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Ford's Saber Rattling in Korea

Washington's continued military occupation of South Korea has produced a chilling display of saber rattling, showing once again how ruthlessly the White House will seize upon a pretext in one of the world's flash points to demonstrate its readiness for a military confrontation.

In a naked display of the force on which its domination is based, the White House responded to an August 18 incident in the Korean demilitarized zone by mobilizing enough military force to bring the world to the brink of war.

The incident itself—a clash between American and North Korean forces over the pruning of a tree—was quickly overshadowed by Washington's military and propaganda offensive.

Kissinger denounced the clash as a "premeditated act of murder" and demanded "reparation." An unnamed "high State Department official" threatened August 20 that he "would not rule out military force" in response.

The more than 41,000 U.S. occupation troops in South Korea were placed on

increased combat readiness. A massive U.S. military buildup was begun in the area, with Ford sending in an aircraft carrier, four frigates, a destroyer, and fighter bombers from as far away as Idaho.

On August 21, Ford carried Washington's strong-arm tactics to the point of sending in 300 combat troops—backed by helicopter gunships, jet fighters, and B-52 bombers—to cut down the offending tree.

The following day Washington rejected as unacceptable North Korean President Kim Il Sung's statement terming the original incident "regrettable." This action showed clearly that Ford was mainly interested in flexing Washington's military might—particularly at the expense of a small country.

The only way to prevent the Dr. Strangeloves in the White House from carrying out further such military provocations is to demand that U.S. troops be removed from South Korea and every other country they occupy. The watchword should be, "Get the troops out and get them out now!" □

Vorster's Maneuvers in Namibia and Zimbabwe

By Ernest Harsch

Faced with continuing Black upheavals in the major cities of South Africa, the racist white minority regime is developing a two-sided strategy for the survival of apartheid. At home, it is intensifying the repression, gunning down and arresting hundreds of Black militants. At the same time, Pretoria is seeking to defuse the mounting social conflicts in Namibia and Zimbabwe for fear that the Black freedom struggles in those countries will further encourage Blacks in South Africa.

On August 18, Pretoria took its first major step along these lines in Namibia, which it has ruled as a direct colony since World War I. A group of white officials and African tribal chiefs who had been meeting in a "constitutional" conference in Windhoek announced plans for a "multiracial" government that would lead the country to formal independence by December 31, 1978. The timing of the announcement was designed to forestall United Nations sanctions. The UN had set an August 31 deadline for Pretoria to announce plans for free elections in the territory.

The statement, however, made no mention of elections, nor did it provide any

details on the form of "multiracial" government to be adopted. While reversing Pretoria's previous policy of partitioning Namibia—with the Africans getting the impoverished north and the whites the mineral-rich south—the statement nevertheless stressed that "provision will be made for the adequate protection of minority groups." In other words, it aims at safeguarding the near total economic domination of both the white settlers, who comprise about 12 percent of the population, and Pretoria's imperialist allies.

The main Namibian nationalist group, the South West Africa People's Organisation, which was excluded from the talks, rejected Pretoria's scheme the following day. Pastor Festus Naholo, SWAPO's secretary for foreign affairs, called for African and international condemnation of the move and said, "The so-called interim government for Namibia has only been provided for to diminish the pressures on South Africa."

SWAPO representatives have stated that before the group is willing to negotiate with Pretoria, the Vorster regime must withdraw all its army and police units from Namibia, release all Namibian politi-

cal prisoners, and recognize the territorial integrity of Namibia.

The "constitutional" conference and the "independence" maneuver are in fact a cover for Pretoria's stepped-up war against the Namibian freedom fighters. In the last three weeks of June, it declared that its forces had killed twenty-six guerrillas, a sharp rise over previous months. The three northern areas of Ovamboland, Okavangoland, and Eastern Caprivi have been placed under virtual martial law and a "no-go" area about half a mile deep has been established along the entire border with Angola. A large military base, designed to train 10,000 troops, is under construction near Grootfontein, north of Windhoek.

Pretoria clearly intends to break the back of the guerrilla resistance before granting the colony its "independence."

On August 13, several days before the announcement on Namibia, Pretoria also formally endorsed Kissinger's efforts to head off the overthrow of the Rhodesian regime by imposing a negotiated "settlement" on the Zimbabwean masses.

South African Foreign Minister Hilgard Muller declared that "the South African Government welcomes this initiative. . . ." Citing the "fruitful discussions" between Vorster and Kissinger in June and a speech delivered by Kissinger on August 2, Muller added that there was "no doubt that the United States is not advocating the complete and unconditional surrender of the white minority in Rhodesia to the black majority."

Muller's speech came just a few days after a sharp increase in the fighting in Zimbabwe. On August 8, a mechanized unit of the Rhodesian army crossed the border into neighboring Mozambique and attacked a Zimbabwean camp at Nyazonia. According to the Salisbury regime, its forces killed more than 300 guerrillas, 30 Mozambican troops, and 10 civilians. The Mozambique regime charged, however, that the Rhodesians had massacred 618 persons, most of whom were Zimbabwean refugees, including women and children.

The American imperialists are also concerned about the impact the Zimbabwean conflict could have throughout the region. In an August 2 speech, Kissinger admitted that Washington is "engaged in frequent consultations with the African states most directly concerned." The aim of those "consultations" is to get the neocolonial African regimes bordering Zimbabwe to pressure the guerrillas into a compromise.

However, a powerful new force that could upset all of Washington's and Pretoria's schemes has entered the arena: the Black masses of South Africa. The militancy and courage displayed by the youths of Soweto and other Black townships can only inspire the Blacks of Namibia and Zimbabwe to press forward with the struggle to rid their countries of white colonial rule. □

Reza Baraheni's Life Threatened by Savak

The lives of Reza Baraheni and other prominent Iranian dissidents living in the United States and Europe are in danger.

Savak murder squads, it has been learned, have been sent from Iran to silence exiles who have spoken out against the shah's repression. Baraheni is believed to be a No. 1 target.

"I have been warned by a source that has been reliable in the past that the Iranian government has dispatched several assault squads from Savak, the Iranian secret police, to Europe and the United States," Baraheni told a New York news conference August 11.

Their aim, he said, is "to exploit the cooperation of criminal elements in this country to eliminate those Iranians who have raised their voices against torture and repression in Iran. These men will appear in the form of ordinary muggers and kill the Iranians one by one."

Baraheni was told of the threat to his life by Professor Richard Cottom of the University of Pittsburgh. Professor Cottom, a specialist in Iranian affairs, told Baraheni he had learned of the Savak assault squads from an acquaintance in the State Department.

Cottom did not know the exact identity of the intended victims, Baraheni said. But "I have been told that my name could definitely be on the top list of the victims, and that the Iranian squads could well be in New York by now."

Baraheni, Iran's best known contemporary poet, was arrested by the shah in 1973, jailed for 102 days, and tortured. His life was saved only by a vigorous international campaign.

Since his release, he has been one of the most effective critics of the shah's repressive regime. He has worked closely with Amnesty International, the International League for Human Rights, the International Commission of Jurists, and the international writers association PEN. He is currently honorary chairman of the Committee for Artistic and Intellectual Freedom in Iran.

Appearing at the news conference with Baraheni to demand action by the United States government were former Attorney General Ramsey Clark; Henry Carlisle, president of the American PEN Center; Muriel Rukeyser, former president of American PEN; novelist Donald Barthelme; and attorneys Leonard Boudin and Ira Gollobin.

A number of protests have already been lodged. The American PEN Center has sent telegrams to the Justice Department and Secretary of State Henry Kissinger demanding an investigation of the affair and protection for the threatened Iranians. Similar statements have been sent by Ramsey Clark, and by Congressmen Fortney Stark and Michael Harrington. □

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Black Protests Spread in South Africa

By Ernest Harsch

Ever since the first large Black protests erupted in Soweto in mid-June, South African police and government officials have repeatedly proclaimed that the uprisings in the townships were "under control." But the massive upheavals are, in fact, continuing to spread to new cities and are drawing in ever broader sectors of the Black population.

The new wave of mass protests began on August 4, when Black students gathered at Orlando Stadium in Soweto to protest the arrest of student leaders in the township after the June rebellions. The crowd quickly grew to 20,000 as the protesters began a march toward Johannesburg, where they planned to rally outside the central prison to demand the release of political prisoners.

Before they reached the police barricades that had been erected on the outskirts of Soweto, however, the demonstrators were attacked by the police. The youths regrouped twice in an attempt to continue their march. When the tear gas and gunfire subsided, three more Black youths lay dead.

Despite the fierce repression and in defiance of a government ban on public meetings, students and other youths met the following day at Soweto's Morris Isaacson High School to plan another march on the central prison.

In an August 5 dispatch from Johannesburg, *New York Times* correspondent John F. Burns reported, "Following the pattern set yesterday, when the police fired on groups of marchers who outflanked a security cordon around the township, the students were joined by hundreds of adult marchers. By the time they reached a police roadblock, at a crossroads, there were at least 5,000 in the column." The protesters gave clenched-fist Black power salutes and sang Black nationalist songs.

For the first time since the uprisings began, the students appealed directly to Black workers to stage protest strikes. Johannesburg is one of South Africa's largest industrial centers, with 220,000 Black workers who commute from Soweto every day. The students' strike call met with some significant success. Burns reported in the same dispatch:

For the second day, large numbers of residents stayed away from work in response to student demands for a boycott. Youths with handkerchiefs across their faces, apparently an attempt at protection against tear gas, were out at dawn manning roadblocks and picket lines at the township's rail stations, urging commuters to return home.

Absenteeism in Johannesburg's factories, which rely on black labor, ranged from a quarter to three-quarters of the work forces. Student leaders cited all this as a demonstration of the potential that black workers have to cripple the economy.

The new spirit of militancy among young Blacks was captured in "Soweto, Where It's Happening," a song by Soweto jazz pianist Dollar Brand. It was sung by many of the demonstrators:

*This is where it's happening,
In Soweto, man.
And the white man will hear it happen-
ing
From Soweto, man.
Because the young men are saying
The young men are saying
Enough, enough
In Soweto, man.*

According to a report in the August 16 *Newsweek*, "the words sent a chill throughout white South Africa."

For the first time since the early 1960s, mass Black unrest also spread to the Cape Town area. On the morning of August 11, several hundred students marched out of a high school in Langa, a Black township outside Cape Town, chanting "Black power." In the evening they were joined by workers returning from their jobs. Other actions, also involving hundreds of Blacks, were staged in the Guguletu and Nyanga townships.

The next day, about 1,000 students and workers marched to the Langa police station, singing songs and holding signs that read, "We are not fighting. Don't shoot—just release our fellow students." The police broke up the protest with tear gas.

Other demonstrations were dealt with even more brutally. Police dogs were set loose on Black youths and in some cases police fired directly into crowds with automatic weapons. According to official figures, at least thirty Blacks were shot to death during the Cape Town protests. The real death toll could be much higher, however. Residents of the Black townships reported that the police took bodies away in trucks for secret burial.

Coloured* students at the University of

*The 2.3 million Coloureds in South Africa are descendants of the early Dutch settlers, Indian slaves, and native Khoi-Khoi, Bushmen, and other African peoples. Most of them live in the Cape, where they originated, and speak Afrikaans, the Dutch-based language of the Afrikaner whites.

the Western Cape launched a boycott of classes in solidarity with the African protesters. On August 16, about 700 Coloured students marched to a courthouse in a white suburb of Cape Town to protest the arrest of student leaders. They were also attacked by police armed with clubs.

Several hundred white students at the University of Cape Town held their own solidarity action, attempting to march to the Black townships to join the Black demonstrators. Since the apartheid regime seeks to maintain the image that its policies have support from the entire white population of four million, it has always reacted sharply to signs of white solidarity with the Black struggle. In June, white demonstrators in Johannesburg were beaten. During the recent Cape Town march, up to 100 white students were arrested.

From Cape Town, the rebellions spread westward to the industrial center of Port Elizabeth, where 500 high-school students in the Kwazakele township staged a rally August 17 to commemorate the police victims and to call for the release of the arrested Black militants. The crowd grew to about 4,000 as youths attacked such symbols of white authority as a bank, a post office, an administration building, and an unemployment office. By August 19, at least thirty-three Blacks in the Port Elizabeth area were killed by the police.

According to a report in the August 20 *New York Times*, protests have erupted in more than seventy Black townships so far. There have also been actions in some of the Bantustans, the impoverished African tribal reserves set up by the apartheid regime. In the Bophuthatswana reserve, students shouting Black power slogans burned down the main parliament building in Mafeking August 8. In the Transkei reserve, police arrested 266 students who had staged a sit-in demonstration in Lady Frere in solidarity with the Black uprisings.

In an effort to spread the Soweto strike actions throughout the country, students began distributing leaflets in Black townships August 20 calling for a three-day *azikwelwao*, a stay-at-home strike, to begin on August 23.

The increasing participation of Coloureds in the antigovernment actions is significant. Pretoria has long sought to divide the Black population by giving the 2.3 million Coloureds and 710,000 Indians in the country a few more rights than the 17.7 million Africans. In the Western Cape, for instance, Coloureds are given preference over Africans in job openings.

The participation of hundreds of Coloured students in the Cape Town demonstrations reflected the growing resentment of the Coloured population toward the regime's racial policies. This resentment has heightened considerably since June, when Pretoria rejected a commission report that proposed "drastic constitutional changes" and the end of job and

educational restrictions on Coloureds.

The Cape Town student actions prompted seventeen Coloured ministers of the Coloured Dutch Reformed Church to sign a statement August 16 rejecting "in the strongest possible terms the sinful structure of apartheid." It declared that "we refuse to accept privileges that are not given to the rest of the black community and we refuse to be used any longer by the divide and rule politics of the white government."

In an effort to contain the spreading protests, the Vorster regime has coupled repression with a few minor concessions.

On August 7, Minister of Bantu Administration and Development Michiel C. Botha, who is in overall charge of enforcing the regime's apartheid policies, declared that the Black townships would be given greater control over local affairs as part of a "new deal" for urban Blacks.

A few days later, he announced that urban Blacks, except for those living in Cape Province, would be allowed to buy or build their own homes without first becoming "citizens" of the Bantustans, as Pretoria had previously insisted.

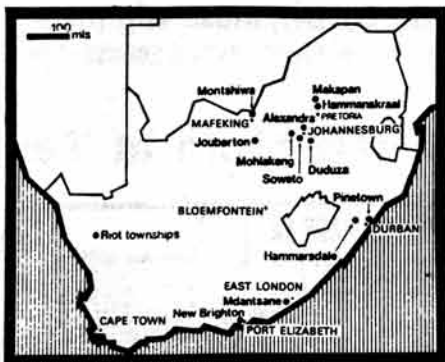
The Transvaal Chamber of Industries, representing many of the largest companies in South Africa, released a memorandum to the government August 19 calling for some reforms, including an increase in the poverty-level wages for Blacks. "The mature, family-oriented black in the cities is more interested in his pay packet than in politics," the memorandum maintained.

Whatever token concessions the regime may be forced to make in an effort to dampen the protests, they will not affect the essential aspects of the apartheid system. Information Minister Connie P. Mulder, one of the most powerful officials in Vorster's cabinet, told a rally of the governing Nationalist party in early August that any concessions Pretoria made would be "within the framework of Government policy."

The main axis of the regime's response to the rebellions has been intensified repression. According to the August issue of the London monthly *Africa* magazine, about 3,000 persons were arrested after the June uprisings. No specific charges have yet been brought against them.

Since the recent wave of protests began in early August, the draconian Internal Security Act, which had been in force only in Transvaal Province, has been extended to the entire country. It allows the detention without trial of anyone for up to one year.

Apart from the protesters who were arrested during the uprisings, the Vorster regime has detained an unknown number of Black political leaders. Minister of Justice, Police, and Prisons James T. Kruger has singled out for particular attack Black groups such as the South African Students Organisation (SASO), the South African Students Movement (SASM), and the Black People's Conven-



Manchester Guardian Weekly

As of August 20, protests had erupted in more than seventy Black townships.

tion (BPC), that are part of what is known as the Black Consciousness movement.

According to a report by Burns in the August 15 *New York Times*, Kruger condemned Black Consciousness "as an absolutely negative, destructive ideology, and cited unrest among urban blacks in the United States in the 1960's as an example of the chaos it can produce." Kruger cited the use of the Black power salute by protesters as "evidence" that the SASO, SASM, and BPC were behind the rebellions.

According to the *Johannesburg Star*, virtually all of the top leaders of the Black Consciousness movement have been arrested. Among those known to have been detained are Jairus Kgokong, Steve Biko, Silumko Sokupa, and Barney Pityana of the SASO; and Nxolisi Movov, Thomas Manthatha, and Kenneth Rachidi of the BPC. Leaders of the SASM are also known to have been arrested.

Other prominent Black figures who were seized by the police include: Winnie Mandela, a leader of the Black Parents Association (BPA) and wife of imprisoned African nationalist leader Nelson Mandela; Harrison Motlana, an executive of the BPA; Rev. Mangaliso Mkatswa and Dan Mokwena of the Roman Catholic Bishops Conference; Rashid Meer, a student leader in Durban and son of well-known Indian sociologist Fatima Meer; and Leonardo Appies, president of the Students Representative Council at the University of the Western Cape.

Many of these Black political prisoners are being held in solitary confinement.

Mapetla Mohapi, a former official of the SASO, was arrested under the provisions of the Terrorism Act on July 15. On August 5 he died in police custody. According to the police, Mohapi committed suicide. However, the white authorities never like to admit it when a political prisoner dies under "interrogation." The suspicion that he was tortured to death was reinforced by the subsequent arrest of Dr. Mamphela Ramphele, the superintendent of a Black health clinic in Kingwilliamstown, who was the only independent

observer present at a postmortem on Mohapi.

Reflecting the regime's contention that the Black rebellions were caused by a handful of "agitators," Kruger predicted August 20 that the arrests would soon bring the protests to an end. The white regime denies that the apartheid system and racial exploitation are the real causes of the mass Black discontent.

Despite the fierce repression, the militancy among Black youths—and among the Black population as a whole—is rapidly deepening.

In an August 5 dispatch from Johannesburg, *Washington Post* reporter Robin Wright quoted a Black teacher as saying of the students, "The situation is more explosive than ever. Their militancy is obviously growing and, with organization, they could really create havoc, like nothing we've seen yet. Promises of talks won't stop them now—nor will bullets."

The participation of many Black workers in the Soweto "stay at home" strike is another indication of how the example set by the students is affecting broader layers of the Black population. Burns commented in the August 21 *New York Times*:

Many people feel that the greatest threat facing the white minority here is not violence but politically motivated strikes, which could cripple the economy. Already, black workers, who have no legally recognized unions, have struck in the mines and factories. If organized nationally, strikes could be a far greater force for change than the township disturbances, which so far the Government has been able to control.

Unlike the June rebellions, which were spontaneous explosions of pent-up anger and frustration, some of the recent protests in Soweto displayed signs of rudimentary organization. The attempted marches to Johannesburg followed mass meetings of students, where the actions were discussed and planned. Students set up coordinated pickets and barricades on the edges of Soweto to urge Black workers to strike.

New organizations have also been formed. The Black Parents Association, an umbrella organization that includes such groups as the SASO and BPC, was established during the June rebellions in Soweto. Although four of the five members of its executive have been arrested, it is trying to set up branches around the country. BPA branches have already been formed in Pretoria and Durban, and one is being started in Cape Town.

Another new group is the Soweto Students Representative Council, which helped organize some of the recent protest marches. Tsietsie Mashinini, a nineteen-year-old high-school student, is its leader.

An important aspect of the mass protests is that the Black population is beginning to sense its own strength. Referring to the regime's retreat on the issue of the compulsory use of the Afrikaans language in Black schools, Mashinini said, "We won the fight against Afrikaans. We can win other fights." □

Eyewitnesses Describe Massacre at Tell Zaatar

"We are without water. We are close to the breaking point. Three thousand people are seriously wounded or dying of hunger. Every empty plot of ground is the site of a grave."

This was one of the last messages sent from Tell Zaatar refugee camp, *Time* magazine reported August 23. It was sent out shortly before the camp was overrun August 12, after a fifty-two day siege by Lebanese rightist forces.

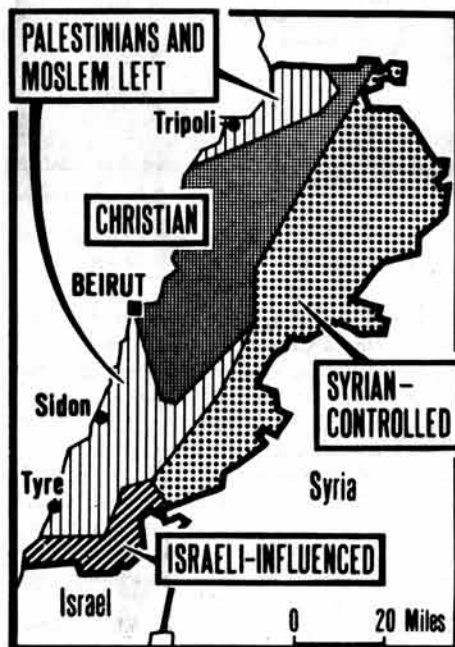
The massacre of the camp's Lebanese and Palestinian residents that followed stunned the world. Breaking a prearranged agreement to allow the peaceful evacuation of the thousands still trapped within Tell Zaatar at the end, the rightist forces encircling the camp slaughtered scores of unarmed men, women, and children as they fled the area.

