an annual dosage of radioactivity eight times greater than that permitted by law.



"Don't worry . . . when you get up to twice the speed of sound, you can't even hear the environmentalists."

Why Mexican Workers Need Their Own Party

[The following article appeared in the May 15-31 issue of *Clave*, a revolutionary-socialist fortnightly published in Mexico. The translation is by *Intercontinental Press*.]

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The First National Conference of Worker, Peasant, and Poor People's Opposition has been called by the Democratic Tendency of the Sindicato Unico de Trabajadores Electricistas de la República Mexicana.¹ A central aspect of its proceedings will be a discussion of a draft of "Programmatic Points." This "draft" was drawn up by a commission formed in the so-called coordinating committee based in Mexico City.

This first conference is valuable in that it represents an attempt to bring together currents supporting democracy for the oppressed.

The saying "In unity there is strength" is very apt. The trade-union bureaucrats, the bosses, and the corrupt politicians who represent them in the government are well organized. This is not the case with the antibureaucratic, anticapitalist opposition.

Some of the most general aspects of the struggles of this opposition are contained in the draft of "Programmatic Points," such as the right of workers to place in command of their union or section the leadership they feel represents their interests. Another is the struggle to improve living and working conditions, which is blocked at every step by the bureaucrats and the leaders who have sold out.

But there are several fundamental questions the draft does not touch on that should not be treated lightly. These are life-and-death questions for the conference, as well as for the opposition currents and for militant trade unions.

First, there is the fight for the political independence of the workers. This is the central question that runs the risk of being ignored.

What Political Independence Means

Let us begin with the example of the electoral fraud in the rail workers union in early 1974.

The Movimiento Sindical Ferrocarrilero,² which represented the opposition to the Mariano Gómez Villanueva clique, had overwhelming support, so much that in some sections—like the one in Matías Romero, Oaxaca—the bureaucrats did not have enough signatures to put up a slate.

1. SUTERM (United Electrical Workers Union of the Mexican Republic).

2. MSF (Railway Union Movement).

Without the open support of the federal government, which included sending troops to silence the militant railroad workers, the bureaucrats would not have had a chance to "win."

This question is not confined solely to the trade unions. Responsibility for the swindles, lack of democracy, the daily assassinations and violence committed against workers, peasants, and students falls fundamentally on the PRI³ government.

There are still those who believe that in these struggles there are three camps: the enemy, represented by the bosses and the bureaucrats; the masses of workers and their allies, who are fighting for their rights; and an "arbitrator" standing above the two others, represented by the government.

But this is not the way things happen. The gains the masses have made have been won by their resistance and organization; they are not the result of the benevolence of the bourgeoisie's representatives in the government. From them we have gotten only repression and more repression.

If the workers had their own government, a government of the workers and peasants that would defend their rights and interests all the way, massacres like those October 2, 1968,⁴ or June 10, 1971,⁵ would not occur. Nor would the killings of peasants that occur regularly in this country.

The murders and violence committed against the workers and their allies have been inspired directly or indirectly by the PRI government.

Many persons will tell us that the fight for a government of the legitimate representatives of the workers and peasants is a long-term fight. Even if we grant that, we can say that trade-union democracy and better living and working conditions must be fought for here and now. The problem that cannot be avoided is that the trade-union struggle and the political struggle go hand in hand.

Isn't it inconsistent to fight on the trade-union level for a leadership that represents the workers and then to vote on the

3. Partido Revolucionario Institucional (Institutional Revolutionary party).

4. Hundreds of students were gunned down by federal troops while attending a peaceful rally in Mexico City in support of a student strike at the Autonomous National University of Mexico.

5. Rightist commandos opened fire on a demonstration of 8,000 persons in Mexico City, who were demonstrating for the release of political prisoners.

governmental level for a representative of the interests of the big bankers?

The fight for political independence of the workers is not a fight for the future. It is a struggle that must be waged right now if we do not want presidential favors or offers of committees and public posts to corrupt the newly emerging leaders.

Although the draft "Programmatic Points" contains a whole series of social, political, and economic demands, this central point is missing.

Such demands cannot be won without explaining and educating on the answer to the following question: Who should rule, the corrupt politicians or the representatives of the workers and their allies?

The answer to this question becomes even more immediate, since the compañeros organizing the First Conference explain in the magazine *Solidaridad* that the meeting is to have a political character. The central political question, the one that stands above all others, is who will rule, who will administer the state.

How to Begin to Solve This Question

The solution to this question begins with a simple point—clarity with regard to the political parties.

Can one speak of a policy of struggle in Mexico without calling for a break with the PRI? We do not think so. The gravest weakness that plagues the workers and peasants movement is *collaboration* with the enemy, both on the trade-union level (where it is known as bureaucratism) and on the political level, with the PRI or the PAN.⁶

In order to take the first resolute steps of independent political action, the workers must begin to build their own political party, a party of the workers based on the labor movement and on the struggles of the great masses of the oppressed.

The main editorial in the April issue of *Solidaridad* said on page 6: "The democratic tendency in the electrical workers union serves as the center of working-class and popular opposition, filling the vacuum left by the absence of a workers party, which no one has discovered how to build."

That vacuum has to be filled, and there is no better time to do it than during the election period.

The Obstacles

It is obvious that there are innumerable obstacles to the formation of such a political party. But these are not precisely the same as the difficulties that stand in the way of achieving trade-union democracy—the degree of organization of the bourgeoisie, bureaucrats, and corrupt rulers, which includes the ability to call on armed institutions.

However, these obstacles were insufficient to curb the power of the telephone

6. Partido de Acción Nacional (National Action party).

workers movement in the last strike. Our problem is not to explain the enemy's strength to the workers; they already know that. It is to make clear that the Mexican labor movement would have the power to eradicate all the problems that plague it if it were organized on the trade-union and political levels.

A question could arise here about the obstacle presented by the undemocratic trade-union statutes that make affiliation to the PRI obligatory for all workers who are members of unions controlled by the party. This is one of the instruments the bosses and bureaucrats use to victimize militant workers.

The majority of organized workers do not have the right to choose what party they want to belong to. In return for the right to earn their living with their labor—unlike the thieving parasites in the government—the workers are forced by the bureaucrats, the company, and the government to give up their right to think as they wish.

But to demand the right of the workers to join the party of their choice does not constitute a crime, no matter how you look at it.

This point—winning the right of the workers to think as they please, without any ideological restrictions whatever—is correctly emphasized in the draft presented to the First Conference.

How can the struggle for a party of the toiling masses be carried out in action? In the same way that many workers initiated their own struggles despite the fact that organizing trade-union currents and tendencies is formally barred by the undemocratic, bureaucratic statutes. When possible, they do it openly; when that is not possible—owing to the relationship of forces—they do it in other ways. This is nothing new for the labor movement.

The first step toward forming a labor party of the toiling masses would be for the First Conference to put up a candidate for president of the republic.

We think that the candidacy of Compañero Rafael Galván⁷ would inspire immense support among the dissatisfied Mexican population, despite the fact that there is little time to campaign.

The committees, groups, or formations supporting this candidacy, along with the First Conference, would lay the initial basis for a workers party.

This is a giant step and for that reason not easy. It involves nothing less than the emergence of a current with massive support challenging the power of big capital and the bureaucrats on the terrain of working-class political independence.

We think that as the combined forces of the imperialists, the bosses, their government, and bureaucratic trade-union leaders exert more pressure, such a step becomes

increasingly urgent. Without it, the draft "Programmatic Points" falls short—attacking the effects without attacking the causes of the oppression suffered by the workers.

The political shortcomings of the "Points" draft affect its view of workers struggles. These struggles and their achievements can be smashed to bits if there is no overall vision of the meaning of the workers struggle.

In the fight for the very points listed in the draft, two further central questions will arise—although, like the need for political independence, they are not mentioned in the "Points."

When the workers demand their rights, the first question to arise will be, Who should control industry; who decides on

raising wages, increasing or decreasing production, and laying off and hiring personnel?

The second question is the right of the workers to defend themselves against aggression. Workers and peasants are a majority of the population and they have the right to defend themselves against attacks by bureaucratic or bourgeois minorities. As the struggle of SUTERM has shown, these attacks are real, do occur, and will increase if they are not denounced and stopped in time. The only answer to them is the mobilization of the masses.

The Mexican workers need leadership. They are seeking it, and the First Conference can provide it if it puts forward a consistent program.

Let's not go halfway; the Mexican workers need their own political party. □

Report of Dominican CGT Conference: The Fight for Trade-Union Freedoms

A booklet containing documents of the First Conference for Trade-Union Freedom, held in the Dominican Republic October 26, 1975, has been published.¹ The selections make a forceful case for the struggle for democratic rights on the island.

Presentations at the conference, which was called by the Central General de Trabajadores (CGT—General Workers Federation), described the current state of the workers movement on the island, its history, and the central tasks facing it in the period ahead.

CGT Press and Propaganda Secretary Enrique de León stressed that a priority had to be the fight to win the release of imprisoned trade-union leaders and the right of all exiles to return to the Dominican Republic.

CGT Organization Secretary Dionisio Martínez Vargas documented the Balaguer regime's repression against the workers movement:

Police persecution of trade unionists and prevention of trade-union activities encompasses everything from raiding homes and assaulting headquarters to the imprisonment, deportation, disappearance, and murder of trade unionists. The attacks on the headquarters of POASI (which has been occupied by police for two years), UNACHOSIN,² and the CGT; the imprisonment of compañeros Santos, Cepeda, Juan Vargas, university student César Félix Santana, and many trade-union activists; the 1967 disappearance of Dr. Guido Gil Díaz, the legal adviser of the Sindicato Unido del Central Romana [United Union of the Romana Sugar Refinery]; the exile imposed on compañeros Fernando de la

Rosa, José Cristóbal Durán, Bladimiro Blanco, Carlos Tomás Fernández, Efraín Sánchez Soriano (Pocholo), and others; the murder of peasant leaders Mario Balderas, Florinda Soriano (Mamá Tingó), Santiago Rodríguez Paula (Viejo Pedro), Aquiles Rodríguez, and Dionisio Frías (Mister Beca), provide a true picture of the policy followed by the current regime—a policy of extermination of class-struggle trade unionism.

The CGT has been a central target of the regime's attempts to stifle the trade-union movement. Two of those mentioned by Martínez Vargas as being in prison at the time of the conference—Francisco Antonio Santos and Eugenio Pérez Cepeda—are central leaders of the federation. They were arrested, along with CGT leader Julio de Peña Valdez, in June 1975, on unsubstantiated charges of "subversion." The CGT immediately launched an international campaign to win the release of the trade-union activists. The campaign succeeded in winning their freedom and the freedom of telephone workers leader Juan Vargas.

Martínez Vargas also listed other denials of trade-union freedoms condoned by the Balaguer regime: the destruction of trade unions or their transformation into yellow trade unions by firing the leaders and placing workplaces under military control; governmental interference in unions in violation of international labor codes; the denial by bosses to negotiate and sign collective-bargaining agreements; disregard for the legal minimum wage and hours regulations; illegal deductions from wages and loans; and the refusal by bosses to pay money deducted from wages into the Social Security fund for which the deductions were earmarked.

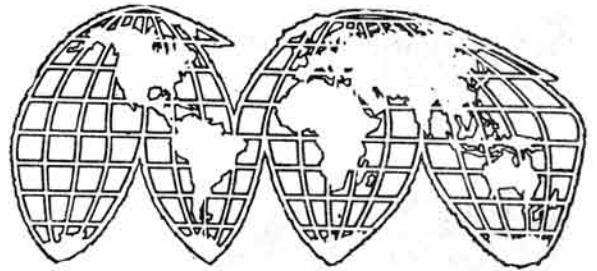
To fight to reverse this situation, León said, the CGT, as a class-struggle union federation, must be strengthened and must work toward unifying in action all sections of the Dominican workers movement. □

1. The booklet is available from POASI Defense Committee, 853 Broadway, Room 414, New York, New York 10003.

2. POASI is the longshoremen's union in the city of Arrimo; UNACHOSIN is the national taxi drivers union.

7. Central leader of the Democratic Tendency of SUTERM.

AROUND THE WORLD



South African Company Studies Plans to Exploit Zaïrean Copper

The giant South African conglomerate, Anglo American Corporation, is studying plans to bring the Tenke Fungurume copper project in Zaïre into production, according to the May 24 *West Africa*. The announcement was made by Anglo American Chairman Harry Oppenheimer in his annual statement.

The project was suspended in January because of financing problems caused by low copper prices, the Angolan civil war (which cut off the main railroad line to Zaïre's copper region), inflated costs, and the country's financial crisis. At the time of the suspension, \$220 million had already been invested in the \$660 million project by several imperialist concerns. Anglo American owns a 14 percent stake in the copper project.

\$106 Billion for War

The Appropriations Subcommittee of the House of Representatives approved June 8 the highest war budget in American history—\$106.8 billion, to be spent in the year beginning October 1. The bill is expected to meet little difficulty in the full

House and Senate, which will vote on it later in the year.

It is worth noting that this same \$106 billion would be sufficient to build 3.3 million low-cost houses and 571,000 apartments, bring the incomes of all Americans above the poverty line, and eliminate hunger in the United States. An additional \$20 billion would be left over for other needed projects.

Student Unrest Sweeps Nigeria

A series of student demonstrations swept several Nigerian universities and colleges in April and May. About 500 students were suspended at the Calabar campus of the University of Nigeria, Nsukka, after demanding that they be transferred to the Nsukka campus when Calabar becomes a full university in September. A number of students at the Nsukka campus were also suspended for allegedly being connected with a banned organization.

The College of Science and Technology at Port Harcourt was closed indefinitely by Col. Zamani Lekwot, the governor of River State, after students protested against inadequate food services. The Petroleum Training Institute in Bendel State was also shut down after students demanded improved academic and administrative arrangements.

Students at the University of Benin, the newest in the country, seized the vice-chancellor, barricaded campus entrances, and cut off telephone and power lines to protest the lack of transport to lectures. The university was closed indefinitely in early May.

All student meetings, assemblies, and gatherings at the University of Ibadan were banned following student unrest there. The Students Representative Council was suspended and the funds of the Students Union were frozen.

Rhodesian Jets Bomb Mozambique

Rhodesian jet fighters bombed a Mozambican army base at Espungabera June 10. It was the first major attack into Mozambique since President Samora Machel closed his country's border with Rhodesia in early March. The white supremacist regime in Salisbury has frequently threatened to retaliate against neighboring Black regimes that are aiding the Zimbabwean guerrillas.

In response to the Zambian regime's

decision to allow Zimbabwean freedom fighters to operate from that country, a Rhodesian spokesman declared, "The attack on Espungabera can be seen as a warning to Zambia and as an indication that Rhodesia is prepared to step up the pace and extent of the war if provoked."

On June 13 this warning took a sharper form. Early in the morning, bombs exploded in Lusaka, the capital of Zambia, damaging the post office and high court building. Zambian President Kenneth Kaunda blamed the attacks on the Rhodesian regime.

Yugoslav Lawyers Face New Crackdown

The Yugoslav Republic of Serbia, which includes the capital, Belgrade, is planning to make the political attitude of lawyers one of the factors considered in processing applications by lawyers to open offices. The announcement of the new measure May 31 is part of a bureaucratic crackdown on dissent that included the prosecution of Srdja Popovic, a Belgrade lawyer.

Upper Volta Hit by Growing Balance-of-Payments Deficit

Upper Volta, one of the poorest countries in West Africa, is building up a crippling balance-of-payments deficit. Even before the Sahel drought, which badly hit the country's major industry, livestock, and necessitated large food imports, the balance-of-payments deficit stood at about \$21 million. Since then it has climbed to more than \$110 million as a result of the drought, increased oil prices, the world recession, and international inflation.

Note to Status Seekers

A letter from a clergyman to the London *Times* lamenting the disappearance of the chamber pot from British hotels and rooming houses evoked twenty-seven other letters on the subject, including the following from a *Times* reader in Edinburgh:

"You may like to know that a personal chamber pot is still supplied by British Rail to passengers traveling by first-class sleeper between Edinburgh and London.

"A carefully worded notice gives guidance on its use. This facility is not, I understand, available for second-class passengers. It is a disturbing thought that the chamber pot . . . has become our newest status symbol."



Herblock/Washington Post

Selections From the Left

was fun

Weekly of the International Marxist Group. Published in Frankfurt, Germany.

The May 27 issue carries a major article on the congress of the East German CP held May 18-22. It takes up such questions as the Stalinist party's changing position on German national unity. Another theme is the bureaucracy's new rhetoric about "developed socialism."