"Red Cross trucks approached the camp [the morning of August 12]," *Time* reported, "and the defenders thought they were part of an already settled plan to evacuate noncombatants. They held their fire. Thereupon Christian troopers launched a surprise attack while the trucks fled."

The August 23 *Newsweek* described the subsequent bloodbath: "As the people of Tal Zaatar surged out toward the 'confrontation line' between Christian and Muslim Beirut, the rightists fell on them like wolves, arguing, by some accounts, over how many Palestinians each right-wing group was entitled to execute. . . . entire families were killed."

According to an account in the August 13 *Washington Post*, "Many of those interviewed charged that hundreds of the Palestinians and Shiite Moslems—especially men and boys suspected by the rightists of having fought against them—were killed when they attempted to surrender to rightist forces or pass through the predominantly Christian eastern Beirut to reach the western part of the city."

As the refugees streamed out of the camp, *Le Monde* correspondent Lucien George reported August 14, rightist militiamen made two successive selections from the fleeing population. "First, the Lebanese were separated from the Palestinians and allowed to leave. Next, among the Palestinians, men from sixteen to forty years of age were placed on one side, women, children, and other men on the other. It was then, apparently, that the summary executions were carried out. The accounts given by those who escaped comprise a narration of the same scene of horror: militiamen shooting Palestinians in the back. Some told of bodies being dragged by automobiles until they were dead. Seven nurses were said to have been



The Economist

Map shows de facto four-way partition of Lebanon as of August 14.

killed in the camp infirmary."

"One or two from every family have been killed," an aged man told Reuters. According to an August 12 dispatch, "He was taken to a point outside the camp where all male prisoners were being collected, he related. There young men were picked out, he said, and someone was told to take them away and shoot them."

Reuters correspondent Time Pearce described what he had been told by two doctors who had escaped from Tell Zaatar, Abdel Aziz Labadi and Youssef Iraki, about the summary execution of sixty male and female nurses by the Christian militia.

"Doctor Iraki," Pearce reported, "who had been saved by a Syrian officer whom he had previously treated, said: 'The dozen male and female nurses (who accompanied us) were led out two by two. I heard machine-gun fire, cries, and then nothing. The same fate was reserved for fifty other male and female nurses.'

"The two doctors think that about 60,000 artillery shells were fired on the camp during the fifty-two-day siege. They estimate at about 2,000 the number of persons killed, and at about 3,000 the number wounded. Nine out of ten victims were children or civilians."

Agence France-Presse correspondent Xavier Baron visited the camp August 13.

He cabled the following report on the scope of the massacre:

"On Friday morning two enormous bulldozers, using the full width of their blades, pushed corpses through the ruins of the Tell Zaatar camp. The northern entrance to the camp at Dekouaneh is a vision of horror; it is necessary to wear a mask to walk through the narrow streets, which are blanketed with a putrid odor. Dozens and dozens of dead bodies are strewn about this sector. It is impossible to count them, for it would be necessary to enter one by one the houses whose walls have been crushed by artillery fire to count the men, as well as the women and children, who lay dead on the ground.

"At the edge of the shattered road . . . the bodies of men and boys are covered with clouds of flies. Bulldozers are pushing them to a common grave, a few hundred meters away."

Minno Candito, special correspondent for the Italian daily *la Stampa*, gave a graphic description of the carnage: "I saw, with my own eyes, dozens of bodies of people who were not killed in combat but who had been executed with a bullet in the head. I personally heard testimony from relatives of victims concerning the execution of prisoners."

The siege and massacre at Tell Zaatar lay bare the true face of the sixteen-month Lebanese civil war. The victims—the residents of the camp—were "both Christians and Moslems," *Time* reported August 23.

They "came from villages along the border of what is now northern Israel. They settled at Tel Zaatar in 1950. Later they were joined by impoverished Lebanese from areas of South Lebanon devastated by Israeli attacks. The flow of refugees eventually swelled to a crushing total of 30,000. At Tel Zaatar they provided a cheap labor force for the Christian-owned factories in the area."

The attackers were Lebanese rightists seeking to liquidate the Palestinian resistance and perpetuate their privileged social and economic positions at the expense of the oppressed Muslim majority. Backed by an invading Syrian army that now controls three-fifths of the country, armed in part by Israel, politically supported by American imperialism, and emboldened by Moscow's silence, they had the green light to exterminate the last Palestinian outpost east of the Beirut river.

"That the Palestinians managed to hold out as long as they did was something of a miracle," *Time* reported August 23. *Time* correspondent Dean Brellis cabled the following description of the siege:

"Overlooking Tel Zaatar from the Christian headquarters, I could not see how anyone remained alive in the camp. The Christians had every kind of artillery piece from 75-mm. howitzers to 155-mm. heavies. The arsenal of machine guns ripped into the fragile tin-roofed shelters of Tel Zaatar with the thundering force of an avalanche."

Newsweek, in its August 16 issue, gave the following description of life in the camp during the final days of the siege:

"Inside the camp, about 5,000 civilians—half of them children—and 500 leftist soldiers were still being battered by the guns of Christians right-wingers, who have sent artillery shells and rockets crashing into Tel Zaatar every day for the past six weeks. Hardly a building was undamaged. The dead lay unburied in the streets and the wounded lay suffering in the ruins of the camp's concrete hovels. The children were dying of dehydration, but the Christian militiamen who encircled Tal Zaatar refused to allow shipments of food, water and medicine into the camp."

Although the camp had been encircled since January and under fire since June, it was the rightist offensive August 11 that struck the most severe blow, cutting off the last source of water.

"Toward the end," *Time* reported, "the brunt of the fighting was borne by the Palestinian Ashbals (Sons of the Lion), youthful fighters often no more than 13 years old."

Wafa, the PLO's news agency, charged August 12 that Col. Ali al-Madani, a high-ranking officer of the Syrian army, was at the operations room of the right-wing forces during the offensive against Tell Zaatar.

According to the August 13 *Washington Post*, the Arab League's special envoy in Lebanon, Hassan Sabri Kholi, when asked about this report, "simply stared and said nothing."

Whether Syria was directly involved in the assault on Tell Zaatar or not, President Hafez al-Assad has been clearly supporting the rightists against his former Palestinian allies.

Syrian troops have held down Palestinian and leftist positions to prevent the reinforcement of Tell Zaatar. In addition, leftists and Palestinians accused the Syrians of deliberately delaying efforts to carry out a cease-fire negotiated July 29 in order to allow the rightists more time to unfold their offensive against Tell Zaatar and other leftist positions.

Assad's maneuver in Lebanon has been aimed at blocking the defeat of the rightist forces and the emergence of a more radical Lebanese government that would give a freer hand to the Palestinians.

A strong Palestinian movement in Lebanon would be a powerful ally in Syria's defense against Zionist aggression. But Assad's strategy is to attempt to assure Syria's defense not by championing the Palestinian cause, but by striking up a

bargain with Israel at its expense.

Assad also fears that a strong pro-Palestinian government in Lebanon might encourage and assist Syrian radical critics of his policies to challenge his regime.

It is the Zionists who have the most to



ASSAD: Used Syrian troops to help prevent reinforcements from reaching Tell Zaatar

gain from Assad's betrayal of the Palestinian cause. Only a few months ago the Israeli regime stood isolated in world opinion following the massive protests of the Arabs inside Israel and the occupied territories. Now it delights in a major defeat for the Palestinians in Lebanon, a country that was until recently the only state adjacent to Israel where the Palestinians were still relatively free to organize their activities.

Moreover, the Zionists have cynically attempted to use the civil war in Lebanon, which they depict as simply a religious conflict between Christians and Muslims, as proof that the Palestinian demand for a democratic, secular Palestine is unworkable.

The truth is that the civil war in Lebanon is not just an inter-religious conflict, but a struggle that cuts across religious lines and pits the oppressed against the oppressor. Compelling evidence of this is the fact that many Palestinians murdered by the rightists at Tell Zaatar were Christians who fled their homeland following the creation of the Zionist state in 1948 and settled in Lebanon.

Moreover, the Zionist regime has played an active, if low-profile, role in the current anti-Palestinian campaign. Not only have the Israelis supplied arms to the rightist-Christian forces, but the Israeli navy has undertaken an active blockade of Saida and Tyre, two ports that are the only

outlets for leftist territory in Lebanon.

In the wake of the massacre at Tel Zaatar, leaders of the Palestinians have also criticized the class-collaborationist policies of the Soviet bureaucracy.

Moscow's principal diplomatic ally in the Middle East at this time is Syria. This has proved to be an embarrassment for the bureaucrats in the Kremlin, who also claim to be supporters of the Palestinian struggle.

Nonetheless, in pursuit of their policy of détente, the Soviet bureaucrats have done nothing that might endanger their diplomatic relations with Syria even while Assad has pressed ahead with his murderous anti-Palestinian course.

On August 15, Abu Iyad, Palestine Liberation Organization leader Yassir Arafat's second-in-command, addressed himself at a Beirut rally to "friendly states," which, according to the August 17 *New York Times*, was taken as a reference to the Soviet Union.

"What have you given us?" Iyad asked. "We do not want you to tell us to reach an understanding with the Syrians. You have lost many of your positions in the Arab world because you did not understand the conspiracy. We are not asking for the impossible; we want a ship carrying flour and hoisting the Russian flag to come to Saida and defy Israel."

However, it is the imperialist government in Washington that is most responsible for the brutal massacre at Tell Zaatar. Through its support to the Zionist state of Israel and its encouragement to Assad and the Lebanese rightists, the White House set into motion the events leading up to the slaughter as surely as if its own troops had carried it out. □

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Mustafa Dzhemilev—'One of the World's Soldiers for Justice'

[The following speech was given by Ralph Schoenman June 24 at a New York meeting in defense of imprisoned Crimean Tatar activist Mustafa Dzhemilev. Schoenman was the executive director of the Bertrand Russell Peace Foundation from 1963 to 1968, and the secretary general of the International War Crimes Tribunal, which played a major role in helping to expose the genocidal nature of the American war in Vietnam. The meeting was sponsored by the Mustafa Dzhemilev Defense Committee, 853 Broadway, Room 414, New York, N.Y. 10003.]

* * *

Comrades and friends, you have heard tonight most eloquently of the plight and the fate of the Crimean Tatars. We have heard from Pavel Litvinov and from Reza Baraheni of the full measure of the persecution of this people. And the language has been the language of deportation and cattle trucks; of half a nation being liquidated; of reservations, of convoys, of prison, and of genocide.

Mustafa Dzhemilev wrote a historical essay on Turkic culture in the Crimea from the thirteenth to the eighteenth centuries—a major and important scholarly treatise on the history of his people. And for this work he was charged with slanderous fabrications and with discrediting the Soviet social and state system. He was sentenced to three years in prison, and almost immediately upon his release he was imprisoned again.

When he wrote the history of the Crimean Tatar people, the Uzbek KGB hunted down every last copy to burn and destroy. In effect then, this regime has sought to take from the Tatars and from Mustafa Dzhemilev a language, a culture, a historical tradition, a very identity. They have taken individual liberty and intellectual freedom, and they have sought to take the nationality from Mustafa Dzhemilev.

We have to ask the question, then, Who is doing this? What is the nature of a regime which is capable of genocide, the annihilation of a people, and the elimination of its cultural heritage? How can the leadership of the Soviet Union call itself socialist when it performs these acts? For every revolutionary, for every socialist, for every Marxist, the question is posed: what, then, is socialism if such things are done in its name? What is the relation between socialism and liberty?

Repeatedly, when people attempt to defend human rights and liberty and democracy in the Soviet Union, the question is put, are you not then defending

bourgeois democracy? Part of the legacy of this persecution is the attempt to equate democracy itself with bourgeois society. But democracy is a revolutionary heritage. It was not given to anybody; it was taken, wherever it has been had, through revolutionary struggle. And indeed it is of the essence of the Marxist and of the socialist tradition that democracy is inseparable from what we are fighting for.

The complaint of Marxists about bourgeois democracy is that it is a facade without content, that the democratic forms do not correspond to how power is structured, that it is an oligarchy ruling and disguising its rule through what would appear to be democratic institutions. Thus, it is not democracy which is bourgeois, it is the attempt to empty democracy of the opportunity to exist and to function.

So, the program of socialists is not the elimination of democracy, but its extension. In the *Communist Manifesto* Marx and Engels say, "the first step in the revolution by the working class is to raise the proletariat to the position of ruling class, to win the battle of democracy."

Marx and Engels continue: "In place of the old bourgeois society, with its classes and class antagonisms, we shall have an association, in which the free development of each is the condition for the free development of all."

It is consistent with the legacy of Stalinism that it attempted the genocide of the Tatar people, because this regime has nothing in common with Marx, with Engels, with the socialist tradition, or with democracy. It is because it is the rule of an oligarchy, an oligarchy that subsists in the most extreme of privilege, that such brutal oppression is a sine qua non of its continued existence.

What is the legacy of this Stalinist regime which would equate the absence of liberty with socialism, which would equate repression and revolution, which would state that to be in sympathy with liberty is to be a reformist? How can we go to workers and call this regime socialist when there is no right to free speech, no free press, no right to strike, no independent trade unions, where genocide is committed, where 20 million Soviet citizens have passed through and perished in concentration camps in the Soviet Union?

A regime that has a political system parallel to that of fascism—that is the root of the persecution of the Crimean Tatars. And how do we as socialists go to members of oppressed national minorities anywhere in the world—to Blacks in the United States, to American Indians and

Chicanos—and speak of socialism if we equate that socialism with the barbarous regime in the Soviet Union.

The Indonesian army, which massacred a half million workers and peasants and students in 1965, was armed by the Soviet Union. And after the coup, when the fate of these people was in the balance, Kosygin sent a message—not to Sukarno or Subandrio—but to Roeslan Abdul Gani, one of the architects of this butchery, tantamount to saying slaughter away.

And what do we say to the people of Iran as Mao embraces the shah? In the *Manifesto* Karl Marx and Frederick Engels speak of what they call reactionary or feudal socialism: "In political practice, therefore, they join in all coercive measures against the working class; and in ordinary life, despite their high-falutin phrases, they stoop to pick up the golden apples dropped from the tree of industry, and to barter truth, love, and honor for traffic in wool, beetroot-sugar, and potato spirits."

We had a program of socialism which was synonymous with liberty; who took that program? We had a banner of class struggle which embodied national self-determination; who dirtied that banner? We had a language of socialism, as expressed in *State and Revolution*, the language of workers democracy; who destroyed that language and made words mean their opposite?

And what of colonialism? Who has equated socialism with the exploitation of national minorities?

I want to take a moment to speak about the fate of the Jews, not only in Europe and not only of the holocaust, but of their persecution in the Soviet Union. And as a Jew myself, I want to say that if ever a people should understand the meaning of deportation, the meaning of genocide, the meaning of being a refugee, it ought to be the Jews. And thus, it is the Jews who should be the first to denounce Zionism, precisely because it is the oppression of a national minority.

It is one thing to immigrate to a country; it is another thing to colonize it. And it is precisely that equation that puts Mustafa Dzhemilev in the front ranks not only of the defense of Jews in the Soviet Union, but of the cause of the Palestinians, because it is the same cause.

It was Ezra Pound who said that the technique of infamy is to invent two lies and to get people arguing heatedly over which one of them is true.

And those who would tell us that we should mute our criticism of Stalinism, of this bureaucratic, parasitic caste in the

Soviet Union, I would remind them of Eugene V. Debs, who said, to paraphrase him, It is better to support what you want and not get it, than to support what you do not want and get it.

So, Mustafa Dzhemilev, one of the world's soldiers for justice, I want to remind you of the fate of Malcolm X. I was with Malcolm a week before his death, in London. He had just returned from Africa, where he had been stalked by the American CIA from Dakar to Dar es Salaam, to Cairo, where he was poisoned.

Malcolm said to me and to a friend, Kojo

Amoo, "If they knew what I had in my head they would put a bullet through it."

Kojo pleaded with Malcolm to wear a bulletproof vest. Malcolm said bulletproof vests won't do. The task is to build a political, mobilized movement. The task is to create a national struggle. The task is to link that struggle to similar struggles around the world.

When Malcolm was murdered in New York, he left a small part of himself in every young Black in the United States.

To Comrade Mustafa we say, we will never forget you. Masses of oppressed

people will carry your banner, will speak in your language, the language of liberty, of democracy, and of national rights. It is your ideals, your example, which will inspire humankind, not that of your oppressors.

And I say they will carry that banner, Mustafa Dzhemilev, forward to revolution, forward to a socialist revolution which will embody freedom, individual liberty, the flourishing of national culture, and the greatest extension of democracy the world has ever known. □

'Public Opinion Must Be Alert to the Escalation of Repression'

How I Came to Be Deported From Peru

By Hugo Blanco

I had traveled to Cuzco on June 21. I was living in Lima, and I went to Cuzco to participate in a public gathering of my federation—the provincial peasant federation in La Convención and Lares.

This federation is made up of about 100 peasant unions in the La Convención and Lares area of the department of Cuzco. Among those unions is the one I belong to—the Chaupimayo union. I am also a member of the national executive committee of the Confederación Campesina del Perú [CCP—Peruvian Peasant Federation].

I had reached Cuzco on the twenty-first, and on the twenty-fourth I went to the public demonstration. It was not the only demonstration held, because June 24 is the Day of the Peasantry and there are demonstrations in various places.

The demonstration I attended had the appropriate authorization of the provincial authorities. That is, there was absolutely nothing illegal about it. Permission had been requested in writing and it had been granted.

The police even knew I was going to Cuzco to speak at the demonstration in Quillabamba, the capital of the province.

Following that, I went to the federation assembly Saturday, June 26. It was the regular assembly of the federation, held every Saturday. One of the unions asked me to attend the swearing-in ceremony for new officers they were going to have the following day, and I did. This, too, was an absolutely legal assembly.

Then on June 30 I attended an assembly of the Chaupimayo union, which dealt with the problems of the cooperative. It is a cooperative for marketing products, one of various cooperatives in the La Convención Valley. And I went to an assembly of

that cooperative—also, of course, perfectly legal.

I want to make clear that during all the time I was in the countryside I knew nothing of what was going on in the cities.

When I arrived in the city of Cuzco on July 1, I found I had to take a taxi to get to my house because there was a strike of owner-operators of minibuses, that is, of public transportation, protesting an increase in gasoline prices that had taken place.

When I got home I read the newspapers and found out about the price hike. The price of gasoline had gone up 117 percent, and along with that the currency had been devalued by 30 percent. The government had also raised public transportation fares 30 percent and taken other economic steps. These included a wage hike of 10-15 percent with the stipulation that wages would remain frozen for twelve months.

These were economic measures that seriously affected the Peruvian people, especially the poorest sectors. They were steps in a process begun in Peru some time ago to try to rescue Peruvian capitalism from its crisis. The economics minister, Luis Barúa Castañeda, has been applying a series of measures recommended by the International Monetary Fund. So these are not the first steps, but they are the harshest so far.

Undoubtedly, they will bring more misery to the people. There will be more unemployment and growing popular discontent.

The public transportation strike occurred because of these steps. The bus drivers called a national general strike.

After I was arrested and brought to Lima I learned more details on this. The government said that the owner-operators wanted to raise the fares, but the drivers

who were in prison with me made it clear that this was completely false. What they were asking for was that the gasoline price be lowered to the old price and that fares also be lowered to the old level. Even with that, they would be making a sacrifice because of the rise in the price of the dollar and of consumer goods. Nonetheless, they were not asking for a cent more for themselves.

The Peruvian government has tried to make a parallel between the strikes in Peru and the ones in Chile against the Allende government.

As we all know, in Chile there were strikes by bus owners against the Allende government. They were right-wing strikes of the entire bourgeoisie to bring down the Unidad Popular government and smash the working class.

The Peruvian government never speaks out against Pinochet or against the military regime in Chile. It also maintains very good relations with this government, and it does not permit a campaign against the Chilean dictatorship in Peru.

The so-called labor organizations created by the government—groups like the Frente de Defensa de la Revolución Peruana [Front for the Defense of the Peruvian Revolution]—do not organize mobilizations against the Chilean dictatorship.

The government was able to slander the Peruvian bus drivers easily because all the national-circulation newspapers are in the hands of the regime. The government says the newspapers are socialized and in the hands of people's organizations, but that is absolutely false. The journalists and editors of the daily papers who favor one or another sector of the government are changed in accord with shifts in the government and what sector is strongest. But the only independent press in Peru—

beyond some local newspapers that have to act very cautiously and have a small circulation—have been the weekly, biweekly, or monthly magazines.

The government seized the recent issues of the main independent magazines. Any attempt by the bus drivers to get information out was prevented, because these magazines had been confiscated.