"Developed socialist society,' the German Democratic Republic [GDR] bureaucracy says in its new program, 'means advancing the relations of production as a relationship of comradesly cooperation and collective labor. . . And to make sure that everything advances correctly and comradesliness grows, 30 to 50 percent of workers' wages in the GDR are determined by piecework or by time.

"The hypocrisy continues: 'The conditions of work are to be planned so as to further happiness in work, alertness, and productivity, as well as striving for order, cleanliness, and discipline.' So as to give the workers a little more happiness in their work, the bureaucracy assists them with production norms, which it calls 'scientifically established labor norms.'"

The article also analyzes the impact of the world depression on the GDR. "There is no Chinese Wall the bureaucracy can hide behind. This appears from the results of the capitalist economic crisis alone, to say nothing of factors such as the need for heavy arms spending and the manifold ideological influence of the capitalist camp."

klasse-kampen

"Class Struggle," monthly publication of the Revolutionary Socialist League, Danish section of the Fourth International.

The May issue features a debate on the women's general strike in Iceland in October 1975. This action aroused international interest because of its unusual breadth. Nearly 10 percent of the population of the island attended a strike rally in Reykjavik.

Klassekampen carried an article by Helga Sigurjónsdóttir (HSJ) in its December 1975 issue noting the importance of the strike.

A reader in Iceland objected to the article and wrote a long reply. Among other things, the correspondent said: "HSJ says: 'There is a danger that the women's

movement may be derailed and led to demoralization and defeat.' Let us hope that this conglomeration of conservative, petty-bourgeois, reactionary, and feminist elements end up as soon as possible in demoralization and defeat. In fact, let us not just hope for this. Let us fight for this."

Helga Sigurjónsdóttir replied: "It is a very serious and dangerous thing to wish for the defeat of the women's movement. It is a very serious political error if you fail to understand the importance of the radicalization that occurred. The biggest danger of 'class collaboration' arises when revolutionists who know better . . . isolate themselves in the role of observers and leave the stage to bourgeois and reformist figures. That's what the bourgeoisie wants."



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

In the June 3 issue, under the title "Britain's Racist Laws," Steve Potter explains why immigration controls in Britain should be abolished. A campaign should center on repeal of the 1971 Immigration Act.

Since 1962 both Tory and Labour governments have passed immigration legislation designed to establish a color bar in Britain. "The Tory Act of 1971 was the first to reveal openly the intention of the ruling class not merely to restrict black immigration, but to strip immigrant workers of all job security."

An immigrant may enter Britain as a contract worker. "When his work permit expires, so does his right to stay here." This can lead to immediate deportation. In some cases a worker is denied entry to his country of origin, is sent back to Britain, and there lands in prison.

"Immigrants who are not immediately deported, but are held for inquiries or appeals, are detained in a special centre with few or no facilities, guarded by Securicor—the private strong-arm agency. X-rays of wrists are used to 'catch people out' on ages, and vaginal examinations are carried out to humiliate women on the basis of discovering whether they are 'really' unmarried."

In 1973 the Law Lords ruled that any immigrant who had entered "illegally" at any time since 1962 was subject to immediate deportation. The police then initiated the practice of raiding Black areas.

"The whole meaning of [Enoch] Powell's

disclosures in Parliament last week was that they gave the racist pot another stir. . . . The spectre of violence in the ghettos raised by Powell was a direct incitement to white racist pogroms."



"Workers Struggle," the weekly newspaper of the Internationalist Communist League, sympathizing organization of the Fourth International. Published in Lisbon, Portugal.

The May 20 issue comments on the presidential candidacy of former General Otelo de Carvalho: "Why are they trying to get the workers to pin their hopes once again on Otelo, on a general? In its communiqué supporting this 'general,' the UDP [União Democrática do Povo—People's Democratic Union] states: 'Otelo is the great guarantor that the constitution will be a weapon in the hands of the people.' Neither Otelo nor any other 'savior' is the guarantor of anything! The working class has to march on its own feet with its own organizations—the unions, workers commissions (and its parties, which are something Otelo is allergic to).

"But they tell us the 'people' spontaneously demanded Otelo, and that dozens of workers commissions and neighborhood commissions backed him. Our reply is that many workers commissions have already denounced these claims, saying that this support came only from one or another element. . . . We might answer also by quoting the PRP [Partido Revolucionário do Proletariado—Revolutionary party of the Proletariat, which supported the Armed Forces Movement's "People's Power" scheme and supports the candidacy of Otelo].

"Its paper *Revolução* said: 'The PCP (R) [Partido Comunista Português (Revolucionário)—Portuguese Communist party (Revolutionary)] and its front group, the UDP, used organs that should be at the service of the workers and tenants and not of any party; 'the PRP is sick of fictitious unity and the party maneuvers hidden behind this facade,' and so on. Frankly the 'nonparty' support for 'Companheiro Vasco [Gonçalves] was better staged."

Luta Proletária asked what Carvalho's program would be. It noted the fierce fight that had arisen between his supporters in the PRP and the UDP. "Will Otelo be against parties and for 'socialism from below'? Will he be for a revolutionary workers party?"

revolución socialista

LIGA SOCIALISTA REVOLUCIONARIA
MAYO DE 1976 AÑO I, N.º 9 PANAMA

Newspaper of the Revolutionary Socialist League of Panama.

The May issue reports growing international support for Miguel Antonio Bernal, who was exiled to Ecuador in February for his outspoken opposition to continued U.S. control of the Panama Canal.

The Second Central American Congress of Sociology has denounced this repressive measure by the Torrijos government.

The rights of all Panamanians are at stake in this case, the paper points out. "Every act of repression engineered against the left by the bourgeoisie and carried out by its officials becomes another harsh blow against a people already oppressed by the high cost of living, unemployment, and lack of housing."

The United States Committee for Justice to Latin American Political Prisoners (USLA) is appealing for solidarity in the case. Demands that Dr. Bernal be allowed to return to his own country should be addressed to the Panamanian Embassy, 2862 McGill Terrace NW, Washington, D.C. 20008.

Funds as well as copies of messages should be sent to USLA, 853 Broadway, Room 414, New York, New York 10003.

Young Socialist

Monthly newspaper of the Socialist Youth Alliance. Published in Sydney, Australia.

In the June issue, Paul Petit reports on a meeting of the National Committee of the Socialist Youth Alliance held in Sydney May 15-16. The discussion centered on building campus branches, stepping up sales of the *Young Socialist* in high schools and suburban areas, and greater use of headquarters in each state.

National Secretary Nita Keig told how the SYA had originated in the radicalization of the 1960s, primarily around the movement in opposition to the war in Vietnam. It formed out of currents opposed to Social Democratic reformism, Stalinism, and ultraleft organizations like Students for a Democratic Society.

"But the main point about these new revolutionists . . . was that they were activists," Keig said. They threw themselves into building the antiwar movement, and they welcomed new developments, such as the women's liberation movement.

While the pace of the youth radicalization slowed down for a time, it is now picking up. The economic crisis with its effect on employment, wages, and student allowances is leading to greater political activity among young people. On the

campuses, too, political interest is on the rise. To take advantage of the new openings, the SYA must expand its work.

Organisational Secretary Dave Deutschmann reported in more detail on projected activities for the coming period. Among the proposals is expansion of *Young Socialist* from twelve to sixteen pages.

The seventh national conference of the organization is projected for Easter 1977. Deutschmann predicted that it would be the biggest yet.



"Red Front," the monthly newspaper of the Revolutionary Marxist Group, Austrian section of the Fourth International.

The May issue has a detailed article on the congress of the youth group of the Socialist party. It notes that a political differentiation is beginning in this organization. For the first time in this generation, left tendencies put forward political alternatives at the national level.

These tendencies are unevenly developed in the various federal states. The furthest left grouping is in Tirol.

This organization holds that the capitalist system can only be gotten rid of by the independent class struggle of the workers and their allies. It can only be replaced by the proletarian democracy of workers councils.

In the same issue, a letter from a sympathizer complained that a previous article had treated the SP youth as a conservative bloc without noting the process of differentiation going on within it.

The editors replied that this was a correct criticism and that the article on the SP youth congress had been published, in part, to correct this imbalance.



Ergatike Pale (Workers Struggle), weekly paper serving the interests of the working class. Published in Athens.

The June 5 issue denounces the victimization of thirty-seven persons arrested at a demonstration May 25 in Athens during a general strike against antilabor legislation before parliament.