I want to take note here of the fact that freedom of the press is being increasingly curtailed for the left. Right-wing magazines have also been seized, but for the rightists this is not a problem. They have enough money to begin putting out their magazines again later. But the left-wing magazine *Marka*, for example, will have many more economic difficulties, if it continues to come out at all. This is already the third time an issue of *Marka* has been confiscated, and these left-wing magazines survive only from their sales, which makes the confiscation of an entire issue a very serious blow for them.

In Lima there were big gatherings of people because of the bus drivers' strike, especially of workers who wanted to go to work and students who wanted to go to school. Everyone was highly indignant about the price increases.

They gathered at bus stops looking for ways to protest. These crowds held spontaneous demonstrations in several parts of Lima, especially in the slums.

These demonstrations took the form of antigovernment, anticapitalist mobilizations. At least one headquarters of a government office was assaulted in a slum. Some companies were also stoned—Motor Perú, for example, which manufactures cars.

Bridges and other routes of communication were blocked in both the north and south of Lima. It was reported that stores were looted, and some buses that were in use during the strike were burned.

That is, the people supported the striking bus drivers, although few of them knew the real reasons for the strike.

The government suspended individual rights for thirty days and decreed a curfew from 10 p.m. to 5 a.m.

Tanks, armored cars, and mounted police were reported patrolling the streets of Lima. Many arrests were made in the context of the suspension of individual rights.

One of the provisions of the suspension of rights was that no one could enter or leave Lima without permission. Lima and the surrounding area were declared in a state of emergency.

I was in Cuzco and didn't know any of the precise facts of these events, only what appeared in the newspaper and bits of news I got listening to foreign radio stations.

I was to go to Lima on July 3. But the night before, the political police came to my brother's house where I was staying. I was awakened by my sister-in-law who

told me, "The police are looking for you." I got up, dressed, and they arrested me. It must have been about midnight. They took me to the police station, where I was held incommunicado for more than twenty-four hours. On Sunday at about 11 a.m. I was taken to Lima by plane. They didn't tell me why I was arrested. They never accused me of anything.

In Lima I was also held in the barracks of the political police. There I was questioned three times on three different days.

The first interrogation had to do with what I had done in Lima during the nine months since I returned to Peru. I told them everything I had done because this was completely public.

They asked me several times how many times I had gone to the editorial offices of *Marka*, why, and what I had done there. I told them that sometimes I had gone to get a back issue of the magazine and that recently they had interviewed me about the peasant movement I had participated in from 1958 to 1963.

They also asked me about my connections to Francisco Montes, the editor of *Palabra Socialista* and a member of the Partido Socialista de los Trabajadores [Socialist Workers party], the Trotskyist party in Peru. I answered that Francisco Montes was editor of *Palabra Socialista* and that I wrote some articles for the newspaper. When they asked me what my relationship to the PST was, I answered that I was not working in the party, that it was impossible for me to work there because I was always followed by the police. At the same time, I said that I shared the political point of view of the PST.

From the moment I arrived in Peru nine months ago, there was always at least one police car, at times two or three, in front of my house. Sometimes there were also motorcycles equipped with radios. Everywhere I went, the police followed me. Several times they took photographs of the people who came to visit me.

When I went to Cuzco they watched me until I got onto the plane. And when I reached Cuzco, as soon as I got off the plane the police took photos of me and began following me.

In my brother's house in Cuzco, where I was staying, there is a telephone. They were always calling to ask if I was there, what I was doing, where I had gone, where I was going to go, etc. They were watching every move I made. When I went to some town, sometimes I would walk. Then they would send people to follow me on foot to that town. If I went in a car, they would follow in a car.

As a result of all those activities, the police had a more accurate record than I did. They had all this written down, and I was not memorizing everything I did day after day.

I want to emphasize that during the nine months I was in Peru, I did absolutely

nothing illegal. I expressed my point of view on the government, on what the government was doing, and so forth. But according to what the Peruvian government says, this is legal. It is permissible for one to exercise the right to criticize even when it is to denounce deportations. I have done nothing more than exercise that right.

The second interrogation was about the United States Committee for Justice to Latin American Political Prisoners, a group in the United States. During this interrogation I realized that the police were reading my mail.

The third interrogation was about a lot of people in Peru and my relationship to them. I refused to answer. I told them that I was not going to answer such questions because I knew that any person who related to me—even if simply as a friend or member of my family—was in danger of falling victim to the repression. This had happened several times to my relatives.

I recounted the case of my mother.

When my mother was on her deathbed and I was in exile in Chile, I asked the Peruvian authorities to allow me to go to Peru. My request accomplished only one thing. The police went to my mother's house and took pleasure in seeing her in her death agony.

After this interrogation I spoke with one of the chiefs of police and told him that they had already asked me everything that I could answer, and that if they continued questioning me that I was going to interpret it as a form of torture.

Several times in my previous arrests they had me for four, five, ten hours at times, interrogating me. Of course, they did not question me all that time. They would begin the questioning. Then they would go away to do something else, leaving me sitting there in front of their typewriter. They would return after two or three hours and ask me one or two questions more. Then they would leave again, returning a few hours later—a method they have to destroy a person's nerves, I suppose.

During the time I was detained in Lima, at first I was not in a cell. I was in some offices of the political police. After the interrogations I asked to be put in a cell, where things would be less hectic. They put me in a cell by myself. There were two or three cells beside mine and they contained about thirty persons. The food was horrible, of course, as it is in all Peruvian prisons.

Among these thirty prisoners were several picked up for being out after curfew, some bus drivers—leaders and rank-and-filers. There were also some foreigners—Argentines and Chileans who had sought political asylum in Peru. There were also leaders of a trade union at a supermarket in Monterrey.

This union was on strike several months ago, demanding that collective-bargaining

agreements be respected and wages raised. The strike was not successful.

Afterwards, the bosses asked for a judgment against the leaders, saying that they were responsible for food having rotted and other things. Then the general secretary of the union died under mysterious circumstances.

Here are some paragraphs from a press release they put out:

"To the working class and the Peruvian people:

"The workers at the united union of Monterrey Stores, Inc., address the public and the working class to let you know about the death of our general secretary, compañera Aurora Vivar Vázquez. Her death is suspicious; up to now it has not been explained, occurring just when our militant leader had testified in the unusual criminal case the bosses are pressing against the workers of our trade union for the alleged crime of damages and seizure of property. This is an open reprisal for our having nobly defended our elementary rights in the general strike. The Peruvian people are fully aware of what happened and of the fact that our compañera Aurora provided a very clear example of honesty and bravery in defending our exploited class. Her death takes place under circumstances of systematic, direct aggression by the multimillionaire Monterrey company. This aggression has taken the form of violations of agreements, customs, and labor laws against the workers of our union.

"Her death must also be placed in the framework of suspicious occurrences like those that took place on the night of the fifteenth of this month, when the Monterrey store located in the Santa Catalina development was destroyed, reportedly by a firebomb. Coincidentally, the following morning we found beer bottles in front of the door of our trade-union headquarters. After investigating them, they were found to be firebombs.

"We also found a sizable quantity of leaflets bearing the name of our organization, in which the workers of our union were urged to carry out wild actions. The Lima police are aware of these facts.

"Nonetheless, there are still unanswered questions. Could it be that they planned to blame the fire that took place in the Sta. Catalina store on our union? Or perhaps they wanted to blow up our leaders?

"The answer is obvious. There are some odd persons and some reactionaries who are acting with the aim of creating a climate favorable for carrying out open repression against the workers. This terrorist act is a warning to all labor organizations to consistently and jealously guard our interests."

After that the compañeros invited people to come to the wake and funeral for the general secretary. During the funeral there were other acts of provocation. A photographer was taking pictures of the leaders

and people who had gone to the funeral. This is dangerous because it is known that the police use these afterwards for interrogation of the people who were present at things like this.

The legal adviser of this union, Dr.



HUGO BLANCO

Laura Caller, who is a member of Amnesty International, had to intervene to prevent people from beating up the photographer, because during the funeral the masses were totally irritated by this photographer doing police work.

Later the lawyer was accused of trying to incite the masses. This is a long-standing problem.

Lately, taking advantage of the suspension of individual rights, the bosses and the authorities have accused members of the union's leadership of being involved in the death of compañera Aurora Vivar. That is, the people who really appear to have killed her are now accusing the compañeros of the dead woman of being the criminals. Because of this, the compañeros were prisoners at police headquarters.

When I said goodbye to them, I promised that whatever country I went to I was going to do what I could to promote an international campaign for them because the case is incredibly scandalous. So, I ask for support to these leaders of the Monterrey union.

Also in prison with me were two persons arrested during a peasant assembly held near Lima. There were also student leaders. Finally, there was a slum dweller. He had been eating an orange when he cut his finger, leading him to drop the peel on the ground. A tank was passing by at that moment and its occupants told him he was

sabotaging the armed forces, so they arrested him.

On July 10 I was taken to the airport and put on a plane for Sweden. The regime didn't give me a choice between going to prison or being deported. They treated me like an object, like any old thing. They just dumped me on the airplane without even telling me where I was going, just like they did before, in 1971.

As I was about to board the plane, the Swedish ambassador came up and asked me to show him my ticket. Of course I didn't have a ticket or a passport. The police had given them to the pilot of the plane.

The police had asked the people at my house for my passport, and they had to turn it over because of the suspension of individual rights. If they hadn't, the police would have ransacked the house.

The plane went as far as Amsterdam, where I was detained at the airport until another plane left for Scandinavia. In Denmark they turned over my passport and ticket to me.

Everything indicates the Peruvian regime is going to continue taking economic steps against the Peruvian people, and it is likely that they will carry out more and more repression against the people.

That is why it is essential for world public opinion to be alert to the escalation of repression going on in Peru. □

Peruvian Regime Denationalizes Oil and Fishing Industries

Opening up Peru to the exploration and exploitation of oil reserves by foreign companies, partial denationalization of the nation's fishing industry, and a decision that "adequate conditions have not been reached" for the so-called transfer of control over the mass media to "people's organizations" are the latest steps taken in the "second phase of the Peruvian revolution."

On July 21 the Morales Bermúdez regime announced it was dropping the "Peruvian system" requiring 51 percent participation by the state oil company, Petroperú, in all oil operations.

In the fishing industry the regime has authorized the sale of its fishing fleet. Activities related to processing fish will remain under state control, although the processing will be carried out by private firms.

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OUT NOW!

Chapter 20

The First National Student Strike and the Split in SMC

By Fred Halstead

[Second of three parts]

Between the time of the SMC conference and the spring actions which it called, there occurred a series of interconnected events that shook the world, or at least the American position in it. The first of these began in Saigon on January 31, 1968, during the lunar New Year holiday known in Vietnam as Tet, that culture's major celebration of the year.

For months the United States military spokesmen had been telling the American public that there was light at the end of the tunnel. The "Viet Cong," as they called the NLF forces, were being defeated and had lost control and even influence in the major population centers of South Vietnam. A November 1967 public report by General Westmoreland claimed that of the total South Vietnamese population of 17.2 million, only 2.5 million remained in NLF-controlled areas. These had been reduced mainly to border areas near "sanctuaries" in Cambodia, Laos, or North Vietnam, and isolated sections of jungle, mountain, or swamp, according to the U.S. claim.

If only North Vietnam would cease its "aggression," the Johnson administration's argument went, by stopping the supply

With this chapter we continue the serialization of **Out Now!—A Participant's Account of the American Antiwar Movement** by Fred Halstead. Copyright © 1976 by the Anchor Foundation, Inc. All rights reserved. Printed by permission. To be published by Monad Press.

and infiltration of fresh troops into these areas, the pro-American Saigon government would have little trouble securing them, and the U.S. could retire in peace, having saved the new country of South Vietnam for the "free world."

In truth, the three years since the major U.S. escalation began, the devastation of the countryside by incessant U.S. air raids and ground "search and destroy" missions had driven some two million peasants into refugee camps and overcrowded poor districts of the cities. All the cities were occupied by the 600,000-man Saigon army and defended by half a million U.S. troops. It is necessary to bear in mind that the NLF forces at this time had no aircover at all and were forced to rely almost exclusively on light infantry weapons. The peasants were sometimes reduced to farming at night around the edges of bomb craters, supplementing their diet with minnows that grew in the flooded craters. The Americans bombed and strafed virtually with impunity in South Vietnam.

Meanwhile, in the richer sections of the cities an artificial economy based on massive American military spending and imports created a meretricious boom for the well-to-do and the hangers-on of the puppet regime. Saigon was flooded with con artists and salesmen of every kind from the United States and Japan.

Let two American newsmen, present when the chain of events began, set the scene, Charles Mohr, the *New York Times* Saigon bureau chief, wrote:

"The great majority of Saigon's residents live in tortuously twisted alleys, many of which end in cul-de-sacs and most of which have no formal names. From the air, it becomes even more

apparent than from the ground that these are incredibly jammed areas.

"The roofs overlap like playing cards in a fanned deck. It is sometimes impossible even to detect the twisting alleys, because they are so closely hemmed and constricted by shantys. . . ."¹⁴

And *Los Angeles Times* correspondent John Randolph, in the accepted American jargon of the time, described another aspect of the city that fateful morning:

"Saigon presented a picture that, for the capital of a small, poor, weak country in its ninth year of a war for national survival, could only be described as disgusting.

"At a time when the country is desperately short of doctors, hospitals, clinics, schools, teachers—and almost everything else—the roar of idiotic firecrackers to celebrate Tet, the lunar year, was costing Saigon at least tens of thousands of dollars per day. . . .

"Combined with this was a New Year's buying spree for gifts of the most luxurious nature. There is much poverty in Saigon, but much prosperity too. Vietnamese were either badgering their American friends to pick up choice items in the post exchange, or failing that, were paying triple prices for legally imported, tax exempt luxuries.

"Genuine luxuries, too—Paris perfumes, cognac, choice Scotch, rich materials, TV sets, cameras, watches—and only the very best, too, no second-rate merchandise wanted."¹⁵

The American irritation at the firecrackers is also explained by the fact that they obscured the first warning sounds of the NLF guns that morning. Its forces set up barricades in the twisted alleys and attacked the American embassy in downtown Saigon—not from "sanctuaries" on the borders, but from within the capital city itself. Thus began the Tet offensive.

The Americans were taken by surprise. Their Vietnamese "friends," it became obvious, had either neglected to tell them, or were themselves so isolated from the general population that they did not know, that the NLF had organized and equipped an army under their very noses. The NLF captured the embassy. They held the compound for only the first day, but it was soon apparent that the NLF controlled whole sections of the city. The attacks quickly spread to every city and almost every town in South Vietnam. Within a few days the NLF held thirty-six cities and major towns, including Hue, the ancient capital and the third largest city in the South. The Saigon regime's army proved incapable of holding up under the NLF attack. Indeed it was obvious that not a few members of these forces, as well as the general population, had to have cooperated with the NLF, at least to the extent of keeping its preparations secret from the Americans. Only the American bases proper remained secure, and fighting occurred within the confines of some of those.

The American military reaction was quick and brutal. They began pulverizing with bombs, shells, and rockets, the urban areas held by the NLF, regardless of civilian casualties. In two weeks another half million Vietnamese civilians—those lucky enough to flee in time from the American holocaust—became refugees. Whole sections of Saigon itself were reduced to rubble.

14. *New York Times*, February 10, 1968.

15. *Los Angeles Times*, February 10, 1968.

The methods by which the American forces recaptured many of the urban areas were summed up in an Associated Press dispatch February 7 from the Mekong Delta provincial capital of Bentre, which the U.S. military had just retaken. That is, they had occupied the rubble and were digging out over a thousand bodies of men, women, and children. AP quoted an American major: "It became necessary to destroy the town in order to save it."

That statement reverberated around the world, and more than a few Americans, who until that time had gone along with their government, turned against the war.

When the Tet offensive was over, the NLF losses were severe, the casualties of U.S. ground combat units heavy, and the civilian casualties enormous. The Americans had recaptured the cities, and militarily the war was stalemated once again. But the American expedition in Vietnam had suffered a major political defeat. And henceforth no one would credit another statement from General William C. Westmoreland about victory being just around the corner.

* * *

The country-western bards among the American ground troops in Vietnam—no one knows exactly when—added another verse to an endless GI ballad sung to the tune of "The Wabash Cannonball."

The forward air controller¹⁶
Is a warrior without match,
With his monogrammed flight jacket,
And his F-100 patch.
Put napalm on a hamlet,
And burned the whole thing flat.
Killed a hundred noncombatants,
And he's sorry about that.

* * *

The Tet offensive convinced many additional Americans that the war was morally wrong. It convinced others that the war was unwinnable, and not worth the cost. It caused General Westmoreland to request an additional 206,000 troops, and the Joint Chiefs of Staff to request a mobilization of the United States military manpower resources, which meant calling up the national guard and reserve units. These requests were not made publicly, but there were rumors to that effect which fueled the public debate.

All these developments precipitated a major secret debate among presidential advisers and the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and a reevaluation of the war strategy by the highest ruling circles.

Clark Clifford, the Du Pont interests' chief lawyer, who had just replaced Robert McNamara as secretary of defense, headed a task force to advise Johnson on Westmoreland's troop request. The task force consisted of twelve men, most of them appointed government officials, none of whom had ever held elective office, and all of whom had close ties to the Eastern big business establishment. This group laid out the essential outlines of what would become the U.S. strategy for the rest of the war. It later became known as "Vietnamization." Essentially it meant retraining and reequipping the Saigon forces (known as ARVIN for Army of the Republic of Vietnam), then cutting back on the American ground role, backing the ARVIN with American airpower, and using the bombing of North Vietnam as a negotiating ploy in the hope of reducing or halting Hanoi's support to the insurrection in the South. This strategy rejected the idea of general mobilization and massive additional U.S. troop levels in Vietnam. Domestic opposition to the war was a major consideration in this approach.

While this strategy was being decided in secret and within top

16. The jets that did the tactical bombing moved too fast to pick out their own targets. This was done by a forward air controller in a light plane who made the judgments and indicated the targets by radio and smoke flares.

ruling circles, the effect of the Tet offensive was being reflected in the primary election campaign and in Congress.

The first primary was scheduled for New Hampshire on Tuesday, March 12. The McCarthy forces had managed to mount an effective campaign apparatus sparked by young volunteers who came to the state in large numbers to set up canvassing operations and storefront offices in every major city and town. (Sam Brown and David Hawk were involved in this.) Nevertheless it was still assumed that Johnson would win handily.

Then, two days before the New Hampshire elections, a report of Westmoreland's request for an additional 206,000 troops, and the fact that this might mean the calling up of reserves, was published by the *New York Times*. The next day Secretary of State Dean Rusk appeared before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee for open hearings on foreign aid. The hearings became a debate on the war between Rusk and the committee's chairman, William Fulbright. Rusk failed to add anything to the rationalizations for U.S. involvement and refused to say whether the Westmoreland request would be granted. It was a dismal show for the Johnson administration.

The next day the New Hampshire primaries were held. McCarthy's vote was beyond all expectations. (When the absentee ballots were counted later, McCarthy had a plurality over Johnson.) It was widely regarded as a rejection of Johnson's war policy. Its immediate effect was to convince Senator Robert F. Kennedy, who had also been making dove speeches, that Johnson could be beaten.

Kennedy announced his own candidacy on March 16. Under those conditions Johnson was by no means assured the nomination. To try to win it he would have to campaign, and he faced the uncomfortable prospect that his every appearance would be the occasion for an antiwar demonstration.

On March 22, General Westmoreland was recalled as U.S. commander in Vietnam and kicked upstairs to the post of army chief of staff in the Pentagon.

On March 31, Johnson appeared on national TV to announce, "I shall not seek, and I will not accept, the nomination of my party." He also announced a suspension of the bombing of Vietnam north of the twentieth parallel—that is, over most of North Vietnam—and offered to negotiate with Hanoi. On April 3, 1968, Hanoi accepted.

* * *

This series of events, initiated by the Tet offensive, dramatically changed the immediate political situation in the country and the context in which the antiwar movement operated. On the one hand the breadth of antiwar sentiment increased considerably. On the other hand there were illusions that the war would soon be over.

This latter effect did not manifest itself all at once, or to the same degree in all parts of the antiwar movement. For one thing, Johnson's declination speech contained an announcement of an additional 10,500 U.S. troops to Vietnam, and military analysts pointed out that a bombing halt north of the twentieth parallel was not that significant since the overall U.S. bombing was not decreased, just concentrated in the remaining areas of North and South Vietnam. What is more, the talks had hardly begun when they became bogged down in a long dispute over technical matters such as the shape of the bargaining table.¹⁷

So amidst hope and anticipation that the war would soon be over, there was also considerable understanding of the need to keep up the pressure, at least for a while longer. The SMC, then, continued to find good response to its preparations for the student

17. The official U.S. position maintained that it was in Vietnam at the request of the Saigon regime, so it couldn't leave Saigon out of the negotiations. In return it was understood that NLF representatives would join the Hanoi delegation. But Saigon and the U.S. balked at seating arrangements that implied direct negotiations with the NLF, so the shape of the table became a disputed issue.

strike and the April 27 mass demonstrations. Many of the moderates, however, while giving some support to the spring actions, were anxious to concentrate their efforts on the elections, either behind Kennedy or McCarthy. And many of the radicals were expressing concern over what would become of "the movement" when the war was over. There was widespread feeling in the "new left" milieu that liberal politicians had co-opted the antiwar cause, that it wasn't radical anymore, and that those who wanted to build a radical base had to shift quickly to other issues and other methods or organizing.

It should be recalled here that the New Mobe administrative committee meeting in December had appointed a subcommittee to arrange a conference to plan the anticipated demonstrations at the Democratic Party convention in August. This conference was scheduled for March 23-24, and by the time it occurred McCarthy had won in New Hampshire, Kennedy had announced his candidacy, and Westmoreland had been recalled.

The conference was by invitation only. It took place at a summer camp at Lake Villa outside Chicago, and was attended by some 200 persons, mostly from the SDS milieu, both old guard and new.

The meeting was not really an antiwar conference at all. It seems that the original subcommittee, which included Dellinger, Greenblatt, Hayden, and Rennie Davis, considered itself a kind of steering committee for a new multi-issue coalition. The conference adopted a program for this "new coalition" which stated in part:

"We call for an election-year organizing campaign to be carried into cities, towns, and counties across America. Our purpose is to generate massive popular support against the war, the draft, imperialism, racism, repression, poverty, and unrepresentative government."¹⁸

Further: "... we need to develop independent electoral alternatives based on radical programs and centered on local organizing."

Interestingly, the conference put off any decision on demonstrations at the Democratic Party convention. The conference voted not to support Kennedy or McCarthy, but most of those present wanted to wait until after the California primary in June—which would determine whether Kennedy or McCarthy were front-runners—before deciding on the nature of demonstrations at the Democratic Party convention.

Nothing ever came of the "new coalition" and the Lake Villa conference turned out to be pretty much a waste of time. But it indicated some of the thinking going on among the active officers of the National Mobilization Committee, and it was a portent of tensions to come. The few YSAers who happened to be invited to this conference were angry at the lack of interest there in the spring actions.

A week later SDS held a national council meeting on March 29 in Lexington, Kentucky. The "ten days" of antiwar actions the previous NC had adopted, and which this meeting should logically have been devoting itself to building, were hardly mentioned. In effect the SDS NC simply abandoned them. According to Sale, "the new shift of focus was expressed for the NC in a moving and persuasive speech by Carl Oglesby, who told the young delegates that the job of SDS now was to turn from the issue of the war to that of racism. Radicals have done all they can now toward ending the war, he suggested, and adventures like the Chicago convention demonstration or schemes for involving working-class communities around the draft were not really going to help much. Radicals now should turn to the questions of black liberation and white racism, fighting not only for the sake of the oppressed blacks, but also because this struck a blow at one of the pillars of the system."¹⁹

What was wrong with this was not the recognition of the importance of the Black struggle in the United States, but—

18. Cited in a Report on the Lake Villa Conference, by Lew Jones, March 28, 1968. (Copy in author's files.)

19. *SDS* by Kirkpatrick Sale (New York: Vintage Books, 1974), pp. 418-19.

among other things—the abandonment of the antiwar cause.

* * *

Yet another event, this one unconnected with the Tet offensive, would shake the country as the spring antiwar actions were being prepared. On April 4, while in Memphis supporting a strike of Black sanitation workers for union recognition, thirty-nine-year-old Martin Luther King, Jr., was assassinated by a hired killer. It had only been twelve years since his role in the Montgomery bus protest had gained him national prominence. Within hours spontaneous rebellions occurred in the Black ghettos of more than a hundred American cities, and there were peaceful demonstrations in countless others. In the capital, smoke from fires set by enraged Blacks hung over the city, and in Chicago the fires were said to be the worst since the great fire of 1871. Some 65,000 national guardsmen and federal troops were called out to reinforce local police. Thirty-eight people were killed and more than 15,000 arrested. One of those killed was Bobby Hutton, the seventeen-year-old treasurer of the Black Panther Party, shot down by Oakland police while surrendering from a house they had surrounded.

* * *

Joe Miles, a nineteen-year-old Black militant in Washington, D.C., was vice-chairman of the local Black Antiwar Antidraft Union. When the news of King's death broke, he was called by students at a high school to organize a protest. He went to the school and joined with a hundred students in a march to Howard University, a virtually all-Black campus. On the way they picked up 200 more high schoolers. At Howard about 1,000 students gathered for a rally. Someone had brought a Black nationalist flag, and everyone cheered as the American flag was lowered from the flagpole and the Black nationalist flag was raised over the campus. We shall meet Miles again in the course of this narrative, after he has been drafted into the army.

* * *

In spite of the inaction of the SDS national office, the month of April saw widespread antiwar activity and preparations for the strike on campuses across the country, initiated by the SMC, local SDS chapters, and other groups. On Friday, April 26, a million students participated in the first national student strike since the 1930s and the largest up to that time in the history of the country. At a few universities, most dramatically at Columbia in upper Manhattan near Harlem, the strike coincided with actions initiated earlier around specific demands directed at the university administration. But for the most part it was a one-day political strike in opposition to the war. As a rule the students did not simply stay out of class, but engaged in leafletting, picketing, marches, rallies, sit-ins, discussions, teach-ins, and other educational activities against the war.

Involved were over a thousand schools, including at least fifty major universities, and many high schools from Maine to California and from Washington State to Florida. The spread of the actions was particularly significant. Schools in every part of the continental United States were drawn in, and there were some surprising results in areas previously considered conservative and prowar. At the University of Arizona, at Tucson, for example, 11,000 students, half the enrollment, stayed out of class.

The most remarkable feature of the April 26 strike was the participation of high school students, especially in New York City. The city board of education estimated abnormal absenteeism that day at 200,000, according to the *Student Mobilizer*. There was large participation from high schools in every kind of community—Black, white, and Puerto Rican, working class and middle class. The *New York Times* put the number of strikers in city high schools and city-operated colleges at 200,000. The SMC estimated an additional 60,000 students were out at private colleges and universities in the New York area.

Paradoxically, the national media paid little attention to the

strike, perhaps because it was overwhelmingly peaceful, orderly, and even businesslike. Local media tended to treat the actions in their areas as local news without pointing up the fact that similar events were taking place across the country at the same time. A few local actions, particularly the Columbia events, got far more national publicity than the national strike itself.²⁰

Nevertheless the national strike had a profound and lasting effect. It tapped new layers of student activists as some of the older ones were getting tired or disoriented. And it helped establish a new atmosphere in the high schools and previously unaffected colleges. This was true even where only a relatively few students on a particular campus participated. These used the occasion for teach-ins, setting up literature tables, and so on, to begin the process which had taken place elsewhere two or three years earlier.

In effect the April 26 national student strike took advantage of the changed atmosphere initiated by the Tet offensive to spread the antiwar word to new layers of people who had previously been immune or indifferent to it.

The strike helped deepen and widen the level of student activism in general. And in this atmosphere the struggles of the students from oppressed national minorities around their own special demands began to assume significant proportions. In the beginning these were almost always combined with some antiwar action. A new movement for the right of high school students as such to engage in political activity—first of all against the war—also made its appearance in the wake of this strike.

20. The Columbia events began with a building occupation April 23, spread to a partial strike April 25, and included a police assault April 29 that kept the full strike going well into May. The events had not been planned by either the SMC or the SDS national council despite highly inventive reports to the contrary. They climaxed a long history of struggles by Columbia SDS, the Student Afro-American Society, and other groups against the encroachment of the university on a park used by the nearby Black community, and against war research by the Institute of Defense Analysis. The general atmosphere of the April days, however, was part of the background which allowed a bold action by a relative handful of Black students and SDSers to precipitate a major confrontation. SDS lost the leadership very quickly, but Mark Rudd, the chapter chairman, never forgot the moment. The will to throw down the gauntlet regardless of objective realities would become a political principle, summed up in the later Weatherman slogan "Dare to Struggle, Dare to Win," and Rudd would try again. Such moments, however, are fairly rare, and do not present themselves as the result of the efforts of any small group, however resolute.

Internationally, the April 26 student strike was a part of the student ferment sweeping many parts of the world in 1968. Student strikes and demonstrations around April 26 occurred in Canada, Mexico, Puerto Rico, Japan, Italy, France, Germany, and many other countries, including Czechoslovakia, then enjoying the brief "Prague Spring." In Copenhagen some 30,000 marched April 27 to the American embassy. There was no direct connection with the SMC call, but it is interesting to note that the famous May events in France—in which a student uprising ignited a general strike by the working class and a near revolution—were the culmination of a chain of events which began with a demonstration in solidarity with the Vietnamese revolution. There was a direct connection between NAWADU and SMC calls and the prolonged student strikes which shook the whole Japanese higher educational system in 1968. On April 26, seventy-two Japanese universities were shut down. This was only for one day, but the solidarity showed the Japanese students they had more power than they knew and gave an impulse to the already developing revolt against their own conditions.

The April 27 demonstrations were not concentrated in one or two cities but took place across the country. They were generally the largest yet for that kind of decentralized arrangement. The numbers in most cities were still in the hundreds rather than tens of thousands, but the movement was obviously growing. In New York the turnout amounted to some 200,000 for dual marches down Fifth Avenue and Central Park West to a giant rally that more than filled Central Park's Sheep Meadow. The range of the speakers was broad, with notables such as Manhattan Borough President Percy Sutton and Mayor John Lindsay putting in brief appearances.

I marched and was one of the speakers at the demonstration in San Francisco, which drew some 30,000. Significantly, that march was led off by a contingent of about forty active-duty GIs, in civilian clothes. Some of them were air force reservists who had recently been called for active duty. In spite of all the pending negotiations between the two sides, the bombing was being stepped up and shortages of manpower had appeared in certain categories so the military was selectively calling up some reservists.

It is interesting to note that the early links between the civilian antiwar movement and *groups* of antiwar GIs, rather than just individuals, began among these levies of reservists.

[To be continued]

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Cannon on How to Build a Revolutionary Party

Reviewed by Tim Wohlforth



All of us who base ourselves on the Transitional Program of the Fourth International realize that the crisis of mankind in our period boils down to the crisis of leadership of the working class. Cannon's contribution to overcoming this crisis came in his dedication to solving the problems of party construction, to which he devoted his efforts, his thoughts, and much of his writings.

The purpose of the revolutionary party is to lead the working class. From this general truth we are forced to proceed to two more concrete questions. How does the revolutionary party achieve the authority to lead the mass of workers? How is the revolutionary party itself led?

The two questions are interlinked, for only a party that has begun to solve the problem of how to lead itself, how to assemble its cadres, hold them and develop them, is in any position to tackle the problem of winning leadership of the class as a whole. Many would-be Trotskyist groups have foundered on the first problem, never to come near the second.

This book is a part of the documentary material showing how James P. Cannon dealt with the problem of party leadership in relation to the problem of transforming the Socialist Workers party (SWP) into the party of the mass of American workers. It stands together with Cannon's *Struggle for a Proletarian Party and Speeches to the Party** as the most important contribution on these questions by anyone in the Trotskyist movement outside of Trotsky himself.

Let us first place James P. Cannon and the SWP in the historic period out of which this book emerged. It was a most trying period for the Fourth International. World War II had begun. Europe was dominated by the fascist regimes of Hitler, Mussolini, and Franco.

In the Allied camp the working class had been mobilized with the help of the Stalinists and the Social Democrats. The aims of the Allied powers had nothing in common with the hostility of the masses of workers in all countries to Hitlerism. The Allies were concerned with their imperialist possessions, with dominating and exploiting

the world after the war. History would soon reveal the objectives of American imperialism—not peace and social justice, but new wars and imperialist assaults in Korea, Vietnam, and elsewhere.

Under wartime conditions the Fourth International could not exist as an effective body. Comrades on the European continent carried on heroic underground work but

The Socialist Workers Party in World War II—Writings and Speeches, 1940-43, by James P. Cannon. New York: Pathfinder Press, 1975. 446 pp. \$3.95. British distributor: Pathfinder Press, 47 The Cut, London SE1 8LL.

were isolated and cut off from the rest of the international. The British movement was small and divided into two competing groups, a situation that was only resolved in 1943, and even then with great confusion and dissension remaining. Leading Ceylonese Trotskyists escaped from prison and went to India, where they conducted important work—but with only occasional contact with the SWP and the rest of the world Trotskyist movement.

Above all, Trotsky was dead, assassinated by an agent of Stalin in the opening phase of the war. The Fourth International was decapitated, but it lived on, largely through the efforts of the Socialist Workers party.

The situation in the United States was none too easy. The great mass upsurge in the CIO was receding as wartime employment rose and the trade-union bureaucrats enlisted in the capitalist war effort. The government prosecuted the party leadership under the Smith Act. The leaders were sentenced to prison the day after Pearl Harbor. After a mass defense campaign and a number of legal appeals, the party leadership would go to federal prison in 1943, just after the period this book covers.

The party thus had to fight for its legal existence. This became clear as the postal authorities began confiscating issues of the *Militant* because of the Trotskyist newspaper's principled opposition to government policy and imperialist war.

In addition, the party had gone through a deep split in 1940, losing 40 percent of its membership and 75 percent of the youth.

One of the causes of the split was the oncoming war itself. Petty-bourgeois layers of the party bent to capitalist war propaganda.

There were certain important points of strength which help to explain the ability of the SWP, despite all these difficulties, to survive and even grow during the war period. Above all was the split with Schachtman and Burnham in 1940. While this led to a loss in membership it strengthened the party politically and theoretically. As Cannon wrote, "We had the good fortune to have an *anticipatory* crisis before the United States entered the war, a crisis which we conquered with the help of Trotsky. We secured our internal peace by a timely preventive war" (p. 250).

This meant that the SWP encountered fewer internal difficulties because of the war than any of the parties of the socialist movement upon the outbreak of World War I. It was the lessons learned in the 1940 fight, and in earlier struggles in collaboration with Trotsky, that gave James P. Cannon, the rest of the leadership, and the membership the political strength to survive the war, even grow out of it, and lay a basis for the critical work which would face it in the postwar period.

American imperialism would emerge from the war as victor and with world power on a scale never before seen; but it also had within its borders the world's most powerful working class and a party which was learning how to become its leadership in the future.

There was another strength the SWP was able to rest upon—the working class itself. It is true, as we have said, that the upsurge of the CIO period receded during the war period. In fact the present bureaucratic and corrupt leadership of the American trade unions was consolidated primarily in this period. The bureaucracy already existed. But under the tumultuous conditions of the 1930s it was far from secure in its own unions. During the war period, with the direct aid of the Stalinists, this bureaucracy tightened its links with the capitalist government and its grip on the labor movement.

However the 1930s was not some distant past in the early 1940s. It was very much a living part of the experiences of the wartime workers. Yes, the workers were swayed by

*These are available from Pathfinder Press, Inc., 410 West Street, New York, New York 10014.

patriotism and confused by their own lack of a developed class consciousness, but they were also a part of the gigantic struggles of the 1930s and they could see the great inequalities and war profiteering of the war period.

One of the most important developments for the future of the SWP was its work in the unions, which encompassed far more than its well-known strength in the Minneapolis Teamsters. Important fractions were built up in auto, in maritime, in shipbuilding, and in other industries. At no time in its history, including the Minneapolis period, had the party been as well rooted in the trade union movement as in the war and immediate postwar period.

One small incident can perhaps illustrate the strength of the work of the SWP in the unions in this period. It involved a red-baiting campaign launched against a comrade by the name of Pauline Furth.

She had been active along with other party comrades in work among extremely exploited cannery workers—largely Chicanos—in the San Diego area. Because of her work she was elected to the executive board of the Seafarers International Union local covering these canneries and to the position of secretary treasurer.

One board member filed charges against her accusing her of being a member of the SWP, an illegal party under prosecution by the government and thus subversive and antipatriotic. She received the support of all the board members except for the man filing the charges. Then a trial was held before the whole membership, a trial attended by over 350 workers. Furth spoke in English and Spanish on her democratic right to hold her socialist views while serving in the union. When the vote came, her opponent received only a single vote out of the 350 assembled at the meeting—his own vote!

Pauline Furth symbolized the kind of cadres that built the SWP in those difficult days. Another example of the work of that period appears in a simple P.S. in one of Cannon's letter. We print it in its entirety: "P.S. Frank Lovell pulled in a few days ago. He was torpedoed. Another comrade also came in yesterday. Also torpedoed. These reports are becoming monotonous. We are awaiting anxiously now for reports of a group of comrades who are on this dangerous Murmansk run" (p. 4).

While Cannon considered activity in the unions to be a central party task, he did not see this as simply carrying on trade-union work in the narrow sense. He saw it as part of the political strategy of building the revolutionary party itself. In particular he stressed the recruitment of workers to the party. He stated:

Fraction work is important for recruiting. I mentioned before, I never heard that discussed much in the party, but it seems to me an excellent idea that if, for example, we decide here on a recruiting campaign, that the fractions in the various unions put on the agenda of the fraction meetings the question of recruiting, not

in general but concretely, and really push the question of trying to draw into the party by the collective work of the fraction a few valuable individuals. [P. 192.]

He then amplified on the relation of trade-union work to party work:

Trade union comrades operating in the trade unions in this day with the tremendous flux in the world, with the ups and downs, can suffer annihilation overnight as a result of some unexpected developments. One who is merely operating as a trade unionist today is operating with blinders on. That is not the case with the party. The party is not a local organization, not a trade union organization. [P. 193.]

Another expression of Cannon's political approach in this period was his position on the labor party question. Seeing a new ferment within the American Labor party in New York State, which tended to tail the Democrats, but was being forced into running independent candidates, he was for undertaking a campaign around the labor party slogan. He said:

Our labor party campaign must be understood as having great implications for the building of our party. *We must conceive of it as our third big political maneuver*, the first being the fusion with the American Workers Party, and the second the entry into the Socialist Party. [P. 308.]

Cannon urged the formation of labor party clubs in the unions.

One interesting aspect of this campaign for us today is that Cannon emphasized the relation between the political action of the working class and the difficulties it faces in certain periods in trade-union action. He stated:

The entire history of the American labor movement shows that the workers tend to resort to independent political action when they find themselves defeated or frustrated on the economic field. There is every reason to believe that this tradition will assert itself more powerfully than ever in the coming period. [P. 305.]

This is an important observation for us today in view of the fact that the growth of unemployment in the United States has a dampening effect on trade-union struggles. Now, too, we may see important conditions developing for a labor party movement.

Of interest in the political life of that period in World War II was the differences that emerged between the Shachtmanite Workers party, the product of the split of the petty-bourgeois opposition in 1940, and the SWP. On several questions the WP had taken positions that appeared on the surface to be to the left of those held by the SWP.

The WP had opposed conscription while the SWP campaigned instead for trade-union control over military training. They refused to support the Chinese revolution against the imperialist Japanese invaders on the grounds that U.S. support of the Chinese side changed the general character of the war there. They refused to support the ALP independent candidates on the grounds that the overall position of

the ALP did not represent a break from Roosevelt.

In each case, the position of Shachtman was one of a leftist observer, a position that barred active intervention and struggle. And so "leftism" became a cover for a rightward course—a course which in time brought Shachtman into the camp of American imperialism as a "critical" defender of a "wing" of the CIA-backed invading force that landed in the Bay of Pigs in an attempt to overthrow Castro.

The SWP conducted a principled and difficult struggle against the imperialist war—risking its legal existence. In fact Cannon originally opposed issuing a statement on the war immediately following Pearl Harbor, on the grounds that the party's position on the war had been amply and publicly proclaimed in the course of the Smith Act trial and that to issue an additional statement at the time might open the party to further government prosecution. But in the end he conceded to a certain sentiment in the ranks for such a statement. His reasoning on this is very important. He felt that the risk of government prosecution was less dangerous to the party than the possible creation of an artificial opposition within the party's ranks over the issue. He put the unity of the party's cadres first. This in itself is indicative of the way Cannon approached party building.

Let us quote from this historic document:

Our aim is to convince the majority that our program is the only one which can put an end to war, fascism, and economic convulsions. In this process of education the terrible facts speak loudly for our contention. Twice in twenty-five years world wars have wrought destruction. The instigators and leaders of those wars do not offer, and cannot offer, a plausible promise that a third, fourth, and fifth world war will not follow if they and their social system remain dominant. Capitalism can offer no prospect but the slaughter of millions and the destruction of civilization. Only socialism can save humanity from this abyss. This is the truth. As the terrible war unfolds, this truth will be recognized by tens of millions who will not hear us now. The war-tortured masses will adopt our program and liberate the people of all countries from war and fascism. In this dark hour we clearly see the socialist future and prepare the way for it. Against the mad chorus of national hatreds we advance once more the old slogan of socialist internationalism: Workers of the World Unite! [Pp. 209-210.]

A most important item is Cannon's speech to the Fifteenth Anniversary Plenum of the National Committee in 1943, "The Problem of Party Leadership." Cannon explains:

... if the decisive problem of the proletariat in this revolutionary epoch is the party, then with almost the same weight one can say the problem of the party is the leadership. And the leadership does not form itself automatically. It must be formed consciously, just as the party itself must

be built consciously by the Trotskyists. [Pp. 350-351.]