Many more persons were arrested but released without being charged.

Thirty of the prisoners were found guilty of "provocations endangering the public peace" and sentenced to five months in prison and two years probation. "At least thirteen of these will be sent to prison immediately without any right of appeal. By this action the government has opened a new phase of harder measures against the workers movement and the oppressed strata of the population."

The two factions of the Communist

party, which, along with the party of Andreas Papandreou, constituted the leadership of the strike, blamed the clashes on "provocateurs." This did not prevent the government prosecutors from going after the Stalinists.

"Police witnesses maintained that the events were not organized by 'unknown and obscure elements,' because of the 190 persons arrested, 50 percent were members of the CP."

There were members of the CP among the defendants, including a member of the "exterior" CP youth who complained bitterly during a recess about being called a "provocateur."

Despite this, during the trial the newspaper of the "exterior" faction of the CP did not criticize the government's handling of the case. The newspaper of the "interior" faction even said that "there was no hint of a political character" to the proceedings.

The two CPs give "critical" support to the reactionary Caramanlis regime.



Successor to Workers Press, the daily organ of the Central Committee of the Workers Revolutionary party. Published in London.

Under the title "Lester Makes History," the June 3 issue features a report on the horse races at Epsom.

"Lester Piggott showed he is still the best jockey in the world by giving a memorable display of riding to win the Derby for a record seventh time on Empery at Epsom yesterday."

For those who have not been following *News Line's* in-depth analyses of horse racing in Britain, Empery is the name of the horse. Credit for winning, of course, goes more to the jockey than the horse:

"With matchless expertise, Piggott brought his horse off the rails and took it up one and a half furlongs out to sweep past Relkino [another horse] with one crack of the whip to win by three lengths."

Further exciting details:

"Relinko could not get back on terms and Joe Mercer had enough to do in holding off the challenge of Pat Eddery and Oats [a horse?] for second place. Irish outsider Hawkberry was fourth.

"For once, Piggott was the bookies' hero. They cleaned up about £7m on the failure of the heavily-backed favourite, Wollow."

Can any reversal in the class struggle compare with this in drama?

"It was one of the biggest upsets in the race's 197 year history. . . . [Wollow] started the hottest favourite since Sir Ivor ten years ago."

Poor Wollow! *News Line* blamed him instead of his jockey: "Henry Cecil will need to re-establish Wollow's tarnished reputation before the colt retires to stud, probably at the end of the season."

Position of Italian Trotskyists on Elections

[The following editorial articles were published in the May 31 issue of *Bandiera Rossa*, the weekly newspaper of the Gruppi Comunisti Rivoluzionari (GCR—

Revolutionary Communist Groups), the Italian section of the Fourth International. The translation and footnotes are by *Intercontinental Press*.]

Vote for 'Proletarian Democracy'

"It's off to a bad start," *Corriere della Sera* wrote in a rather restrained way last Sunday. An electoral disaster for the Christian Democrats is in the wind, you can smell it coming. (Any suggestion about the opening of Fanfani's¹ campaign in San Basilio is purely coincidental.) But there is no alternative for the bourgeoisie. The so-called third force of the secular parties has not even managed to take a shaky first step. (A handful of common candidates for the PRI, PSDI, and the PLI² is just one of those swallows that don't make a summer.) You cannot argue with La Malfa,³ as Saragat delicately explained. And, for the moment, Giovanni Agnelli,⁴ the very special godfather of this project, is staying at home. So, the bourgeoisie has to make do with what there is.

And what there is is the DC [Democrazia Cristiana—Christian Democracy]. It is not much, as everyone realizes. Among other things, all the talk about renovating it has turned out to be so much hot air. (And there is a reason for this, because when a ship is sinking the instinct for self-preservation tends to take over, and it is hard to get new crew members.) Even the pope is worried, and he has come onto the field to tilt a lance in defense of his godchild. We would bet that his calls for a vote for the DC will be as effective as his ban on masturbation.

What has been renovated (we are still talking about the party slates) is the PCI [Partito Comunista Italiano—Italian Com-

munist party], but not for the better. In its list of candidates (above all, for senate seats), we find not workers, women, soldiers, and noncommissioned officers but "independents." The latter are nearly always bourgeois notables who, scenting the changes in the wind, have jumped on the bandwagon. We hold profound contempt for Miceli⁵ and the whole crowd of putschists. But we have also an ingrained distrust of General Pasti⁶ and all the "reformers" in the top rungs on the military hierarchy, even when they are converted on the road to Damascus.

The truth is that the PCI also has its problems. Of course, they are nothing comparable to those of the DC and the other bourgeois parties, which find themselves obliged, almost in spite of themselves, to reveal all their internal incohesiveness, to fight their battles over candidates in public, to plunge ahead in their arrogance and blindness in the midst of public contempt, or at best indifference.

The masses' growing expectations, on the other hand, revolve around the PCI and the PSI [Partito Socialista Italiano—Italian Socialist party]. These parties are unquestionably the focus of the masses' desire for deepgoing change. But by comparison with the hopes placed in them, the PCI and PSI make only ineffectual proposals. The PCI is groping. It is forced by its line and by a section of its supporters to relegate the elements of its "social alternative" to the distant future. For the immediate future and the period following the elections, it lacks a sufficiently concrete program.

But the "historic compromise" perspective is not working either. And the proposal for a government of national unity that the PCI put forward at its last Central Committee plenum includes openings (very cautious ones, to be sure) for the possibility

that all or a part of the bourgeois parties may not go along. In that case, they say, the PCI will assume its responsibilities. That is, a government of the left is not an alternative we are working for, but if such a situation came about, well who knows?

The fact is that this perspective—a government of the left, of the workers parties—is arousing increasing interest among the toilers, workers, soldiers, and women. The existence of a slate, Proletarian Democracy,⁷ that is centering its campaign on precisely this slogan, is the only really new element in this electoral competition.

This slate is being put forward by different organizations, which are not yet able to formulate a common program, not even an electoral platform. But this ticket offers a place for advancing the only proposal that can promote the advance of the mass movement in the coming period.

We do not want to spread the illusion that the formation of a PCI-PSI government by itself can solve the crisis in a way favorable to the interests of the proletariat. What will make it possible to solve the crisis in a left way is the growth of the mass movement, the extension and unification of the struggles, a working-class program for reducing the workweek and increasing pay, a sliding scale of wages and hours, nationalizations and workers control. However, a government of the workers parties that the toiling masses consider their own and that they can call on all the more forcefully to meet their needs offers the most favorable framework for advancing such a program.

To achieve this in these elections, voting left is not enough. To achieve this, you have to vote Proletarian Democracy.

7. The Proletarian Democracy slate is an electoral bloc of groups that describe themselves as "far left." This name was used in the June 1975 elections by a bloc of Avanguardia Operaia (Workers Vanguard, a semi-Maoist group) and the Partito d'Unità Proletaria per il Comunismo (PdUP—Party of Proletarian Unity for Communism, a combination of left Social Democrats and liberalizing Stalinists who look to Peking as an alternative center to Moscow). Although many other groups have now been included in this slate, these two organizations retain the main voice. The largest group that has been added to this bloc is Lotta Continua, a combination of ultraleft and centrist tendencies that found a common reference point in the Great Cultural Revolution. The Italian section of the Fourth International is running 3 candidates under the Proletarian Democracy designation, out of a total of about 700.

1. Amintore Fanfani, veteran strongman of the Christian Democratic right.

2. Partito Repubblicano Italiano (Italian Republican party), a secular bourgeois party with a liberal coloration. Partito Socialista Democratico Italiano (Italian Democratic Socialist party), a right-wing split-off from the SP. Partito Liberale Italiano (Italian Liberal party), and old-fashioned businessmen's party, liberal in the nineteenth-century sense.

3. The strongman leader of the PRI; he has the reputation of using his small party as a pawn in personal political maneuvering.

4. The older brother in the family that owns Fiat, one of the most powerful capitalist dynasties in Italy.

5. A former officer in the Italian intelligence agency implicated in a conspiracy to establish a military dictatorship. He is running on the fascist slate in the June 20 elections.

6. A former NATO general running on the CP slate.

For a Workers Government

The June 20 elections have an importance far greater than such votes usually have because the question posed in the last analysis is who should take the political leadership of the country. This is understood perfectly by the workers and all victims of capitalist exploitation and oppression. The members of the ruling class understand it as well.