Cannon viewed as his major contribution to the movement his efforts to tackle this problem.

[We have invested] the highest degree of consciousness in the question of selecting the leading staff of the party, and I believe if one should estimate what part I have played in the development of our movement, if it would be of interest to anybody, it could easily be established that my most important contribution was that I introduced the element of consciousness into the question of selecting the leading staff, of training it in a certain manner, educating it in certain methods, and developing it into a staff of professional revolutionists. [Page 351.]

It is important to understand the context in which Cannon discussed this vital question in the central leadership of the party. It is, after all, a unique contribution. While Lenin and Trotsky devoted much of their day-to-day efforts to this very same question, they wrote little directly on the matter. Cannon's most important contribution to the arsenal of Marxism may very well have been the attention he paid to what he had learned on this matter from Lenin and Trotsky and from his own experience.

The party had just passed through a very fundamental fight that had cut even more deeply into the central leadership of the movement than it had into the ranks. Cannon was the only member of the Political Committee of 1943 who had also been a member of the Political Committee in 1938. That fact alone shows the extent of petty-bourgeois influence within the top leadership of the movement as well as the great changes in leadership personnel that had taken place in the aftermath of the fight with Shachtman, Burnham, and Abern.

Of course this early leadership, with all its deficiencies, had made a critical contribution to the early development of Trotskyism in America and internationally. It was not just a matter of Cannon. It was the team Cannon laboriously put together with Trotsky's help that defended Trotskyism as an embattled small group against Stalinist persecution in the early days and then turned toward the mass movement.

As Cannon emphasizes in several places, one must build a movement with the human material at hand at the time. There is no other way. Nevertheless, the years immediately following the split with Shachtman, Burnham, and Abern constituted a critical period in assembling a new leadership which held together in the main right up to the 1953 break with the Cochran group.

Secondly, the 1939-40 fight itself had been a great school on how to politically struggle within a movement, to bring out the central issues, to avoid all the traps of blind factionalism, to educate a cadre in the process. Trotsky's *In Defense of*

Marxism remains to this day a veritable textbook on such matters.

Finally, the question of leadership was brought up by the appearance of a new opposition in the party, the Goldman-Morrow group. At this early point in its evolution the group was based on personal affinities. Later it began to find issues around such questions as the "regime," the need for "creative thought," "independent thinking," and the like. Eventually they accepted Shachtman's basic political positions and split.

Cannon believed that assembling a leadership and cadre of people of diverse abilities and various limitations deserves the most careful attention. As for himself he recognized his limitations in many fields. His task, as he saw it, was to assemble from the human material available a leadership balanced in talents and experience so that the party as a whole could go forward as a *party*.

Such a party needed to be structured in such a way as to permit the fullest and freest discussion on all levels as well as the firmest discipline when it came to action in carrying out agreed-on tasks. Cannon was as much opposed to circle groups, amounting to talk shops, as he was to bureaucratic parties and one-man shows.

All this may seem a simple enough proposition. In fact Cannon presents it as the most modest of proposals. But history has shown that parties of the Cannon type have been rare indeed. And these problems are by no means behind us today. The intriguing question is, Why is this so? Why have we Trotskyists seen so many confusing and unnecessary splits, so many continuous clique divisions and wars, so many self-proclaimed "geniuses" and one-man shows? Why, in short, has so much valuable human material of the revolutionary movement been dispersed and destroyed over the years?

A clue to the answer is given in Cannon's assertion that constructing a party leadership must be approached in a *conscious* way. The solution to the problem involves much more than technique or form. We are dealing at the highest level of the party with the basic problem of our epoch—leadership. This means we must learn to assemble a cadre on an *objective* political basis and not according to subjective or personal inclinations.

As Marxists this means that each selection, each decision, is motivated by one criterion only—the needs of the working class, our political tasks at a given moment in the struggle of that class to advance on the road to socialism. As a party learns to function in this way each member of the party is broken from the influence of other classes, particularly the capitalist influence reflected into a party through petty-bourgeois transmission belts in the working class and middle class. At bottom all subjectivity, cliquism, pretensions to "genius," are reflections of such

class pressures and have a political meaning. A party must learn, when confronting such problems, to understand them as objective problems of the working-class movement itself and let their political meaning come to the surface.

Even this explanation of what is meant by viewing problems of leadership as a conscious question leads us to another observation which Cannon develops in this article. No one is born a conscious Marxist. It is something that must be *learned* from others who have gone before us and through our own experience.

Cannon illustrates this in two ways. First he contrasts the SWP with the other sections of the Fourth International which emerged in the 1930s.

France had the same legality as we had, much riper political conditions, etc., but they fooled around so much with this question of organization, with the lack of discipline, caution, restraint, lack of understanding how valuable it is to keep cadres together, needless splits and foolish unifications, and generally, a light-minded dilettante attitude toward the organization question, with the result that our French comrades had to face the war practically without leadership. What leadership they have is more or less what they have been able to consolidate under the fascist terror. My experience in France is unforgettable. And in England. And what I have seen negatively has convinced me just as much as the positive experience that the only way to build a party is our way, and from that you can't budge me. [P. 383.]

Next, Cannon observed how the SWP developed into the kind of party it was, how it learned to treat consciously the problem of leadership. Cannon understood very well he was not born with this knowledge.

In fact Cannon's earlier experience trained him for quite a different role than he would end up playing. It trained him for the role of an inveterate factionalist. Perhaps because he knew that kind of animal, as well as the deleterious consequences of dead-end factionalism, he became exceptionally sensitive and alert to its first manifestations. This is how Cannon explains his development:

When I came out of the nine years of the CP I was a first-class factional hoodlum. If not, how would I ever have survived? All I knew when somebody started a fight, let him have it. That existence was all I knew. I think Trotsky is right when he says that in that long drawn-out fight between Cannon and Abern that historical right is on the side of Cannon. But that doesn't mean I was right about everything. No, I was wrong about many things, including my methods and my impatience and rudeness with comrades and repulsing them. My past record—but that is years ago. I don't do that anymore. I don't insult comrades. I don't persecute them or even give them grounds for thinking I am doing it. I know more about how to lead a party than that. I have had responsibilities on my shoulders and I have had the Old Man's instruction and some day I am going to publish the Old Man's correspondence on this question and it will be very illuminating as one of the great sources of my information and change. I improved myself,

cleaned myself up, and you have got to judge me as I am today. [P. 374.]

Cannon's great distinction from other Trotskyists of his day is that he *learned* from Trotsky and he *changed*. He did so because he always, no matter what his weaknesses were in an earlier period, proceeded objectively from the needs of the working class and thus fought to change himself to meet the requirements of the working class in the construction of the party.

Cannon, with his skill and his experience, carried great weight, of course, within the SWP. However, he did not utilize that weight to develop a personal group around himself, to build a personal party. As he expressed it: "I don't like sycophants, even if they attach themselves to me for a time, because I am concerned with the problems of creating a cadre that can lead the party in case a streetcar would run over Cannon some day" (p. 365).

History would show that rather than fall victim of a streetcar Cannon would live to a ripe age. He devoted the last two decades of his life to assisting in transferring leadership to others. This process was well underway by the time of the Cochran fight in 1953 as Cannon shifted more and more responsibilities to Farrell Dobbs and others of that generation. But the process did not stop there, and in the past decade Cannon supported Dobbs in making the transition to a still younger leadership. To our knowledge no other party in the history of the workers movement has carried through such a transition without great factional explosions and loss of valuable cadres.

Cannon, as we have noted, did not view himself as a "genius." In fact, in his opinion no geniuses existed in the Fourth International following the death of Trotsky. But that does not mean that the struggle to construct a party must be given up until a new Lenin or Trotsky appears.

Just as importantly, Cannon stressed that the one true genius he did work with, Leon Trotsky, did not act towards the movement in the way many self-proclaimed geniuses have acted. Trotsky knew that he did not and could not possess all knowledge in his own head. He, too, developed by learning from others, admitting errors, and changing when it was necessary to change.

This led Cannon to comment on "deferring" to others. What he meant was that there are times when one, even though convinced of being right, must defer to others, to submit on questions that do not involve matters of principle to the decisions of the party. Trotsky, Cannon pointed out, deferred on occasion to Cannon, even though so much of Cannon's knowledge was derived from Trotsky.

Cannon mentions the example of B.J. Field, a member of the American party in the early 1930s who was expelled by the New York Local for violation of discipline.



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Field then turned up at Prinkipo with Trotsky. At the time, he was actually writing material for Trotsky. The American party protested that this man could not speak for the world Trotskyist movement when he had not cleared up his relation with the American section. Trotsky deferred to Cannon on the matter and apologized.

Another example was Trotsky's opinion that the movement in America should use "Communist" in its name. Cannon disagreed because of his experience of working in the American labor movement. The name remained "socialist."

Cannon also mentions that on many occasions, when he had doubts on trade-union or other party work, he would defer judgment to the comrades on the spot until experience could clarify the matter.

No party can avoid error and no party has. When we study the real life of Lenin's party, or the real life of the Fourth International under Leon Trotsky, or the real history of the SWP, we see many conflicts, difficulties, mistakes, imperfections. Cannon himself makes this judgment of the early years of the American Trotskyist movement. We know of Trotsky's great error on the question of the party in the 1903 to 1917 period. We know of Lenin's theoretical confusion on the central question of the permanent revolution in the same period.

What constitutes a party as a living revolutionary vehicle with potential to lead the working class in the future is not a group that seeks to eliminate blemishes according to an a priori idealistic concept. Its chief hallmark is determined adherence

to the scientific Marxist outlook combined with a continuous attempt to apply this outlook within the working class. But this requires that the party be a party capable of change, of development, of learning what it does not know and cannot know at a given stage of its objective development.

Cannon's party was such a party. In fact it may very well have been the only party of its kind in that period. We can all learn from the rich experience of building that party.

Of course, internationally Trotskyists can learn only through their own experiences in party building. These experiences can at times be very painful. But one can pass through painful experiences more quickly, learn from them, avoid at least some mistakes the next time around, and recoup from blows faster if we proceed consciously as Cannon did. □

Argentina 'Denationalizes' Banks

Chase Manhattan, Citibank, and Morgan Guaranty are among the banks that will benefit from the Argentine junta's search for \$1.2 billion in loans.

Investments totaling about \$45 million had been tied up since 1973 when former President Juan Peron decreed the banks would be taken over by the government.

Now, Argentine Finance Minister Jose Martínez de Hoz has announced the banks will be "denationalized," which is expected to facilitate getting the loans the junta needs to make payments on its \$10 billion foreign debt.

A Discussion Between Trotsky and Greek Left Oppositionists

Trotsky. I would like to raise some questions about the problem of "faction and party" so as to be able to draw some inferences for other countries from the Greek experience. Should we remain a faction or take steps toward a policy of independence vis-à-vis the party? A situation can be envisioned where the party might be weak and the faction strong, and thus able to make a bid to replace the party. However, all attempts to move in such a direction up till now have failed to produce any favorable results. We have seen the experience in Germany (Urbahns) and in Belgium (Overstraeten), as well as the attempts of the Right Opposition and the most recent experience of the SAP.¹ What is the situation in Greece?

Two more questions on this: First, what current political questions divide the Archio-Marxists and the Communist Party; that is, how do the fundamental differences express themselves in practical work? Second, what experience has there been in the electoral field?

Answer. Suggests reading the written report that has been largely completed and then basing the oral discussion on it.

Trotsky. What is the Agrarian Party's program?

A. They call themselves "anticapitalist."

Trotsky. Do they also call themselves "socialist"?

A. They call themselves "Marxists."

Trotsky. And what is their agrarian program?

A. "Against Communism and against

1. What these four groups had in common was their attempts—unsuccessful in each case—to gain hegemony of the revolutionary movement through bypassing or ignoring the Communist parties. Two of them had previously been associated with the Left Opposition but had left it in 1930: the German Leninbund, led by Hugo Urbahns, and the League of Communist Internationalists, led by Edouard van Overstraeten. The others were the German Kommunistische Partei Opposition, led by Heinrich Brandler, which was associated with the Bukharinist Right Opposition in the USSR, and the German Sozialistische Arbeiter Partei, a centrist grouping formed by Max Seydewitz and Kurt Rosenfeld in 1931 after its leaders had been expelled from the German Social Democracy.

capitalism." Actually they are representatives of the rich farmers.

Trotsky. What slogans do they propose? (With regard to taxes, banks, etc.)

A. A debt moratorium on loans from the state and the agrarian bank, lowering taxes for the peasants—for a "peasants' government."

Trotsky. The feudalists after all, were Turks, and they were driven out. But what about the church, does it control large landed estates?

A. It does not have a lot of property. There were also big Greek landowners; however in 1918-19 their holdings were taken away by the land reform, which in return offered them large and lucrative compensation.

Trotsky. Who was the land distributed to? The refugees² or the indigenous population?

A. Both. There were 1,500,000 refugees. Among them, about 200,000 eventually received homesteading credits. However, large layers of farmers have considerable tax debts. They are all now threatened with the confiscation of their property.

A. Reports further on the political slogans of the [Communist] party.

The united front: On this question, a bitter struggle prevails between our organization and the official party. In general, the party rejects the united front, even at the trade-union level. Its policy is the united front "from below"³ with separate leaderships for each strike and struggle (set up by the party, of course). On this question our struggle has intensified, especially during the last period.

Trotsky. In connection with Germany,⁴ or as a separate question?

2. Following a disastrous military campaign in Asia Minor in 1921, the remnants of the Greek army and well over a million destitute Greek refugees began to return to Greece.

3. The "united front from below" was based on the idea that joint-action arrangements with non-Stalinist organizations had to be negotiated and consummated with the ranks, but not the leaders, of such organizations. The effect was to exclude the possibility of actual united fronts.

A. In our propaganda we connect up the events in Germany with the attitude of the party in Greece. We are now in the midst of a big crisis, and decisive battles are in the offing. Our congress raised the perspective that these struggles could culminate in a general strike.

Trotsky. And the party?

A. After the liquidation of the Third Period,⁵ the party abandoned the slogan of the political strike and now merely views the task as struggling for direct, economic partial demands. In place of the united front, the party created a "People's Committee," in which only the party, its youth, and the red periphery organizations participate. The Opposition has proposed that workers' congresses be held in every city in which all tendencies in the working class should take part and where committees based on proportional representation should be established, which, as a higher form of the united front, would provide leadership for struggles.

Trotsky. These are soviets.

A. As we have defined their tasks, they should move from leading partial strikes, the unemployed movement, and actions around the housing question and price and production control toward taking the leadership of a general strike and becoming organs of dual power.

Trotsky. These are soviets. But it is perhaps better for the moment not to call them this. When we established the soviets in Russia, they were not at first organs of power. They had to develop into that. Now, however, the word "soviet" at once suggests the idea of immediate conquest and exercise of power.

A. To our demands for workers' con-

4. From 1930 to 1933 the International Left Opposition and its sections carried on intensive efforts to persuade the Comintern to alter its disastrous policies in Germany and to promote a fighting united front against the Nazis.

5. The "Third Period," initiated by the Stalinists in 1928, was supposedly the last phase of capitalist rule, to be quickly replaced by successful proletarian revolutions. In 1932 Trotsky and the International Left Opposition saw signs of this disastrous theory being dropped by the Stalinists, but it actually was not dropped until 1934, a year after Hitler came to power.

gresses and struggle committees with representation of all tendencies, the party counterposes its "People's Committee" embracing only official party organizations. The Spartakos group⁶ is opposed to our slogan and has issued a manifesto advancing the slogan for a "workers' and peasants' government." This is defined as an intermediate stage that would not yet represent the dictatorship of the proletariat but would rather prepare the way for it. It is supposed to tax the rich and cancel the peasants' debts.

Trotsky. We could include this slogan, and at the same time raise the question of what bodies the workers' and peasants' government should base itself upon. On the "People's Committee" or on the "Workers' Congress"? How many members does the Spartakos group have?

A. They say seventy-five. But this includes completely inactive, dispersed, and vacillating elements.

Trotsky. And the Factionists?

A. Thirty. They have allied themselves with the Spartakists, although hardly a single one of them wants to work with them.

Trotsky. What kind of organ do they have?

A. A monthly.

Trotsky. Are they going through a rapprochement with the party? Don't they want to rejoin?

A. Several of them have gone back to the party. However, as an organization, they do not want to work with the party at all. We just recently proposed a united front to

6. The Spartakos group was organized in 1927 by Pantelis Pouliopoulos. Pouliopoulos was one of three Greek delegates to the Fifth Congress of the Communist International in 1924. That same year, he was elected general secretary of the party. In 1926, he began to lead the resistance to the Stalinization of the Greek CP. In 1927, he was expelled. After leaving the party, he formed a group that took its name from *Spartakos*, the periodical it began to publish in January 1928.

In 1930, the Spartakos group adhered to the International Left Opposition. In 1934, the Spartakos group united with the LAKKE (Leninistike Antipoliteusi tou KKE—Greek CP-Leninist Opposition) to form the Organose Kommouniston-Diethniston Ellados (OKDE—Organization of Communist Internationalists of Greece). In 1937, this group united with the "Neos Dromos" formation to found the Eniaia Organose ton Kommouniston-Diethniston Elladas (EOKDE—United Organization of Communist Internationalists of Greece).

7. A grouping outside the official section that claimed adherence to the International Left Opposition.

About This Document

The transcript of this discussion between Leon Trotsky and the leaders of the Archio-Marxist group in Greece was prepared for circulation in the International Left Opposition in mid-1932 as part of the preliminary work for the first world conference of the Left Opposition, held in February 1933.

It has never been published before, and was among the material found in the archives of the late James P. Cannon, printed by permission of the Library of Social History, New York.

In the original text Trotsky was listed as "Question" or "Q."; "Answer" or "A." designates a representative or representatives of the Archio-Marxists.

The text is in German and is accompanied by the following introductory note by Trotsky, dated June 15, 1932:

The enclosed minutes of a conversation among individual comrades is only a brief outline and should be useful as information for the sections of the Left Opposition. Because of the incompleteness of this transcript, not too much weight can be attached to every particular phrase and each individual formulation contained within it.

One of the central questions the coming international conference of the Left Opposition had to settle was whether its sections should continue to operate as factions of the Communist parties or whether they should begin to function as independent parties in competition with the CPs. The question had come up recently in a sharp form at a national conference of the Spanish section, whose leaders had adopted a course of action leading away from the "faction" perspective toward that of an independent party.

Since Trotsky disagreed with the leadership of the Spanish section, which at that time was the largest organization of the Left Opposition in western Europe, he was particularly interested in discussing the faction/party question with the leaders of the Greek section, which was then not only the largest organization in the International Left Opposition but also the one with the longest experience in mass work.

The Archio-Marxist tendency arose in the early Greek CP as an opposition to the eclecticism and heterogeneity of that organization, which developed in confusion caused by the lack of Marxist tradition in Greece. They were expelled in 1922, and began to edit a publication called *Ta Archei tou Marxismou* (Archives of Marxism), devoted to Marxist education. They made contact with the Left Opposition in 1930 and voted to affiliate to the Left Opposition at their congress in 1931.

This was a period of great upheaval

in Greece. Although the country had been declared a republic in 1924, the years 1924-35 were marked by violent political strife, coups, and countercoups, culminating in an unsuccessful rebellion in 1935 led by supporters of E. Venizelos, an antiroyalist. Their defeat led to the death of the republic. In 1936, a dictatorship was set up by Metaxas, supported by the king.

A financial crisis occurred in 1932 when the government was unable to repay its foreign debts because of the military disaster in Asia Minor. Pressure from Washington and London for repayment of the debts led to sharp conflict in Athens, with at least three governments formed in that one year.

In 1932 the Greek CP, like the rest of the Comintern, was still staggering under the burden of its ultraleft "Third Period" line, which only added isolation, weakness, and disorganization to an already isolated, weak, and disorganized party. As a result, the relationship of forces between the Stalinists and the Left Oppositionists was unusually favorable to the latter in Greece, and the Archio-Marxist experience therefore seemed to Trotsky to be especially relevant to the faction/party question.

The discussion is also notable for Trotsky's sensitive and patient attention to the views of the Archio-Marxists, particularly on the issues where he firmly disagreed with them, as on the national question in Greece.

The international conference in February 1933 adopted Trotsky's position on the faction/party dispute (see *Documents of the Fourth International: The Formative Years [1933-40]*, [Pathfinder Press, 1973]). But shortly thereafter, Trotsky and the Left Opposition decided that the Third International, whose policies had made Hitler's victory in Germany possible, was bankrupt, and that founding the Fourth International and independent parties in all countries was justified and politically necessary.

The 1933 conference recognized the Archio-Marxists as the sole section of the Left Opposition in Greece, but in 1934 they withdrew. It was not until the eve of the founding conference of the Fourth International in 1938 that the Archio-Marxists and another formation, which emerged from the Spartakos tendency, united into a single organization, which was represented at the founding conference.

The translation of the transcript is by Candida Barbarena and will be included in a forthcoming volume of Pathfinder Press's series *Writings of Leon Trotsky*.

the party. So far, no answer has been received. It is unlikely that the offer will be accepted, especially since the bitterest enemies of our organization are in the new leadership, people who in the past even engineered the murder of our comrades.

Trotsky. To sum up: The Archio-Marxists are for a workers' congress, to lead partial struggles toward a general strike. The Communist Party calls for a People's Committee. But this is only a leading body. What is it supposed to do?

A. The People's Committee has attempted to organize demonstrations. All of ten people showed up. Since then the party has said nothing more about the People's Committee.

Trotsky. Does the People's Committee have a legal existence?

A. Its manifesto had the address of the trade-union organization. It contains the slogans for a "soviet Greece" and for a "workers' and peasants' government." The latter slogan has been around since 1923-24. In those days it was advanced along the lines of the Kuomintang⁸ and the Bulgarian tactic. At present the party has not defined the character of this "workers' and peasants' government."

Trotsky. And what is the position of our organization regarding this slogan?

A. We can only view this slogan as purely formal, a substitute for the "dictatorship of the proletariat." Just raising such a slogan is not enough to achieve it. We need transitional slogans that lead toward this.

Trotsky. We can accept raising this slogan as a perspective, that is, in the following sense: We have a bourgeois government, but we want a workers' government. So, we propose a workers' congress. Then, we can say to the party: You are for a workers' and peasants' government. In order to achieve this we need bodies on which such a government can base itself, that is, a workers' congress.

A. In our most recent proposal for a united front, we suggested a joint platform for unity.

Trotsky. The slogan for a workers' and peasants' government, which would be foolish for Germany, is correct in Greece,

8. In this period the Left Opposition was critical of the slogan "workers' and peasants' government" as used by the Comintern because of the way the Stalinists had used it in China before 1927, when they claimed that the victory of the bourgeois-nationalist Kuomintang would produce a workers' and peasants' government.

where there is a peasant movement, a movement of debt-burdened refugees. It represents masses. And since the proletariat in Greece does not constitute a majority, the slogan for a workers' and peasants' government can become important—as a form of the dictatorship of the proletariat, but one that is comprehensible to the peasants. It is in fact more than a form. The role of the peasantry in Greece requires that the vanguard of the proletariat take it into consideration and formulate its own policy and measures accordingly. That was also the situation in Russia, yet we spoke about a workers' and peasants' government only after the conquest of power, and Lenin was not entirely certain about this characterization. But for us the decisive fact was that the proletariat had already won power and taken over the government.

A. We explained in our congress that we are opposed to the workers' and peasants' government as an "intermediate form," but that we consider it a synonym for the dictatorship of the proletariat.

Trotsky. The dictatorship of the proletariat has various stages. In Russia the first stage was marked by the coalition with the Left SRs [Social Revolutionaries] (November 1917 to July 1918). That was the coalition with representatives of the peasantry. Two days following their resignation, the Left SRs organized a revolt against the Soviet government and were jailed. Subsequently, the Soviet government became more "Bolshevized." There was a difference between the first and second stages. In this sense we can say that the term workers' and peasants' government was "honest," for there had been a workers' and soldiers' congress and, moreover, a peasant congress. This peasant congress joined with the workers' and soldiers' congress, elected its committee, and sent its representatives to the executive committee of the workers' and soldiers' congress. That corresponded to the peasants' way of thinking at the time.

Fascism

A. The party speaks of social fascism,⁹ archiofascism, agrarian fascism, and monarchofascism.

Trotsky. Does any real fascist organization exist?

9. The theory of social fascism, developed by Stalin, held that Social Democracy and fascism were not antipodes but twins. Since the Social Democrats were only a variety of fascism, and since just about everyone but the Stalinists was some kind of fascist, then it was impermissible for the Stalinists to engage in united fronts with any other tendency against the ordinary fascists. No theory could have been more helpful to Hitler in the years leading up to his winning power in Germany.

A. There are fascist organizations that are politically insignificant, artificial imitations of Italian fascism. Recently, an organization of combat veterans and nationalists was formed. It is carrying out a certain amount of activity and focuses on attacking the Communists. But it does not call itself fascist and does not constitute a political organization in the full sense. It is an imitation of the Stahlhelme,¹⁰ from whom they have also borrowed their name. The group is based in Salonika, where they have already been able to break up trade-union meetings.

Trotsky. You have said nothing about the national question. What about Macedonia and the minorities?

A. Our congress passed a resolution opposing the slogan of independence for Macedonia, which was adopted by the party in 1925.

Trotsky. Why?

A. This came after there had been a complete population exchange of Greeks, Turks, and Bulgarians. Bulgarian Macedonia had 90 percent Bulgarians, Greek Macedonia 90 percent Greeks, Serbian Macedonia the same. Excluding the Jewish minority, who live only in the cities, all of those in the countryside are Greeks from Asia Minor and the Black Sea area.

Trotsky. Why did the party raise the slogan for Macedonian independence?

A. Manuilsky¹¹ and Kolarov¹² pressed for it. At the time, the Bulgarian party had made an alliance with Bulgarian nationalists, who called themselves "Macedonians," and hoped to win them over. It was on this basis that the slogan for Macedonian independence was raised. But the "Macedonians," under the leadership of Zankov, immediately began to train their fire on the Communists.

Trotsky. Should it be a question of the independence of Macedonia as a whole?

A. Yes.

Trotsky. I'm not certain whether it is correct to reject this slogan. We cannot say we are opposed to it because the population will be against it. The population must be asked for its opinion on this. The "Bulgarians" represent an oppressed layer. We

10. "Steel Helmets," an ultraright association of World War I veterans mobilized as a counterrevolutionary force in Germany in the early 1920s.

11. Manuilsky was at this time secretary of the Comintern.

12. Kolarov, a leader of the Bulgarian CP, was at this time a member of the presidium of the Comintern Executive Committee.

must explain that the people have the right to decide for themselves. If the government rejects a referendum, then we must struggle against this decision. If the oppressed nationality rises up against the government, then we must support them. This is the kind of language we have to talk. And if the Macedonian Greeks declare their opposition to the Athens government, demanding their independence, should we dogmatically oppose it? I doubt it. But, I am not familiar enough with the question, since I only came into contact with the Macedonian problem in 1913.¹³

A. The Comintern dumped this slogan, because it turned out to be unrealizable: Macedonia is not a uniform national whole.

Trotsky. But neither is Greece. Why couldn't Macedonia likewise exist as an autonomous union with different nationalities? The population has to be polled about this.

A. What are the forces which will support this?

Trotsky. It's not our task to organize nationalist uprisings. We merely say that if the Macedonians want it, we will then side with them, that they should be allowed to decide, and we will also support their decision. What disturbs me is not so much the question of the *Macedonian peasants*, but rather whether there isn't a touch of chauvinist poison in *Greek workers*. That is very dangerous. For us, who are for a Balkan federation of soviet states, it is all the same if Macedonia belongs to this federation as an autonomous whole or part of another state. However, if the Macedonians are oppressed by the bourgeois government, or feel that they are oppressed, we must give them support.

Trotsky. Is there a movement of Macedonians in Greece for autonomy?

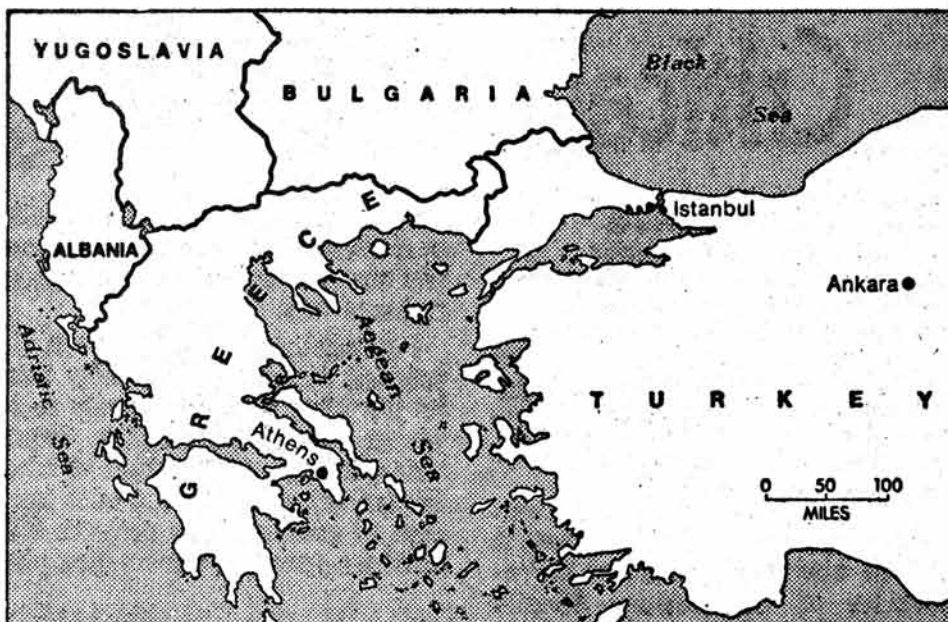
A. No.

Trotsky. In Sofia there is a Macedonian committee which is, of course, supported by the government; however, in Vienna during 1929-30, there existed (and still exists?) a Macedonian newspaper that was published by a committee backed by the Comintern. What do you propose for the Balkans as a whole?

A. A soviet federation.

Trotsky. And the party?

13. Trotsky was a military correspondent for a Russian paper in the Balkans during the Balkan War of 1912-13. His writings on the subject were collected in a book that has been translated and is scheduled for publication by Monad Press (New York).



Los Angeles Times

A. A soviet Greece. They say nothing about a Balkan federation of soviet states. The party criticizes our slogan for a federation, because they claim we use it to hide the fact that we are opposed to a soviet Greece.

Trotsky. Prior to the war there were the Tesniaki (left Social Democrats) in Bulgaria, who supported a Balkan federation. At that time, this slogan played a big role. We took it up although what was proposed was a [bourgeois] *democratic* federation. It is now clear that no democratic power exists in the Balkans that could make such a federation a reality. Rather this is a task for the proletariat. The perspective of a workers' congress, a peasants' movement, a general strike, that is, the prelude to insurrection in Greece, will pose the question of the Balkan federation with greater force. "How can anyone imagine a victorious revolution in a Greece caught in this birdcage system of the Balkan states, hemmed in on all sides by dictatorship and fascism?" some will say. We will answer: "A revolutionary perspective is impossible without a federation of the Balkan states, which obviously will not stop here, but rather will be extended into the federation of the United Soviet States of Europe."

The Trade-Union Question

A. Our slogan on the trade-union question is for trade-union unity, with workers' democracy and the right of factions. The party counterposes unity in the United General Confederation of Labor. (The red trade union).

Trotsky. Which of the existing trade-union federations is the strongest?

A. They are almost equal in strength,

but the Stalinist federation is more active. We participate in all the trade unions, but we are strongest in the United General Confederation.

Trotsky. Is the party's influence in the United General Confederation stronger than ours?

A. The party holds on to the leadership through artificial and violent means. Although we are in the leadership in several trade unions in the United Confederation, up to now we have not been able to get a single representative in the national leadership. We hold the leadership in the following United Confederation trade unions in Athens: textiles, cement, bakers, pretzel makers, blacksmiths. In the reformist federation we lead the cobblers, construction workers, carpenters, and barbers. The metal workers' organization in Piraeus, which was under our leadership, and later won by the Stalinists, is now in the hands of the reformists, who are directly in league with the employers, the state, and the police. In Athens we have thirty-two fractions (minority groupings). Each of these fractions holds regular evening discussions, in which numerous sympathizers participate. Finally, there are still a number of independent trade unions that are not connected to any federation, mostly those that have been expelled from one or the other.

Elections

Trotsky. What position did the Archio-Marxists take on this question? What experience have they had, and what is their present stand?

A. We approach this question from the standpoint of the relationship of forces.

Trotsky. How can our poor vote in the 1931 local elections in Salonika be explained?

A. That question was discussed at the congress and it was established that there had been a wrong estimate of the relationship of forces. The information that we received from Salonika before the elections was that the party organ was selling 70 copies an issue, our organ 3,000 an issue. The party had almost no support in the trade unions. We held the leadership in six trade-union organizations. The crowds at the party's public election rallies never numbered more than 300, while we drew 1,000 to 1,500. The unemployed movement was also under our leadership. The results of the election were 2,300 votes for the party, 390 votes for us. The discussion at the conference revealed the following: (1) The information about newspaper sales was false; not all copies were sold, many were merely distributed. (2) The trade unions were not exactly mass organizations, and the sympathy toward us was more local and personal than political in character. Moreover, our influence was not as great as had been reported to us. (3) A considerable portion of our supporters is young, still without the right to vote; another section of workers couldn't get voters cards. (4) The party got the votes of the passive elements who do not attend rallies, cannot be mobilized by the party, and whose activity consists only in voting. Our influence, on the other hand, is precisely among the active elements of the proletariat. (5) Behind the party stands the authority of the Soviet Union and the Comintern.

Trotsky. Points 1 to 4 could explain the party getting 2,000 votes and our also only getting 2,000 or even 1,000. Therefore it is obvious, in view of the results, that the last reason cited is the decisive one. Only this can explain why the passive elements vote for the party and not for us. Why must we especially stress this reason? Because along with the local and national factors, the authority of the October Revolution and the Comintern enters in as a powerful component of the relationship of forces. There is experience to confirm this: Germany (Urbahns, the Brandlerites, and most recently the SAP); Belgium (Overstraeten); in addition, the experience of a new opposition group in Kosice in Czechoslovakia.

That proves that the historical conditions still do not exist for a second party. In the prewar International, the left wing struggled for years as a small group. Mammoth events like the World War, the collapse of the Second International, the Russian Revolution, were necessary to create prerequisites for establishing a new international. In the present era, events have not yet taken place that in the eyes of the masses are of decisive enough impor-

tance to justify establishing a new party. For that reason, not only can we not establish a new party but rather we are caught up in the same receding wave as the official party, since we are viewed by the masses as a part of the Communist camp.

This fact is very important for Spain. There we have a new group that now has somewhat over 1,000 members and whose leadership has just declared that they do not want to continue tailending the party, but want to present their own slate in the elections. They will propose a united front to the party and following the anticipated refusal, put forward independent candidates. The danger facing the Spanish organization along this path is tremendous.

At the time of the elections the Greek comrades had already had their own organ for ten months, and for an even longer time a number of trade-union newspapers. Until just recently, the Spanish organization only had a monthly theoretical journal. If our organization in Greece has 1,600 members out of a population of seven million, the Spanish organization, which arose in the exceedingly favorable conditions of a rising revolutionary wave, should have at least five times as many members. In short, running our own candidates against those of the Spanish Communist Party, which has grown at an incomparably greater rate than the Opposition and which has incomparably greater resources at its command, will lead to even less favorable results than was the case in Greece. The stand of our Spanish comrades is very rash and can compromise our organization for a long time.

Trotsky. I would again like to raise the question of Macedonia and Epirus. So far as I understand, not much importance has been given to this question up to now. However, this question is very important for educating the Greek workers, for liberating them from national prejudices, for improving their understanding of the international situation in the Balkans and generally. Official statistics give the following information: There are 82,000 Macedonian Slavs among Macedonia's 1,400,000 inhabitants; there are 19,000 Albanians among Epirus's 300,000 inhabitants. The first question that comes to mind is: Are these figures accurate? Our first task is to take an attitude of total skepticism toward these figures. The statistics were drawn up in the year 1925, at the time of the resettlement, under the bayonets of military authority. What do they call "Greek"? Perhaps those who speak Greek because they have to but don't consider themselves Greeks. If these figures are inaccurate, that fact must evoke dissatisfaction and hatred among the nationalist elements. If we say that the official statistics must be regarded with great skepticism, we will win a lot of

sympathy. Most important, in this way we can win the confidence of the Bulgarian proletariat. Even before the war the Bulgarians were also very distrustful of the Greeks, since the Greeks are very nationalistic.

But even if there really were no more than 82,000 Slavs in Macedonia, this question would retain its great significance. Where does this minority of 82,000 live? Probably on the Bulgarian border. The small size of this national layer does not rule out autonomy. Thus in Russia there is the tiny country of Moldavia, near Romania, existing as an independent entity. The question will be asked: Do you want even more Balkanization? To this we answer: We are for the formation of large economic units. But this cannot occur against the will of the masses. If these masses want separation, we must say: Go through your experiment, you will come back to the soviet federation. However, insofar as the bourgeois government of the ruling nation prevents you from separating, we will defend you. The importance of posing the question in this way is best illustrated by the fate of the Austro-Hungarian monarchy and tsarist monarchy.

In Austria the semi-Marxists always came up with wise economic, pseudorevolutionary arguments to prove the need for retaining the oppressed nations within the framework of the Austro-Hungarian monarchy. The result: Austro-Hungary disintegrated into its component parts. In Russia the Bolsheviks always championed the right of each nation to its autonomy. As a result, Russia survived as an economic entity. This was possible only because through their long years of struggle for the right of self-determination of nations, the Bolsheviks won the confidence of the nationally oppressed popular masses, and above all, of the proletariat. I believe that the Greek and international press must devote several articles on this question. The entire problem must be thoroughly studied and a small conference held with the Bulgarian comrades, so as to work out a uniform policy.

A. This year large national revolutionary mobilizations against England occurred in Cyprus. We spoke out in defense of the population's right of self-determination and explained the need for revolutionary struggles. We took the same position with respect to the Dodecanese, which are occupied by the Italians. The organization has concerned itself with the Macedonian question for several years. The party's alliance with the Bulgarian nationalists severely undermined it. I will write about this.

Trotsky. In Cyprus and the Dodecanese it was oppressed Greeks, in Macedonia, oppressed Slavs. If Communists stand up for the oppressed Greeks, but do not support the oppressed Slavs against the

Greek oppressor, mistrust of us can only grow. If I am not mistaken, Engels said in a polemic against Bakunin: Any revolutionary who holds out one little finger to pan-Slavism is lost.

The Agrarian Question

Trotsky. What are the Archio-Marxists' slogans on the agrarian question?

A. The conference drew up a series of demands: Cancel the debts of the refugees and those of the poor peasants (debts to the National Bank, usurers, outstanding unpaid taxes). Abolish the produce taxes (on harvests and livestock).

Trotsky. It is paid according to quantity of produce, and you want to repeal this tax for poor peasants?

A. Yes. Our conference and our regional committees, moreover, put forward a series of partial demands, divided by category—wine, tobacco, and olive oil, which represent the most important products of Greek agriculture. The conference commissioned the members of the Central Committee to draft a separate report for each region. These reports are still in preparation. For some time we have had a general position on the agrarian question. However, only this year did we set very practical tasks for ourselves in this field.

We also opposed the "Agrarian Party," since a peasants' party, which would stand between or above the two principal classes, the bourgeoisie and the proletariat, isn't possible. A "neutral" Agrarian Party can only be an organ of the bourgeoisie. Many members of the Agrarian Party are former Communists who were demoralized by the policy of the official Communist Party and have since turned toward the new party, believing that it is also a revolutionary party.

Through systematic work and theoretical clarification, large sections of this party can be won to us. In certain peasant areas revolutionary sentiments can be seen. Our comrades who live in nearby towns are invited to villages to speak by peasant members of the Agrarian Party. Peasants from entire villages are called together and listen to our speakers with great sympathy. In a number of areas the peasants are actively working to distribute our newspaper. The situation is rather favorable for us, and it is not excluded that under the pressure of the peasants, who are a hundred times more to the left than the party leadership, as well as under the influence of our activity, the Agrarian Party may quickly disintegrate.

Our comrades are working out specific demands for each area that answer to the needs of the peasantry there. Moreover, in accordance with the decision of the conference, in the near future we will publish a special peasants' paper. As for the Communist Party, it labels the Agrarian Party



Leon Trotsky and Natalia Sedova in December 1932.

"agrarian fascism." The Communist Party projects forming farm workers' trade unions. We are not opposed to this idea, but it will not solve the peasant question, since the farm workers constitute a negligible percentage of the farming population and are found in only some areas. We put forward the slogan for forming associations of poor peasants.

A few more experiences: In Macedonia and Thrace the official party had a great influence over the peasant population at one time. Now, however, the party is visibly losing ground to the Agrarian Party; we have to struggle against the Agrarian Party all the more so as to win back what the Communist Party has lost. The CP publishes a fortnightly newspaper for the peasants. The Agrarian Party has two daily newspapers and one monthly organ (that is, bourgeois newspapers that have taken up support of the Agrarian Party.) In the last elections the Agrarian Party won a large vote. In some villages, where the CP is not running any candidates, and where we have workers native to the area who enjoy authority in the village, we want to run candidates in order to carry out Communist propaganda. The Agrarian Party is very heterogeneous; they try to pull in everyone without regard to their ideas. In their magazine you can find articles from totally conflicting tendencies. The leaders of the same organization write for and against socialism, for and against small property.

Another serious problem in Greece is a lack of arable land. In some areas reclamation is being carried out. The dearth of land has produced a large migration from the countryside to the towns. This includes people looking for work, artisans, merchants, as well as lumpenproletarian elements.

Trotsky. Do the agricultural workers'

trade unions already exist? And the peasants' associations?