The economic crisis that began in September 1974 and is not yet over has played the decisive role in bringing on this test. Moreover, it has made any partial solutions extremely difficult if not impossible. The working class and the working people have been forced to realize that their problems cannot be dealt with in fact at the level of the individual factory, branch of industry, or trade, but only on a national scale. It is the overall orientation of economic policy that must be reversed, and only a new political leadership, qualitatively different from those that have gone before, can do this.

The leading group in the PCI says that it is the only force that has outlined a clear perspective. The capitalist press has been obliged to recognize that this is so. The Christian Democrats are unable to make any specific commitments. They limit themselves to rejecting the PCI's proposals and trying to revive a vague perspective of special collaboration with the PSI. In reality, they are waiting for the elections to indicate the relationship of forces among the various parties. Until then, they want to maintain the widest possible margin for maneuver. On the other hand, the PCI has a strategic plan that is not of recent origin. In its last Central Committee meeting, it delineated a possibility for the more immediate future, a coalition government including all the so-called democratic parties (that is, all except the Movimento Sociale Italiano-Destra Nazionale [MSI-DN—Italian Social Movement-National Right, the neofascists]).

The revolutionists reject the PCI's plan. They think, first of all, that it would be difficult to carry out, since the parties of the ruling class are unwilling to accept an operation that, for the moment at least, they consider too risky. But if the ruling class's objections were to decrease and the desired historical compromise and the desired government of national unity were to become realities, this new kind of government would be totally incapable of solving the crucial problems facing us in the interests of the working class and other strata of the working people.

The most probable outcome would be a repetition of the episodes we have already seen. When the PCI and the PSI were in the government, they did not force any radical changes. At most they obtained insignificant concessions. They helped to restabilize the economy in the interests of

the ruling class and at the expense of the working class. And once this was accomplished, they were shown the door with or without recommendations. Let's not forget that in adopting the center-left policy, entering the government, and collaborating with the Christian Democrats, the PSI had perspectives and a plan not unlike the one the PCI has now, as well as a program that was not qualitatively different either (in fact, in some respects, it was more ambitious).

Today, the PSI itself, with some bitterness, has drawn a negative balance sheet of this experience. To go back further, the experience of the government of national unity and the three-party (PCI-PSI-Christian Democrats) governments after World War II was similar. The workers parties enabled the bourgeoisie to surmount its crisis, and once this was done, they were shown the door.

As revolutionists see it, it is obvious that you cannot get the country out of a crisis brought about by the mechanisms of the capitalist system by collaborating with the main party of the capitalist class, as the Christian Democrats have unquestionably been for thirty years. If you want to carry out a radical change, the indispensable prerequisite is to defeat this party, to oust the regime that it has established, and to expel the Christian Democrats and all the representatives of the ruling class from the political leadership of the country. The qualitative leap needed has to have a class content. The succession of bourgeois governments has to be ended by the formation of a workers government.

A workers government means a government excluding all those who defend the interests of the ruling class. It is a government that defends the interests of the working class and its allies, made up of representatives of the workers organizations. It would begin to apply anticapitalist measures and not consider itself bound by the political and military pacts with

Chances for the Revolutionary Left

By Edgardo Pellegrini

[The following article by a member of the Political Bureau of the Italian section of the Fourth International appeared in the June 4 issue of the French Trotskyist daily *Rouge*. It was the sixth article in a series on the "Italian far left and the elections," and gives the position of the Italian Trotskyists. The translation is by *Intercontinental Press*.]

Slogans for a government of the workers parties, the nationalization of Fiat and other big industrial combines under workers control, and for breaking Italy's ties

imperialism. It would rest on the trade-union organizations and all organs that have been or may be created by the mass movement.

The revolutionists reject the gradualist strategy of the reformist organizations. They do not confuse a government of the workers parties that could be formed within the framework of the existing institutions with the seizure of power by the proletariat. But in the present Italian context, in the framework of the crisis that is throwing the country into turmoil at all levels, a government of the workers parties, even resulting from an electoral victory, could set in motion a dynamic leading to the conquest of power.

The PCI and the PSI never tire of repeating that they represent the majority of the working class and the toiling masses. This is more or less of an argument directed against the far left. All right, if the June 20 elections confirm this claim, if the PCI and the PSI do enjoy the confidence of the broad masses, the far left will not ignore this. It will call on Berlinguer and De Martino [the PSI head] to assume their responsibilities. Instead of tail-ending the Christian Democrats, the PRI, and the Liberals [PLI], instead of getting entangled in more or less "historic" compromises, they should assume the political leadership of the country, form a new government.

Revolutionists will not participate in such a government. They cannot take the responsibility for a gradualist strategy, which they believe is not suited to the revolutionary aims of the working class. But without any sectarianism or sterile dogmatism, they will support all the anticapitalist measures carried out by a government of the traditional workers parties, as well as all its actions that are in the interests of the masses.

That is the meaning of our slogans:

*Oust the Christian Democrat regime!
For a PCI-PSI government!
Vote Proletarian Democracy!* □

with NATO are the central axes of the program the Gruppi Comunisti Rivoluzionari are presenting in the campaign leading up to the June 20 elections. From the beginning, the GCR declared their support for a common slate of the nonreformist left forces. They therefore responded favorably to the agreement among the various forces around the Democrazia Proletaria [DP—Proletarian Democracy] ticket. At the same time, they have not glossed over the limitations of this agreement. The first drawback is the absence of a common programmatic basis for the campaign. Secondarily, there have been problems

about the criteria for assigning candidates on the various lists.

However, despite these limitations, which have given rise to an additional drawback (the DP campaign is actually a convergence of several campaigns: the one conducted jointly by Avanguardia Operaia and the PdUP, the one conducted by Lotta Continua, the campaign of the Workers Movement for Socialism [ml], and so on), the main result is that there is a common slate, despite all efforts and pressures brought to bear by the reformists (headed by the CP) to prevent it.

The fact that following June 20, there will be a group of nonreformist deputies in parliament will present the forces to the left of the CP with the problem of how to use this forum, what the relationship should be between parliamentary activity and work in the mass movement, what kind of relations they should have with the reformist parties, and so on. There are a whole series of problems that cannot be solved overnight.

The question of program will then be the central one in a vast debate that will encompass the entire revolutionary left and may extend to broader sectors of the workers movement. The problem of the fragmentation of the nonreformist left will also be posed more acutely. This involves three large centrist groupings, a few middle-sized organizations, and a myriad of local groups (called "autonomous formations"). The strong rank-and-file movement that forced the PdUP to accept a common agreement has already made known its feelings on this point, demanding adoption of a perspective of unifying all these forces into a revolutionary party. This debate will start again after June 20.

In expectation of this, the PdUP is speeding up the process of its organization-

al unification with Avanguardia Operaia. But a more far-reaching initiative has been taken by a representative of the leadership of Lotta Continua, Lisa Foa. She called for a "constituent assembly for a revolutionary party." This proposal can have a great impact and block the maneuvers of the right wing of PdUP, whose fundamental aim is to form a party to put pressure on the CP, not very different from the PSIUP* in the 1960s.

Lisa Foa's proposal offers a perspective of unity that corresponds to the demands and expectations of tens of thousands of activists. It is obviously an interesting one. An overall discussion of the program of a revolutionary party would have to take up the question of what strategy to follow in Italy in the coming years, what tactics to use against the reformists, the problem of internal democracy in the revolutionary party, the conception of the relationship between the vanguard and the masses, the question of the transition to socialism, and the international ties of the organization to come out of this discussion.

Such a discussion not only would involve the members of these organizations but would be carried out on a mass level, in various committees (in the schools and the factories, in the neighborhoods and the barracks). This could have an impact greater than anything that could be done before. So, the GCR has to define now what the fundamental issues are in this debate. These include the question of the

* Partito Socialista Italiano d'Unità Proletaria (Italian Socialist party of Proletarian Unity), a split-off from the SP that developed when it broke its traditional alliance with the CP in 1964 and entered the center-left governmental coalition with the Christian Democrats. Most of this group were eventually absorbed into the CP.—IP

workers government, of nationalizations (the need for this is more understandable now, since it is related to the problem of unemployment and hence to workers control and reduction of the workweek with no cut in pay), and of the abrogation of all political and military pacts linking the country with world imperialism. Around these central points we can tie together immediate demands and the defense of democratic freedoms.