A. No, not agricultural workers' trade unions. A few local peasants associations. (Reads from the [Archio-Marxist] magazine *Doulos* [Torch] the report of a regional committee and the struggle program advanced by the committee.)

Trotsky. The facts are very interesting and create the impression of a prerevolutionary situation. I have the impression that in the present circumstances our organization's slogans are no longer adequate. This situation requires advancing, along with limited demands, general slogans that can give a common direction to the movement. One might be workers' and peasants' control of the banks. For example, let's consider the question of remitting debts and granting credits. There are, of course, poor and rich peasants, and there must be control over whose debts are to be canceled and who is to be granted credit. There have to be organizations that can exercise this supervision—peasant committees. *Peasant associations* are semipolitical organizations that we can utilize to increase our influence. *Peasant committees* are revolutionary bodies that turn against the state one day and become revolutionary organs of state power the next. These committees correspond entirely to workers' soviets in the city. We must combine the question of debt remission and credit with the demand for control of the banks and for forming peasant committees. Peasants' control! No secret diplomacy in the granting of credit! Open the books of all banks! But since the peasants cannot understand the books, they will turn to the workers in the city and ask their help. We must understand how to crown limited and local demands with demands of national scope and give

the movement revolutionary perspectives.

The formation of the Agrarian Party is a symptom of a revolutionary crisis like the events in Bulgaria in 1924. It is true that it cannot be an independent class party. However, besides this correct theoretical evaluation, we have to have a correct policy toward this party, whose existence is now a fact. Our policy cannot be simply negative. We must initiate a sorting-out process in this party and show on the basis of the facts that it cannot be a substitute for a Communist Party, but that rather it must be replaced by a Communist Party. Our policy has already been defined by the demands we have raised. We propose common struggles on the basis of these demands. Either we will win over the revolutionary elements of this party or else unmask them in front of the peasants. The same holds true for the slogan for control of the banks and forming peasant committees.

In the elections we can also run not only local workers, but even revolutionary peasants as our candidates, asking them to embrace our demands and to commit themselves to fight for these demands. Even if peasants are members of the Agrarian Party, we can put them on our slates if they embrace our program, since the Agrarian Party is not a party but rather a collection of tendencies that must be broken up. Of course, that does not rule out the possibility that one or another peasant that we push to the fore will become corrupted after being elected and will betray us rather than be decisively won over to us. During the Duma elections the Bolsheviks again and again formed voting blocs with the Social Revolutionaries, a tactic that was severely criticized by the Mensheviks. To these criticisms, the Bolsheviks answered: Our bloc is based on the struggle for democratic demands. The liberal bourgeoisie is antidemocratic. We are prepared, along with the SRs, to clash with the liberal bourgeoisie and its Menshevik allies. The big difference between Russia and Greece is that in the latter feudalism no longer exists. However, what still exists is the *bill* presented by feudalism in the form of the debt owed by the refugees and poor peasants for the land they have occupied. The struggle to abolish this indebtedness is the struggle for the final elimination of feudalism.

* * *

A. A question about the meaning of the latest turn in Russia.

Trotsky. We have written many times that a retreat was unavoidable. The Stalinist bureaucracy proclaimed the program for thorough collectivization on the basis of a completely inadequate technical and economic foundation: It hoped to liquidate the kulaks by administrative measures. It forced the middle peasants to

enter the collective farms and to acclaim this collectivization as a magnificent success. We said that the peasants would consume their basic agricultural capital, and the crisis would inevitably spread beyond this sector. Collectivization cannot be carried through without a technological foundation and without the necessary psychological preparation. The outcome is evident: The existing grain and livestock have fallen below minimum needs. In Moscow, Petrograd, and other big cities, there are already difficulties in maintaining the supply of food. In the provinces, on the other hand, there is famine. That is true also in the peasant villages (especially there, where grain must be brought in). The petty bourgeoisie is suffering as a result, but so is the working class. The number of collectivized peasants is now dropping. Independent peasants—who previously were said not to exist—are now beginning to be protected. Individual property and the free market are being encouraged, a process of differentiation is being generated among the collective farms and even more so among independent peasants. After ruining the kulaks by administrative violence, the bureaucracy is once again giving them the opportunity to thrive. We have always proposed controlling the kulaks, trimming their claws. The kulaks cannot be eliminated all at once, but they can be regulated and cut down to size until the technical and cultural bases have been laid for collectivization on a wide scale. Until February 1928, the kulaks were encouraged. The kulaks, who comprise 5 percent of the peasantry, owned 40 percent (official figure?) of the grain supply destined for the market and finally refused to deliver grain to the cities, which resulted in the threat of famine. This is when the Stalinist bureaucracy first launched its attack against the kulaks and transformed the grain requisitioning campaign into a campaign of annihilation against the kulaks. Now, they have returned to the old position, but on a new basis. This will have the greatest consequences for the collectivization, and for the five-year plan. The distribution of goods will be regulated not only by the plan but also by the free market. How far this will go remains to be seen, since it cannot be predicted how far the retreat will go. The introduction of the NEP¹⁴ was very carefully managed, and nevertheless it touched off an elemental growth of the free market. But at that time we had the party, which attentively followed and controlled all

14. NEP was the New Economic Policy initiated in 1921 to revive the economy after the civil war, replacing the policy of "War Communism." It was adopted as a temporary measure and allowed a limited revival of internal free trade and foreign concessions alongside the nationalized and state-controlled sections of the economy. The NEP was succeeded in 1928 by forced collectivization of the land and the first five-year plan.

developments. At present, *economically speaking*, we are starting from a more advantageous position: Industry has grown, the socialist sector has become stronger. But the *political* factors are less favorable and they may get the upper hand over the economic factors: (1) The *workers* suffered greatly while industry was being built up, but they were told that this was the advent of socialism. We warned of the disillusionment that would inevitably be provoked by such phrases. Now, not only will the kulaks in the village accumulate capital but the Nepman in the city will also, and a new process of social differentiation will arise. The masses have become more critical politically and more demanding, but also more disillusioned. (2) For the *peasants* relinquishing their individual farms meant a catastrophic change in their way of living. Now a return to an independent peasant economy is starting. The peasants will say to themselves: "What they forbid yesterday, they permit today. Why then did they turn us out of our farms?" The authority of the state will be violently shaken, and, on the other hand, the class consciousness of the kulaks will be reinforced. (3) However, the most important element is the *party*. Russia is a country with a vast scattered petty-bourgeois population (110 million peasants). More than half of them are collectivized. We always predicted the inevitable differentiation and the danger of the kulakization of the collective farms; we always stressed that the collective farms represent only a transitional economic form, and that they have to be regulated. The new turn will accelerate the differentiation within the individual collective farms and among them. In order to observe all these molecular processes and sound a timely alarm, thousands and thousands of active leaders are needed. The bureaucracy and statistics cannot be substituted for this. There must be an independent revolutionary proletarian party, and this does not exist. The NEP meant continual latent class struggle. It was the task of the party to lay this bare. The party has now been displaced by the bureaucracy, which *deceives* the party and the proletariat about the situation and the tasks. In 1921 we told the party and the proletariat the absolute truth, that we had to retreat to capitalist methods; we made clear the dangers involved and warned against them. Even if we were obliged to arm the kulaks *economically*, we armed the proletariat *politically and militarily*. The party does not exist as a party now. Everything takes place in the dark. Nothing can be foreseen. Hence the great dangers. □

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El Desarrollo Desigual y Combinado en América Latina

Por George Novack

[El siguiente artículo es una respuesta al de David Romagnolo "The So-Called Law of Uneven and Combined Development" (La Llamada Ley del Desarrollo Desigual y Combinado), que apareció en el número de primavera de 1975 de *Latin American Perspectives*, revista que aparece cuatro veces al año, publicada en California por intelectuales latinoamericanistas. En la época del artículo, Romagnolo cursaba estudios de posgrado en historia en la universidad Irvine de California. El artículo de Novack apareció en el número de primavera de 1976 en la misma revista. La traducción es de *Intercontinental Press*.]

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David Romagnolo hace dos críticas fundamentales a la ley del desarrollo desigual y combinado. La primera, que al parecer no toma en cuenta el principio fundamental del materialismo histórico de que el modo de producción determina la naturaleza de una formación social. Entonces, se basa en las peculiaridades superficiales y en los rasgos excepcionales del desarrollo histórico, en vez de hacerlo en sus rasgos generales y fundamentales. La segunda, que la ley del desarrollo desigual y combinado se centra más en el intercambio que en las relaciones productivas, cayendo así en los errores de los economistas burgueses vulgares.

Ninguno de los dos planteamientos es correcto. La ley del desarrollo desigual y combinado parte de la premisa de que el modo de producción, constituido por el nivel de las fuerzas productivas y las correspondientes relaciones de producción, es el determinante que subyace en todas las estructuras sociales y todos los procesos históricos. La ley tampoco subordina las relaciones de producción a las relaciones de cambio, aunque reconoce que con el intercambio generalizado de mercancías intrínseco al capitalismo, las relaciones de cambio tienen mucha mayor importancia que en las sociedades precapitalistas, donde la compra y venta de productos es económicamente marginal.

Sin embargo, estos dos principios marxistas elementales solamente dan los puntos de partida y sirven como guías de orientación para el análisis de formaciones sociales históricamente desarrolladas en su completa concreción. Con su ayuda es necesario continuar y explicar por qué un modo de producción particular se manifiesta en formas tan diferentes y se desarrolla en grados tan dispares bajo distintas

circunstancias. ¿Cómo es que, como señaló Marx, "la misma base económica" muestra "infinitas variaciones y gradaciones de apariencia?" Esto se puede esclarecer, nos dice, "sólo por el análisis de las circunstancias dadas empíricamente." En este caso, tenemos que preguntar: ¿qué circunstancias empíricas cuentan en las variaciones y gradaciones de apariencia de los modos de producción en América Latina tras su conquista y colonización?

La ley del desarrollo desigual y combinado formula las razones generales, las causas subyacentes, del crecimiento diferenciado de un modo de producción dado en una formación social concreta. Puede crecer normalmente, como el capitalismo inglés del siglo XIX, o desarrollarse de forma incompleta y encanijada, como las relaciones feudales en las colonias británicas de América del Norte, o de forma exuberante, como la esclavitud en Brasil. La naturaleza y el nivel específico de su desarrollo dependen de las condiciones e influencias que le rodeen.

Un modo de producción no llega al mundo, o a una de sus partes continentales, completamente hecho, ni perfectamente formado; atraviesa un curso complejo de evolución desde el principio hasta el final. En su proceso de origen, expansión, desintegración y destrucción, sus relaciones con otros modos de producción de orden superior o inferior, tienen mucho que ver con el ritmo, extensión y cualidad de su propio desarrollo. Moldean sus características especiales. Estos rasgos distintivos que surgen de su desarrollo real en la vida se incorporan a la estructura de la formación social y no se pueden separar de ella, ni ser ignorados al definir o plantear su naturaleza real.

El principal problema de la teoría histórica en el llamado "debate de la dependencia" es: ¿qué causó el atraso relativo de América Latina, con todas las consecuencias predestinadoras del subdesarrollo? Colateralmente, ¿por qué las burguesías latinoamericanas han tenido un desarrollo tan débil y enano, y han jugado un papel tan limitadamente progresivo, en comparación con sus congéneres de Europa Occidental y América del Norte?

La ley del desarrollo desigual y combinado contribuye a clarificar estos problemas según las siguientes líneas. Hasta el siglo XVI, el Viejo y el Nuevo mundos, completamente separados entre sí, experimentaron caminos de desarrollo muy diferentes que les colocaron en niveles distintos. Las

potencias marítimas de Europa Occidental estaban en la transición del feudalismo al capitalismo en el momento en que los habitantes originales de las Américas todavía estaban muy por detrás de ellos. Esta inmensa disparidad en sus grados de desarrollo predeterminó el dominio de una parte sobre la otra, y conformó los destinos posteriores de América Latina desde la conquista hasta la actualidad.

Romagnolo insiste en que "el punto en que el materialismo histórico se centra es en el desarrollo interno, mientras que la ley del desarrollo desigual y combinado [lo hace] en las relaciones externas." Una dicotomía tan rígida entre las relaciones internas y externas no tiene vigencia para la era de la expansión capitalista que se desarrolló a escala mundial. Es aún más inapropiada respecto del desarrollo de la América postcolombina, cuando fuerzas externas dirigidas por los conquistadores ibéricos invadieron el continente, subyugaron y saquearon a sus habitantes, y alteraron radicalmente las anteriores relaciones sociales y económicas. La colisión de sus modos de vida y de trabajo puso un sello indeleble en toda América Latina.

Las nuevas y superiores relaciones que los portugueses y españoles introdujeron en el hemisferio occidental desde México hasta Chile no evolucionaron de forma orgánica a partir del orden social preexistente, como en Europa Occidental, donde las fuerzas burguesas ascendentes florecieron hasta el punto en que requerían una forma superior de economía social y régimen político. Por el contrario, el capital comercial penetró por diferentes canales en el Nuevo Mundo, al ritmo que sus representantes iban rompiendo las antiguas instituciones comunales y reconstruían las relaciones entre los hombres en formas hasta entonces desconocidas. Por ejemplo, las ciudades, como centros comerciales no crecieron a partir del campo, como en Europa Occidental, sino que se fundaron de forma independiente por los colonizadores comerciales bajo el patronato de la corona, y desde estas ciudades fue desde donde la naciente burguesía criolla comenzó a cambiar la vida rural.

La ley del desarrollo desigual y combinado opera con fuerza especial y se puede aplicar mucho más pertinentemente a este tipo de períodos de transición en que las antiguas condiciones están siendo arrancadas y transformadas, o deformadas, y nuevas condiciones están en su etapa de formación.

Romagnolo escribe: "La extensión de la circulación de mercancías puede impulsar el desarrollo de un modo de producción, pero no inicia un cambio en la forma de la producción social. Las contradicciones internas del modo de producción no emanan de la 'combinación fortuita de elementos,' es decir, externamente; más bien son inherentes a la forma de la producción social y caracterizan la relación esencial entre las fuerzas productivas y las relaciones sociales de producción."

Esta afirmación categórica pasa por alto el hecho de que antes de que un modo de producción pueda funcionar de acuerdo a sus leyes inmanentes, tiene que nacer. La propiedad de esclavos, las relaciones feudales y capitalistas, junto con otras instituciones, costumbres y valores de la civilización no existían en el Nuevo Mundo hasta que fueron importados de ultramar. La circulación de mercancías en el mercado mundial y la codicia de metales preciosos que impulsaron a los españoles y portugueses hacia el oeste, en primer lugar hicieron mucho más que "impulsar" la forma existente de producción social; implantaron y favorecieron todos los modos característicos de explotación de clase en Latinoamérica, excepto la industria mecanizada. Fueran esclavistas o feudales, los propietarios de minas, empresarios de plantaciones y rancheros producían y vendían mercancías para el mercado mundial. La extracción de metales preciosos por medio del trabajo forzado, promovió la formación, circulación y acumulación del capital en el extranjero.

Rosa Luxemburg planteaba en *La Acumulación del Capital*: "El capital, impulsado a apropiarse de las fuerzas productivas para propósitos de explotación, saquea todo el mundo; se procura sus medios de producción de todos los rincones de la tierra, tomándolos por la fuerza si es necesario, de todos los niveles de civilización y de todas las formas de sociedad."¹ La acumulación capitalista ha dependido en todas sus etapas en mayor o menor medida del acceso a los medios de producción y subsistencia producidos bajo condiciones precapitalistas o no capitalistas. De esta forma, anexiona formas precapitalistas de producción como tributarias de sus operaciones económicas. El azúcar brasileño jugó anteriormente el mismo papel que el algodón cultivado por esclavos en los estados del sur de los Estados Unidos, y que el trigo ruso cultivado por siervos.

En efecto, las plantaciones brasileñas, que tuvieron un crecimiento precoz como principales exportadores mundiales de azúcar, proporcionan un ejemplo impresionante de desarrollo desigual y combinado. Su predominio impuso un extremo desequi-

librio a la economía durante el período colonial.

La cosecha se cultivaba y procesaba por medio de esclavos, la forma más primitiva de trabajo de agricultura extensiva. Si bien los barones del azúcar se beneficiaban directamente del sobretrabajo de la fuerza de trabajo de que disponían, su forma de funcionamiento no era la misma que la del esclavismo clásico basado en una economía natural. Era un esclavismo comercializado que tuvo su origen y desarrollo como vástago del mercado capitalista mundial.

Aunque la plantación (fazenda) era una unidad productiva aislada y autosuficiente fuera de la economía monetaria, donde las opulentas familias terratenientes se comportaban como damas y caballeros sobre las espaldas de sus esclavos, estaba en el engranaje de la vasta maquinaria del comercio. El aprovisionamiento de trabajo no venía de los indios locales, sino, como en el Caribe, de los mercaderes africanos que comerciaban con los esclavos como mercancía.

Las refinerías de azúcar requerían una considerable inversión de capital. La materia prima de lujo se comercializaba por compañías monopolistas, se transportaba solamente en barcos portugueses, se vendía en Portugal y se cambiaba por mercancías de la metrópoli. En consecuencia, a diferencia de las ciudades españolas, los pocos y subdesarrollados centros al borde del mar eran apenas más que lugares para el embarque y desembarque de mercancías.

Esta simbiosis de la producción esclavista con el comercio internacional dio un carácter combinado a la economía brasileña. Esta fue resultado y a la vez englobó la mutua penetración de factores pertenecientes a dos especies históricas distintas: la esclavitud, que era característica de la primera etapa de la sociedad de clases, y las relaciones monetarias y de mercado que estaban surgiendo en su forma culminante, capitalista.

Desde luego, una vez que la esclavitud de los negros se estableció a gran escala (se llevaron a las colonias entre seis y ocho millones de esclavos desde finales del siglo XVI hasta principios del siglo XIX), se desarrolló de acuerdo a sus propias leyes internas. Pero este modo de producción, establecido sobre una contradicción de doble carácter, tenía un doble motor para su dinámica. Su desarrollo no sólo se regulaba por su propio momento, sino también por condiciones y fuerzas externas. La economía de exportación no se autodeterminaba, sino que se conformaba y deformaba por la unión por medio de la división social del trabajo con el sistema imperialista centralizado y tiene que ser analizada y tenida en cuenta en su conexión orgánica con la economía monetaria del mercado mundial.

Esta ligazón era evidente en la forma cíclica del comercio brasileño, los ciclos de alzas y bajas bruscas, expresión del

ascenso y decaimiento de la cosecha del azúcar y otras mercancías como maderas, metales preciosos, algodón y más tarde, caucho y café, que dependían de las fluctuaciones de la demanda extranjera en las condiciones competitivas del mercado mundial. La expansión y contracción de estas ramas de la producción han sido las responsables de su desarrollo unilateral, retrasado y dependiente.

Las distorsiones del desarrollo social y económico de América Latina bajo las presiones del mercado mundial y de la dominación por fuerzas extranjeras es una de las principales peculiaridades de su historia, de las que el continente sufre hasta la actualidad. El papel subordinado impuesto a América Latina como principal fuente de materias primas y alimentos en la división internacional del trabajo bajo el capitalismo, hizo posible que los poderes metropolitanos más avanzados explotasen y dominasen a estos pueblos, primero bajo el sistema colonial y más tarde en las formas más refinadas del capitalismo monopolista.

Esta desigualdad se manifestó, tanto en América Latina como en otras partes del mundo colonial, en la aparición y mantenimiento de un amplio espectro de formas combinadas en que relaciones precapitalistas de una clase u otra estaban fundidas con las relaciones capitalistas. De esta forma, los diferentes modos precapitalistas de producción se vieron limitados a servir las necesidades e intereses de los adinerados locales y de ultramar. En el período de transición desde la dominación hasta la maduración de su desplazamiento por otro, Romagnolo no deja lugar para la existencia de estos modos de producción mezclados, con características contradictorias, que dan un giro particular a la estructura social de un país.

Dos artículos en el mismo número de *Latin American Perspectives* describen etapas sucesivas en el proceso de combinación. El primer paso en que instituciones de orden más débil e inferior fueron sometidas a la influencia de otras más desarrolladas y poderosas se describe en el artículo de Karen Spalding² sobre la reorganización de las relaciones sociales en el Perú bajo la dominación colonial española. El *ayllu*, la antigua unidad de la comunidad incaica basada en los lazos familiares se transformó cuando la población andina fue reubicada y concentrada en pueblos controlados por representantes de las autoridades españolas. Aunque los indios retuvieron el derecho de usar la tierra, esta era propiedad legal del Estado español.

Aquí la forma tradicional de vida social basada en el parentesco con su propiedad comunal quedó subordinada a la dominación de los opresores y explotadores que

1. Rosa Luxemburg, *The Accumulation of Capital* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1964), p. 358.

2. Karen Spalding, "Hacienda-Village Relations in Andean Society to 1830," *Latin American Perspectives*, primavera de 1975, pp. 107-121.

extraían impuestos del pueblo. La antigua posesión comunal se amalgamó con la nueva propiedad del Estado en una formación servil bajo el impulso de la economía europea de intercambio. Aún más brutal fue el reparto de los indios entre los propietarios de las encomiendas que conseguían trabajo forzado de su parte.