The point most debated will probably be the one of the transition to socialism, that is, the relationship between the revolutionists and the CP-SP government and between the bourgeois institutions and the working class's organs of self-organization. This question has more to do with the aftermath of the elections, but clarification of these points is necessary right away, since it is on these issues that the most confusion exists in the nonreformist left. The illusion that some kind of people's power can arise and develop despite the survival of the bourgeois state is expressed most clearly by the PdUP, which proposes this as a mode of transition to socialism. But this notion is also present in a different guise in the formulations of Lotta Continua and Avanguardia Operaia.

The debate on program will thus assume a central role in the postelectoral phase. As of now, this debate has not gotten very far, and this lag could result in a modest vote for Proletarian Democracy on June 20. But this debate must be kept from being sidetracked onto issues that while important are secondary or sectoral problems. This is why the GCR think that the questions of the workers government, nationalizations, and withdrawal from NATO should be at the center of the discussion. □

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El PC Mexicano Explica la Política de las 'Alianzas Amplias'

[Como parte de la publicidad dedicada a cubrir la elección presidencial mexicana, a realizarse el 4 de julio, el semanario *Revista de Revistas*, que aparece en Ciudad de México, entrevistó a líderes de varios partidos políticos, publicando sus comentarios en la edición del 5 de mayo.

[Una de las entrevistas particularmente interesante fue la que se le hizo a Arnoldo Martínez Verdugo, secretario general del Partido Comunista Mexicano. Sus comentarios contribuyen a aclarar el significado de la plataforma electoral conjunta que firmaron en enero 12 el Comité Central del Partido Comunista, el Comité Político de la Liga Socialista (Tendencia Militante), y el Secretariado del Comité Nacional del Movimiento por la Organización Socialista.

[El texto completo de la plataforma electoral en español fue publicado en la edición del 1 de marzo de *Intercontinental Press*.]

* * *

Habla Arnoldo Martínez Verdugo, secretario general del Partido Comunista Mexicano.

"Pensamos que dada la situación de crisis política por la que atraviesa nuestro país, la unidad de la izquierda es la fórmula para que todas las personas que buscan una solución democrática de esas crisis puedan influir más eficazmente. Vemos que hay una motivación muy clara que debería impulsar a todas las personas de izquierda, a todos los demócratas, a encontrar los puntos de coincidencia y a poner el peso de esta corriente histórica en la búsqueda de una solución democrática."

El dirigente comunista afirma que esa crisis política de la que habla puede desenvolverse hacia dos salidas: "Una es la salida democrática; la otra es la de un endurecimiento autoritario. Y hay fuerzas que buscan esta última solución."

Agrega entonces que para que la situación se oriente en el primer sentido, lo principal es que puedan unirse no sólo las fuerzas de izquierda, sino además las fuerzas democráticas. A las primeras las define como aquéllas que tienen un programa y una táctica revolucionarios. Las segundas, dice, son aquéllas que buscan la reforma del sistema, en sentido positivo, en sentido democrático.

"Este es el esquema," dice, "de lo que en nuestro último congreso llamamos política de amplias alianzas. En ella, el aspecto fundamental lo juegan, claro, las fuerzas de izquierda, que deben ser el núcleo de una auténtica transformación democrática



Revista de Revistas

MARTINEZ VERDUGO

en nuestro país. Pero proclamamos que deben tomarse también en cuenta otras fuerzas, otras instituciones.

"Entre éstas, por ejemplo, nosotros incluimos a las fuerzas renovadoras de la Iglesia, que para cualquier cambio de significación en el país deben ser tomadas muy en cuenta e incluirse en cualquier estrategia para la formación de un nuevo bloque de fuerzas, que es a lo que debe aspirar la izquierda."

Martínez Verdugo menciona también a la Universidad, a las fuerzas "patrióticas democráticas" que haya en el ejército, e inclusive a algunos sectores progresistas de la empresa, entre aquéllos que deben considerarse en una política de amplias alianzas, como la que propone el PCM.

"¿Incluirían también en ese esquema a algunos elementos o sectores del PRI?" se le pregunta.

"Sí," responde pronto. "Deben tomarse en cuenta algunas tendencias que pueden considerarse de izquierda oficial que existen en el PRI y que ahora se reavivan. También pueden dar un aporte importante. Rafael Galván es un militante del PRI y, sin embargo, con él se ha podido realizar una relación unitaria en el movimiento obrero. Desde luego, no tomo en cuenta a todo el PRI."

El secretario general del PCM se refiere

1. Partido Revolucionario Institucional, el partido burgués en el poder.

ahora a la situación de la izquierda mexicana que, dice, "vive todavía un período de dispersión que le ha causado muchos daños." Considera que el factor principal que ha impedido una unificación está situado en las concepciones tácticas que algunos sectores han mantenido y mantienen.

"Fundamentalmente," dice, "me parece que la divergencia reside en la actitud frente al bloque gobernante. Por ejemplo, el PPS² sigue aferrado a la concepción táctica que determinó el fracaso de la izquierda a partir de 1940: es decir, el llamado 'frente patriótico,' como ellos lo formulan, que consistiría en unir a las fuerzas democráticas y de izquierda en torno al gobierno y bajo la dirección del gobierno.

"Pienso que lo erróneo de esa táctica consiste en que no toma en cuenta los cambios que se han realizado en el bloque gobernante, sobre todo a partir del gobierno de Miguel Alemán.³ No toma en cuenta que en el gobierno comenzaron a predominar los intereses de la gran burguesía, ni que el capitalismo de Estado comenzó a convertirse en capitalismo monopolista, sobre todo a partir de que el sector estatal se puso al servicio de los monopolios privados. Y esto hizo que el Estado mexicano ya no representara los intereses que pudo representar durante el gobierno de Cárdenas,⁴ por ejemplo.

"En nuestra opinión, lo que la izquierda debe plantearse ahora es la lucha por una dirección democrática del Estado, por una conducción democrática de los asuntos nacionales, lo cual exige que las fuerzas de izquierda se agrupen de manera autónoma y no dependan del aparato estatal."

Martínez Verdugo aclara que de darse tal agrupamiento de la izquierda, ello no querría decir que adoptaría una posición sectaria. La izquierda unificada, explica, podría efectivamente establecer alianzas, compromisos con fuerzas del gobierno, "siempre y cuando ella actuara con su propia política, con su propia táctica y su propia estrategia y no como auxiliar del gobierno, que es como quiere éste tener a las fuerzas democráticas y de izquierda.

"Mientras no se extienda esta concepción de que la izquierda tiene su propia alternativa, sus propias soluciones para

2. Partido Popular Socialista.

3. Miguel Alemán fue presidente desde 1946 a 1952.

4. Lázaro Cárdenas fue presidente desde 1934 a 1940.

los problemas económicos y políticos del país y no se actúe autónomamente, siempre habrá dificultades para que la izquierda se una," advierte.

Luego lamenta que no se haya aprovechado debidamente la coyuntura que ofrecía la sucesión presidencial.

"Ante la campaña presidencial, la izquierda tenía grandes posibilidades de haber presentado una alternativa y de desplegar su fuerza. Sin embargo, resultó neutralizada porque el PPS decidió seguir

su misma táctica de apoyar a los candidatos oficiales y el PST⁵ optó por una posición similar."

"Concretamente, ¿qué fórmula propone el PCM para lograr una unificación de la izquierda?"

"Aun ahora, y a pesar de las divergentes posiciones adoptadas por las fuerzas de izquierda ante la campaña electoral, cree-

5. Partido Socialista de los Trabajadores.

mos que puede hacerse un esfuerzo que antes de que termine la campaña, las fuerzas de izquierda logren formular un programa común. Para ello, sugerimos que se convoque a una asamblea nacional de fuerzas de izquierda. Ese sería ya un principio."

Finalmente, Martínez Verdugo sentenció:

"Cuando la izquierda se una efectivamente, habrá posibilidades de un cambio en este país." □

En Búsqueda del Apoyo de los Grandes Negociantes

La 'Segunda Fase' de la 'Revolución' Peruana

[El siguiente artículo apareció en la edición del 8 de mayo de *Palabra Socialista*, un órgano de informaciones obreras y estudiantiles publicado en Lima. Las notas al pie de página son de *Intercontinental Press*.]

* * *

Pese al mes transcurrido, el Mensaje Presidencial del 31 de marzo aún deja sentir su resonancia en el ámbito político nacional. Los pronunciamientos de simpatía con dicha exposición de parte de diversas entidades patronales, de partidos y órganos de expresión de la derecha, de la CTP,¹ etc., revelan la importancia casi decisiva que ha tenido el Mensaje de Morales Bermúdez en el objetivo del gobierno de restaurar un nuevo equilibrio de fuerzas en el país.

Desde nuestro punto de vista, el discurso del Presidente ha ido dirigido al objetivo inmediato de renovar la confianza de los patronos y del imperialismo a fin de reactivar las inversiones y seguir obteniendo los préstamos que vienen ofreciendo diversos organismos financieros imperialistas. Por ello, el Presidente—en su Mensaje—hizo una particular defensa pública de la empresa privada, responsabilizó—en cambio—a los paros y a las huelgas y a los "malos" dirigentes y asesores laborales de ser los causantes del actual caos económico, acusó a los "malos" periodistas—hoy fuera de los diarios—de haber "creado la incertidumbre, el temor a la desconfianza" y generado la "falta de credibilidad" del gobierno, se autocriticó por haberse efectuado en el régimen anterior algunas medidas precipitadamente—caso Marcona²—e invocó al diálogo a fin de resolver diferencias y de

1. Confederación de Trabajadores Peruanos, dirigida por la Alianza Popular Revolucionaria Americana (APRA).

"promover la unión, concordia e integración de los peruanos." Indudablemente, pues, por el tono y el contenido del Mensaje del 31 de marzo, sus principales destinatarios no han sido los trabajadores y el pueblo sino los patronos y el imperialismo.

Si a este Mensaje agregamos el último paso dado en la minería al declararla en "estado de emergencia,"³ el despido intempestivo de periodistas en *Expreso*⁴ y en otros diarios al amparo de la suspensión de la estabilidad laboral en los mismos, la prohibición a los actos convocados en defensa de las libertades democráticas por el COPAPOL⁵ y otros organismos, etc.—pasos que, al decir de *Opinión Libre*, son el "corolario del Mensaje Presidencial"—tenemos que concluir en que nos encontramos ante un nuevo y más sólido viraje derechista del gobierno.

Si bien es cierto, este último Mensaje Presidencial ha definido públicamente y sin "medias tintas" un curso derechizante

2. El 24 de julio de 1975, el gobierno peruano nacionalizó la "Marcona Mining Co.," compañía minera en manos de capitales norteamericanos, que operaba el único complejo del hierro que existe de Perú.

3. El 9 de abril, el régimen de Morales Bermúdez declaró estado de emergencia en la industria minera, autorizando a las compañías a despedir a obreros en huelga, para lo cual contaba con el apoyo previo de los ministros de minas y de trabajo.

4. El 7 de abril, en momentos en que se presentaban a desempeñar sus tareas, fueron despedidos doce periodistas que trabajaban para *Expreso*. Esto fue parte de una "reorganización" oficial del periódico, iniciada tres semanas atrás. El semanario *Marka*, publicado en Lima, dijo que la "reorganización consistía en parte en suprimir noticias, cortar editoriales y en rehusarse a imprimir comunicados de los sindicatos."

5. El 10 de abril, una demostración organizada por el Comité por la Amnistía Político-Laboral fue prohibida por el gobierno.

en la política del gobierno, este proceso se ha visto venir desde mucho antes, desde los últimos años del régimen de Velasco.⁶ Precisamente, desde ese entonces, hemos venido manifestando que el fracaso del nacionalismo burgués y la profundización de la crisis invariablemente conducirían al gobierno a conciliar cada vez más con la derecha y el imperialismo. Que al haber llegado el gobierno nacionalista a lo máximo que puede dar un régimen de su naturaleza, su rumbo se orientaría con mayor fuerza hacia la derecha en el objetivo de llegar a un acuerdo con todos los sectores patronales e imperialistas a fin de resolver los graves problemas económicos y mantenerse por un tiempo mayor en el poder. El golpe del 29 de agosto no vino sino a institucionalizar ese proceso y a reordenar las fuerzas internas a fin de consolidar un equilibrio real que le permita la aplicación coherente de esta nueva política. El Plan Barúa⁷ constituyó—desde el punto de vista económico—el principal paso del gobierno en su política de alcanzar la "Unidad Nacional" y de ganar la simpatía de aquellas instituciones financieras imperialistas que mantenían—y aún mantienen—en oferta sus préstamos y ayudas a cambio de algunas concesiones económicas.

El último Mensaje Presidencial sólo ha venido a consolidar esta política y a definir sin ambigüedades cuál va a ser la orientación del gobierno.

6. Juan Velasco Alvarado fue presidente del Perú desde 1968 hasta el 29 de agosto de 1975, día en que fue depuesto por obra de un golpe de estado en el que no hubo derramamientos de sangre.

7. El 12 de enero, el ministro de economía Luis Barúa anunció un programa de "reactivación nacional" que, entre otras cosas, elevaba el precio de los alimentos y del petróleo y eliminaba aproximadamente \$34 millones del presupuesto educacional.

Dos objetivos se plantea el gobierno con esta política: primero, ganar económicamente la confianza de los patronos y de los organismos de crédito internacionales, ofreciéndoles mejores garantías para sus inversiones y préstamos, a fin de "aumentar la producción" y de esa forma neutralizar la crisis. Y, segundo, seguir avanzando hacia una unidad política que le permita al gobierno tener un buen respaldo patronal para mantenerse algunos años más en el poder.

En el primer objetivo el gobierno choca con que la crisis económica es tan profunda que muy difícilmente podrá pacificar el actual descontento popular. A ello se debe precisamente las últimas medidas represivas que desesperadamente busca implementar a fin de tranquilizar por "vías más convincentes" la actual inquietud de lucha de los trabajadores. En el segundo, la situación es mucho más difícil, principalmente porque el conjunto de la burguesía, que ha experimentado ya siete años de nacionalismo burgués, prefiere resolver la crisis por ella misma, sin ningún tipo de intermediarios.

Es por esa razón que el apoyo otorgado por los patronos, por Acción Popular, el APRA, la DC,⁸ la CTP, etc., es sumamente condicional. Aplauden de hecho las últimas medidas del gobierno, pero aún mantienen una actitud de expectativa ante los ofrecimientos del Presidente. La derecha pide acciones más concretas: suspensión plena de estabilidad laboral, liquidación del derecho de huelga, reforma de la Comunidad Industrial,⁹ expulsión de los izquierdistas que aún quedan dentro del gobierno, etc., y la definición en el próximo "Plan Túpac Amaru"¹⁰ de una salida electoral.

De cualquier forma, al margen de las exigencias patronales, el gobierno ha dado un nuevo e importante paso hacia la "Unidad Nacional." En este contexto, tenemos que descartar toda posibilidad definitivamente de nuevos bandazos populistas. Al contrario, en la medida que el gobierno busque ganar el apoyo patronal y desviar sus pretensiones electoralistas, tendrá que mantener e incluso profundizar este curso derechista para de esa manera preservar el equilibrio político.

La Situación Sigue Siendo Transitoria

Si bien es cierto, con estas medidas y el mensaje, el gobierno podrá lograr un mejor

8. Democracia Cristiana.

9. Un programa que ofrece a los obreros participación en las ganancias. La parte de los obreros está basada en el interés producido por acciones que representan el 15 por ciento de la renta anual neta de la empresa. Una vez que la Comunidad ha obtenido el 50 por ciento de las acciones de la empresa, los obreros obtienen la propiedad de su 15 por ciento.

10. El plan que Morales Bermúdez prometió poner en práctica en la "segunda fase" de la revolución peruana.

equilibrio aún la situación política sigue siendo transitoria. Aún el gobierno no ha definido una salida política precisa que le permita tranquilizar las expectativas de la reacción y contener el actual alza social. El "Plan Túpac Amaru"—por lo que insinuó el mismo Presidente—es en el momento motivo de discusiones internas, sin que hasta la fecha haya algo ya plenamente definido.

En nuestro parecer, si bien hasta ahora Morales Bermúdez ha podido conducir el carro del gobierno arbitrando las contradicciones internas, fortaleciendo el ala bonapartista y haciendo alianzas con los sectores más reaccionarios para evitar la ruptura, a la larga por el propio desarrollo de la crisis tendrá que definirse por uno de los dos caminos que le queda al gobierno: o deja el poder y abre un proceso electoral para desviar por esa vía las inquietudes patronales y las luchas de los trabajadores; o se mantiene en el poder y endurece su política a límites semejantes de vecinos gobiernos latinoamericanos a fin de contener la situación. Ese es, creemos, lo que se discute ahora dentro del gobierno.

Esta indefinición sobre qué salida escoger es lo que ha provocado la demora de la publicación del "Plan Túpac Amaru," un plan que como dijera *Opinión Libre* "antes de nacer ya se quebró." La posibilidad de una nueva Constitución "para cuando las reformas estén consolidadas" y de un referendium nacional—adelantada por Morales Bermúdez en su exposición—sólo busca no desanimar las esperanzas de algunos sectores patronales, alentando algunas expectativas. Tal como sigue la dinámica dentro del gobierno, creemos que una salida política bien definida sólo podrá lograrse a fuerza de bruscos cambios internos o de golpes o autogolpes.

¿Cómo Frenar la Actual Escalada Derechista?

Indudablemente no será con los métodos del PC (Unidad)¹¹—que ahora nos llama a "aumentar la producción para defender la revolución"—con los que vamos a enfrentar este proceso derechizante; menos aún con el apoyo a los sectores "patriotas" del gobierno para que frenen éstos a los más reaccionarios, como así lo sugirieron otros sectores de la izquierda.

Sólo la más absoluta defensa de la independencia política de clase y mediante la movilización unitaria de las masas trabajadoras podremos enfrentar esta escalada. No es negándonos a hacer un "Paro Nacional" cómo vamos a impedir que la "contrarrevolución" siga desarrollándose; sino al contrario, así le hacemos el mejor juego, le dejamos el espacio libre para que siga avanzando. Por eso, ahora

11. Partido Comunista (Unidad), el partido comunista pro-Moscú.

más que nunca, todas las organizaciones de base deben de exigir a sus actuales direcciones a que ejerzan la más amplia unidad de acción en defensa de las libertades democráticas, en defensa de la estabilidad laboral, del derecho de huelga, etc. y apuntalar las medidas de lucha más adecuadas al momento. Un Paro Nacional en estas circunstancias permitiría a la clase obrera renovar la confianza en sus fuerzas, dar un duro golpe a la ofensiva patronal y hacer retroceder al gobierno en sus pretensiones derechistas.

Pero la lucha en estos momentos no se libra sólo en el plano sindical. Con un Paro Nacional no se van a resolver a plenitud las actuales reivindicaciones de los trabajadores y la actual situación crítica por la que atraviesa el país. Es menester que ahora elevemos nuestras luchas inmediatas a su expresión política: a la lucha contra la continuidad de un gobierno que ya demostró haber fracasado como tal y que sólo nos lleva a los más peligrosos callejones sin salida. En un contexto en que la derecha saca cabeza y que las distintas corrientes reformistas buscan arrastrar a los trabajadores como furgón de cola de los generales "patriotas" (¿?), se impone la urgente necesidad de formular una salida obrera y popular que dé una respuesta a los principales problemas que sufren el país y las masas trabajadoras. La única salida a la crisis y la única forma de frenar el actual proceso de derechización es iniciando la lucha porque se vaya el gobierno militar por ser el principal responsable de la crisis y porque se nombre un gobierno provisional de la CGTP¹² y demás organizaciones obreras y campesinas—elegido en un congreso de los trabajadores—que imponga un plan económico obrero para resolver la crisis y llame a elecciones inmediatas. □

12. Confederación General de Trabajadores Peruanos, la federación sindical dominada por el PC(U).

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FROM OUR READERS

A letter quoted in an earlier "From Our Readers" column told how an article published in *Intercontinental Press* March 22, "Release Egypt's Political Prisoners!" had helped in building a campaign in their behalf in Sri Lanka.

The same subscriber in Sri Lanka has written us about further progress:

"Our campaign about the Trotskyists imprisoned in Egypt has continued. In addition to a few hundred individual letters sent to Sadat and the Ambassador here, we have circulated numerous petitions to obtain signatures for the release of the Egyptian Trotskyists.

"We are seeking United Front action with other political groups including the renegade L.S.S.P. and the Revolutionary Marxist Party to hold a joint public meeting on this issue."

W.L.W. of Frankfurt, West Germany, included this note when he sent us a copy of a discussion between the East German oppositionists Wolf Biermann and Robert Havemann, which we hope to publish in a forthcoming issue of *Intercontinental Press*:

"By the way, I am glad that the publication of Fred Halstead's 'Out Now!' has resumed; it is always on the top of my must-reading list. I think it is a very good source of inspiration for work in such a mass movement."

A subscriber in Lexington, Kentucky, sent in a change of address and at the same time inquired about our subscription rates for Turkey:

"Also," he wrote, "I just met a few weeks ago a person from Turkey who is going home soon and would like to subscribe to I.P. Please send to my new address information on how to subscribe to I.P. from Istanbul, Turkey—I will forward the information to him."

A reader in Los Angeles sent a letter thanking us for our "prompt attention in sending the subscription to my son." He added:

"Now I need a subscription for myself to cover one year of your weekly. Also I would appreciate your including back copies corresponding to past months; that is to say the latest I have is the issue of Dec. 22, 1975, so you can mail to me all the copies following the indicated date and of course the subscription ordered."

"I've just discovered IP and find it almost shockingly excellent," writes F.L. of Cambridge, Massachusetts. "My half-time employment leaves me with time to read IP but without money to fully afford

it. If you could possibly allow me a six-month subscription, I will start saving my nickels in order to present you with a full subscription upon the new year."

A six-month subscription is a "full" subscription and we're just as glad to get these as those for longer periods.

G.C.Y., Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, says that "due to being unemployed," he "cannot get a 1 year sub. Sorry."

Again—we welcome all the six-month subscriptions that come in.

K.K., Shawnee Mission, Kansas, sent in his renewal and asked us to send all the back issues he had missed.

"Thank you," he wrote, "for this [the box on the renewal form which, if checked, brings you all of the back issues between expiration and renewal], as I had to wait until this week for payday. Otherwise, I value the publication tremendously."

Another subscriber, J.O. of Los Angeles, California, explained:

"I want to renew my IP sub retroactively to February 23, 1976, issue when my last subscription expired. . . . Without having the IP for the last 3 months, I've lost track of what's happening, especially in Portugal. So if you can start this renewal with Vol. 14, No. 7, I can begin to catch up on what I've missed."

The following request came from M.S., Cincinnati, Ohio:

"We are beginning our Socialist Summer School here . . . and need an old IP article which is required in the syllabus. . . . The article is 'Importance of Revolutionary Continuity,' Hansen, April 6, 1970. . . .

"Please send us a xerox of this (or an old issue if you have extras) and bill us. We need it as soon as you can manage it."

The article is the text of a speech given in Los Angeles by Joseph Hansen at the celebration of James P. Cannon's eightieth birthday. Copies of this issue are still available and can be obtained for 50¢ each as long as they last.

W.C., Toronto, Canada, sent in the following order:

"I'd like the complete back-issue file on Pierre Frank's 'History of the Fourth International.' Is this possible? How much is it?"

The entire series published in thirteen issues of *Intercontinental Press* during March-June 1972 is still available and can be obtained by sending \$6.50 to the business office.



Herblock/New York Post

A prisoner in Georgia writes that he would like to read *Intercontinental Press*.

"I'm writing this letter," he says, "in the interest of knowing if you have a special program which you offer prisoners subscription (or back issues) to your periodical (*Intercontinental Press*) free of charge. Or—rather—it is possible that I could be given recent back issues of I.P."

"Presently I'm unable to make any contributions to I.P. for any material received, and any assistance given in this matter would be—very much—appreciated."

Because of generous contributions from other readers, we are able to send this friend a subscription.

R.B. of Vancouver, Canada, sent this note with payment for a bundle subscription:

"You are going to think me quite mad for we must again so soon increase our order of I.P."

This kind of madness is quite O.K. We are prepared to process bundle subscription increases forthwith.

Again on the Postal Service.

B.D. of Philadelphia guessed right when he said "probably" in his letter:

"It is probably the post office's fault but I did not receive issues 13 and 14. Or did it have anything to do with the fact that I just renewed?"

S.T., Toronto, Canada, after waiting a month for the first issues on her subscription to arrive, asks:

"Can you give me an explanation why the papers haven't arrived yet? Please send it from now on by first-class mail. . . ."

There's some speculation on the reason for slow delivery or nondelivery. We support Herblock's theory shown above. □