La predominancia de las subsiguientes formas combinadas está documentada de forma excelente por Kyle Steenland en "Notes on Feudalism and Capitalism in Chile and Latin America" (Notas sobre el Feudalismo y Capitalismo en Chile y América Latina).³ Distingue cuatro etapas en el desarrollo de Chile tras la conquista: 1) la esclavización directa de la población nativa; 2) el crecimiento de relaciones de producción semif feudales; 3) la aparición de trabajo asalariado hacia el fin del siglo XIX mientras la agricultura permanecía semifeudal; 4) la dominación de las relaciones capitalistas a partir de los años treinta. En ninguna de estas etapas la economía chilena tuvo un carácter plenamente capitalista o puramente precapitalista. Era, señalaba el autor, un compuesto, una mezcla singular, de uno y otro. A la vez que la agricultura y la minería, principales fuentes de riqueza, funcionaban bajo condiciones feudales o de servidumbre, estas ramas de la economía estaban enganchadas a las relaciones comerciales capitalistas que eran responsables de su auge o decadencia, como ocurría con el azúcar brasileño. Las formas precapitalistas de trabajo se plegaban a las necesidades del mercado mundial dominado por el capitalismo mercantil.

Steenland plantea muy claramente el problema cuando escribe: "... No se puede definir como capitalista una economía que produce predominantemente para el mercado, pero donde el trabajo no es libre... Por otra parte, está claro que una economía que produce para el mercado, en la que la principal finalidad de los terratenientes y agricultores es el intercambio de mercancías; no se puede llamar feudal."⁴ La solución a esta situación contradictoria es el reconocer que durante ese período Chile era "semifeudal," dice. Es decir, en su economía aparecían mezcladas relaciones de producción precapitalistas con lazos mercantiles con el mercado local y mundial.

Esto es correcto. La economía chilena no tenía una naturaleza homogénea, sino heterogénea. De hecho, era una formación combinada en la que rasgos primitivos estaban unificados sintéticamente con otros más avanzados.

Cuando Romagnolo critica la ley del desarrollo desigual y combinado por centrarse en el cambio más que en las

relaciones de producción, no comprende el rasgo peculiar y decisivo del período colonial en América Latina—y de la era del capitalismo mercantil como tal. Bajo el sistema colonial, los países atrasados fueron explotados por sus amos de la metrópoli precisamente a través de "las relaciones externas de comercio e intercambio" que instituyeron e hicieron funcionar en su propio beneficio. El Consejo de Comercio en Londres que monopolizaba el comercio de las colonias británicas para la corona, impulsando la Guerra de Independencia en Norteamérica, tenía su contrapartida en la Casa del Comercio en Sevilla que regulaba el comercio exterior todavía más estrictamente.

Romagnolo culpa a la ley del desarrollo desigual y combinado por implicar que "el modo capitalista de explotación puede tener lugar, parecería, bajo condiciones cualesquiera de producción, fuesen capitalistas o precapitalistas." Su ironía está fuera de lugar. Habla como si la producción industrial fuese el único método de explotación accesible al capitalismo. Esto no es así. El préstamo de dinero y el capital mercantil emplean el método de explotación característico del capital sin comprometerse en el modo de producción capitalista distintivo. El trabajo asalariado es la forma fundamental de extracción de plusvalía en el capitalismo avanzado. Pero incluso bajo el capitalismo monopolista el trabajador puede ser explotado no sólo como productor, sino también como consumidor a través de los plazos de crédito del prestamista. Aquí la explotación primaria en el proceso de producción tiene un suplemento en la explotación secundaria del usurero.

Romagnolo olvida que además de la explotación directa de una clase por otra existe la dominación política, militar y cultural de una nación sobre otras—incluso sobre un continente. Estos dos tipos de explotación están inseparablemente unidos bajo el sistema colonial y su sucesor imperialista. Antes de que los capitalistas llegaran a su propio modo de producción técnica basada en la industria mecanizada, los banqueros, comerciantes y manufactureros de las potencias más avanzadas practicaban diferentes métodos de extorsión de riqueza sobre los pueblos atrasados del mundo. Marx describe estas formas y métodos en *El Capital* bajo el título de "La Llamada Acumulación Originaria."⁵

El Viejo Mundo se enriqueció a expensas del Nuevo no solamente por medio de la explotación directa a través del proceso de producción, sino también indirectamente a través de las relaciones estatales y comerciales. El globo se dividió en potencias explotadoras y países oprimidos y explotados. El mantenimiento de relaciones feudales en América Latina en las plantaciones

de exportación era indispensable tanto para la acumulación del capital internacional como para la prosperidad de los terratenientes nativos. Estas necesidades conjuntas de la clase dominante han mantenido su presa en el continente durante siglos.

Es extraño que Romagnolo niegue la aplicación de la ley del desarrollo desigual y combinado para América Latina si admite la posibilidad de la "presencia simultánea de más de un modo de producción" y dice que "la Rusia atrasada se caracterizaba por una combinación de relaciones semif feudales y capitalistas." Cuando dos tipos de relaciones económicas cualitativamente diferentes se entremezclan, como sucedía en la Rusia zarista y América Latina, constituyen una formación combinada.

Romagnolo no niega la presencia del desarrollo desigual; la desigualdad estructural es demasiado evidente. Más lejos, admite la posibilidad de formaciones combinadas. Sin embargo, se niega a dar el siguiente paso lógico poniendo juntos los dos fenómenos históricos en su correlación necesaria. Es esto lo que hace la ley del desarrollo desigual y combinado.

* * *

Hay un exceso de abstracción y una ausencia de concreción en sus críticas de la ley del desarrollo desigual y combinado. Esto no es excusable ni siquiera en la discusión de problemas teóricos y metodológicos. El método del materialismo histórico da los resultados más fructíferos, no por la constante reiteración de sus fórmulas, sino cuando estas verdades generales se aplican a las realidades concretas de la historia. El marxismo se acerca a lo particular a través de lo general, y a la vez ve lo general a través de y en sus manifestaciones concretas en los hechos.

Tanto la generalidad como la particularidad del proceso histórico real están englobadas en la ley del desarrollo desigual y combinado. Lejos de negar o refutar cualquiera de los principios del materialismo histórico, esta ley los ha ampliado y enriquecido con la explicación teórica de la riqueza de la variedad en las concretas y cambiantes expresiones de cualquier modo de producción dado. El mismo sistema económico tiene manifestaciones multiformes, no un curso uniforme de evolución. Romagnolo podría desenredarse de su visión unilateral si recurriera a esta ley para considerar el curso del desarrollo social y económico de América Latina desde el siglo XVI, en vez de confundirlo y malinterpretarlo al estilo del maoísmo. □

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3. Kyle Steenland, "Notes on Feudalism and Capitalism in Chile and Latin America," *Latin American Perspectives*, primavera de 1975, pp. 49-58.

4. *Ibid.*, p. 52.

5. Karl Marx, *El Capital*, vol. I (México: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1973), Sección VII.

Tras la Máscara 'Socialista' del MPLA

Por Ernest Harsch

[El siguiente es el primero de dos artículos que aparecieron publicados en nuestros números del 19 y 26 de julio, con los títulos "Behind the MPLA's 'Socialist' Mask," y "The New Danger of Imperialist Domination," respectivamente. La traducción es de *Intercontinental Press*.]

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En incontables comunicados, discursos y emisiones de radio, el Movimiento Popular de Libertação de Angola (MPLA) ha manifestado que intenta construir una sociedad "socialista" en Angola.

Pero el "socialismo" del MPLA se limita al campo de la retórica. Su política real nos cuenta una historia completamente distinta.

Desde el fin de la guerra civil en Angola en febrero, el MPLA ha continuado sus esfuerzos para controlar y desmovilizar a las masas. Particularmente en el área de Luanda ha intentado contener y derrotar cualquier lucha independiente de los obreros, arrestando a gran cantidad de activistas políticos y sindicales.

Al mismo tiempo, este régimen "socialista" ha invitado asiduamente a los intereses imperialistas a reasumir su explotación de la gran riqueza natural de Angola. Dos grandes compañías de petróleo y diamantes han aceptado ya la invitación del MPLA, y otros grupos relacionados con el imperialismo están peleando por conseguirse una parte.

Las acciones que ha emprendido para reprimir cualquier iniciativa independiente por parte de las masas, dejan claro que el MPLA teme cualquier amenaza para su trayectoria de acomodación con el imperialismo y para sus planes de construir un régimen neocolonial estable en Angola.

Para contener esta amenaza potencial a su dominación, el MPLA ha adoptado una política de dos caras. Hasta ahora, su principal táctica ha sido intentar encadenar al movimiento obrero a través de cuerpos sindicales y de "poder popular" directamente controlados por el MPLA, exhortando al mismo tiempo a las masas a "sacrificarse por la revolución."

El otro aspecto de la política del MPLA ha sido golpear con puño de hierro a los que no se convencen con su demagogia, o que intentan organizar luchas independientes.

'Poder Popular'

Las masivas luchas obreras que sacudieron a Angola después del golpe del 25 de

abril de 1974 en Portugal tuvieron un impacto importante en aflojar la presa de Lisboa sobre la colonia. Por primera vez, los trabajadores angoleños tenían la oportunidad de organizarse ampliamente. Formaron sindicatos, comités de trabajadores, comisiones de vecindad, y grupos de "poder popular." Aunque se establecieron en su mayor parte independientemente del control del MPLA, estos grupos en la región de Luanda generalmente buscaron dirección política en el MPLA.

En vez de apoyarse en estas luchas obreras para avanzar en la lucha por una independencia real, el MPLA, como sus rivales nacionalistas, vio este auge de las luchas como una amenaza para su propia estrecha pelea por el poder.

Después de unirse al régimen de coalición con el FNLA [Frente Nacional de Libertação de Angola], UNITA [União Nacional para Independencia Total de Angola] y los colonialistas portugueses en enero de 1975, el MPLA lanzó llamadas a los trabajadores para que parasen sus huelgas, apoyó una legislación rompehuelgas, y en febrero incluso llegó a enviar tropas contra los estibadores en huelga en Lobito.¹

Durante varios meses al principio de 1975, el MPLA se apoyó en su influencia sobre la población Mbundu de la región de Luanda para implicar a los organismos obreros y de vecindad en su lucha fraccional contra el FNLA y la UNITA. Sin embargo, hacia finales de julio, el MPLA había conseguido expulsar al FNLA y a la UNITA de Luanda y ya no necesitaba de esos grupos como armas fraccionales. Disolvió por la fuerza y desarmó a algunos de ellos, y transformó a otros en órganos burocráticamente controlados para imponer la política del MPLA a las masas. En septiembre y octubre de 1975 comenzó a detener a gran número de dirigentes de los comités obreros y de los grupos de "poder popular" que no habían mostrado el grado requerido de sometimiento a la dirección del MPLA.

Así, a finales de 1975, las distintas organizaciones independientes de masas habían sido políticamente decapitadas. Establecidas en un principio como parte de las luchas de masas desde abajo, fueron transformadas en instrumentos burocráti-

cos encargados de llevar a cabo las directrices que el MPLA daba desde arriba.

Este sistema de control de masas se institucionalizó el 5 de febrero con la adopción de la Ley de Poder Popular, que regula la elección de "comités populares" en los niveles comunal, municipal, provincial y de vecindad. Sin embargo, sólo los comités de vecindad y aldea son elegibles directamente. El resto de los cuerpos elegibles, serán nombrados por los miembros de los comités inferiores de su jurisdicción.

Es significativo que la ley no incluya ningún "comité popular" a nivel de toda la nación, ya sea elegido o de cualquier otro tipo.

Para asegurar que no se infiltren "inde-seables" en las elecciones, el MPLA impuso una serie de restricciones al derecho de votación, negándose a los simpatizantes y antiguos miembros del FNLA y UNITA, y también a todos aquellos que practiquen "racismo," "tribalismo," o "regionalismo," es decir, cualquiera que refleje los intereses particulares de los Ovimbundu, Bakongo u otros pueblos de Angola. También prohíbe que voten todos aquellos a quienes se crea culpables de "sabotaje económico" y "pereza," cargos frecuentemente lanzados contra huelguistas y activistas obreros.

Incluso con estas restricciones, el MPLA aún dudaba de realizar las elecciones. Estaban previstas para el 13 de mayo, pero se retrasaron a causa de una serie de luchas obreras que se produjeron a principios de este mes.

Los obreros industriales de Luanda y otras ciudades emprendieron huelgas y ritmos lentos para apoyar sus demandas de alzas salariales y mejores condiciones de trabajo. Las huelgas continuaron por lo menos durante dos meses. Según el *Washington Post* del 2 de julio, "el gobierno ordenó que los obreros en huelga de la única fábrica de bolsas de café volvieran al trabajo."

Según una emisión de radio de Prensa Latina el 9 de mayo fechada en Luanda, el ministro del Interior, Nito Alves "dijo que mientras la producción estuviese paralizada en la capital, el voto electoral perdería gran parte de su significado revolucionario."

El presidente Agostinho Neto también tomó muy en serio las huelgas. "No puede haber un poder político sólido o estable," dijo, "mientras las fábricas y el campo no están produciendo para la consolidación de una independencia económica real."

1. Para una descripción de las acciones antiobreras del MPLA y sus colaboradores en el régimen de coalición, ver *Angola: The Hidden History of Washington's War* por Ernest Harsch y Tony Thomas. New York: Pathfinder Press, 1976.

Según un informe de David B. Ottaway en la *Washington Post* del 24 de mayo, el MPLA también estaba preocupado "porque elementos izquierdistas de la oposición han estado utilizando los consejos como trampolín para atacar al gobierno." Dijo que las elecciones se retrasaron porque los dirigentes del MPLA "se dieron cuenta de pronto de que no habían hecho los preparativos adecuados para la selección de candidatos."

Para eliminar a cualquier disidente, el MPLA decretó que todos los candidatos para los comités de vecindad tenían que ser propuestos por una de las organizaciones obreras, de juventud o de mujeres controladas por el MPLA.

Los poderes de decisión de estos órganos de "poder popular" quedan limitados a la organización de tareas locales como la organización de mercados cooperativos en los barrios pobres, o llevar a cabo actividades educativas. Su principal función es llevar a la práctica la política de la dirección del MPLA.

Los diferentes comités obreros establecidos o tomados por el MPLA en las fábricas tienen un papel similar. En un informe del número del 28 de febrero de *Le Monde*, el corresponsal René Lefort citaba al administrador de una plantación de café describiendo el comité obrero como "un simple cuerpo consultivo." Añadió que "los poderes de la administración están intactos."

En las industrias nacionalizadas, el MPLA ha establecido comités de administración, algunos de cuyos miembros son elegidos por los trabajadores de la fábrica, y otros designados por el régimen. Como en los grupos de "poder popular," los miembros elegidos tienen que ser propuestos por el sindicato local.

La principal federación sindical de Angola es la União Nacional dos Trabalhadores de Angola (UNTA), que está controlada directamente por el MPLA. Durante la ola de huelgas que comenzó en mayo, el secretario general de la UNTA, Aristides Van-Dunen, visitó la fábrica Textang para denunciar a los huelguistas. El 13 de mayo, una delegación de la UNTA en la provincia de Cuanza Sul aprobó una resolución pidiendo al régimen que reprimiera las huelgas.

La UNTA también ha jugado un papel importante en la campaña del MPLA para imponer la aceleración de los ritmos de trabajo y jornadas más largas. Lefort informaba que "según el secretario regional del sindicato, el interés primario de los trabajadores es, en todos los casos, aumentar la producción."

Aunque el MPLA ha intentado presentar una apariencia de dominación democrática, el poder real en Angola está en el Consejo Revolucionario en el poder, y en el Buró Político de diez miembros del MPLA.

Cuidado con los 'Traidores'

Los cargos del MPLA han tratado de justificar la detención de disidentes políti-

cos y dirigentes obreros independientes acusándoles de "reaccionarios," "ultraizquierdistas," "traidores," "saboteadores," "racistas," "divisionistas" o "agentes del imperialismo."

El número del 17 de abril del *Diário de Luanda*, que está controlado por el MPLA, contenía un artículo calumniando al padre Joaquim Pinto de Andrade, dirigente de Revolta Activa² que fue encarcelado rápidamente por el MPLA. El artículo llegaba hasta calificar a Andrade de "verdadero compañero del diablo."

Según un folleto publicado por el CDAL-PA (Comité de Divulgação e Apoio à Luta do Povo Angolano) en Lisboa en marzo, muchos de los detenidos por el MPLA eran miembros o dirigentes de diversos grupos de "poder popular," comités obreros, comisiones de vecindad, organizaciones estudiantiles u otros organismos locales en Luanda y Benguela. Un dirigente de la UNTA detenido en Benguela fue acusado de intentar formar "grupos de estudio marxista-leninistas en las fábricas."

Algunos de los disidentes detenidos eran también miembros de grupos políticos clandestinos de izquierda, como la Organização Comunista de Angola (OCA) y los Comités Amílcar Cabral (CAC). A diferencia del MPLA, algunos de los grupos clandestinos se identifican con la clase obrera angoleña y han llamado al establecimiento de un gobierno obrero y campesino.

Para silenciar lo más posible a estas fuerzas de izquierda el MPLA prohibió los periódicos *Angola*, *Poder Popular* y *4 de Fevereiro*. El ex director de *Angola*, Rui Ramos, fue arrestado.

El 28 de abril, el régimen anunció el establecimiento de un Tribunal Revolucionario del Pueblo, que juzgará "los crímenes contra la revolución angoleña." Una ley

2. Revolta Activa, una tendencia disidente dentro del MPLA, actualmente disuelta.

firmada por Agostinho Neto el 3 de mayo especificaba que este tribunal también juzgaría los crímenes contra "el Estado y el MPLA." No se puede hacer apelación a los veredictos de este tribunal.

El único caso importante que este tribunal ha oído hasta ahora es el de los trece mercenarios ingleses y norteamericanos que fueron capturados en el norte de Angola en febrero. Pero, a juzgar por la campaña de calumnias del MPLA contra los disidentes presos, también puede ser que se esté preparando para llevarles ante el Tribunal Revolucionario del Pueblo, quizás bajo el cargo de ser "agentes del imperialismo" o "saboteadores."

En una declaración del 9 de abril, el ministro del Interior Nito Alves amenazó con la posible ejecución de algunos de los presos políticos. Los disidentes también podrían ser enviados a los campos de "rehabilitación" política que el MPLA ha establecido como complemento al sistema penitenciario heredado de los portugueses.

Se Fortalece el Puño de Hierro

Desde el fin de la guerra civil, el MPLA ha continuado aumentando sus fuerzas policíacas y militares.

En marzo, había 45,000 soldados en el ejército del MPLA, las Forças Armadas Populares de Libertação de Angola (FAPLA). A finales de febrero se adoptó una ley de conscripción obligatoria, estipulando que todos los angoleños entre dieciocho y treinta y cinco años debían servir durante dos años en las fuerzas armadas.

"El proyecto absorberá una parte de los seis millones de desempleados que hay en Angola, y será una forma conveniente de consolidar el apoyo al régimen," informaba Caryle Murphy en el *Sunday Times* de Londres del 29 de febrero. "El MPLA ya tiene un estrecho control político sobre sus fuerzas armadas. Cada unidad del ejército, por ejemplo, tiene un 'comite dos combatents' que une a los soldados con el movimiento políticamente."

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El control político del MPLA sobre sus propias tropas no parece ser completo, sin embargo. En mayo, el ministro de Defensa, Iko Carreira se quejaba de que había "un cierto sentimiento anarquista" y una "tendencia hacia el igualitarismo absoluto" en el seno de las fuerzas armadas. Dijo que los soldados mostraban poco respeto hacia sus superiores. Según el número del 17 de mayo del diario de Lisboa *Jornal Novo*, Carreira dijo que el MPLA se había visto obligado a reclutar elementos "lumpen," lo que había conducido a una "disminución del nivel político" entre los militares.

"Ya se ha confirmado por las mismas autoridades de Luanda que hay unidades militares fuera del control del Mando Central, que actúan por su propia cuenta en una atmósfera de total indisciplina," informaba el *Jornal Novo* del 24 de mayo. Según un comandante del MPLA, "infiltrados" en las FAPLA han provocado la inquietud entre la población de la región de Lubango.

El 21 de mayo se publicó en Luanda un plan para la reorganización de las fuerzas armadas. Fue distribuido a la prensa por el comandante Bakaloff y llamaba al Comité Central del MPLA a asumir directamente el control político sobre las fuerzas armadas. Más tarde, en el mismo día, el presidente Neto anuló el informe. No indicó ninguna oposición a él, pero dijo que se había hecho público "precipitadamente."

La principal tarea de las FAPLA en este momento parece ser mantener el control sobre las áreas de Angola que habían estado en poder de sus rivales. Junto con miles de soldados cubanos, continúan emprendiendo acciones contra las unidades guerrilleras de la UNITA, que todavía tiene apoyo entre los Ovimbundu y otros pueblos de Angola central y meridional.

En la región poblada por los Mbundu alrededor de Luanda, las principales fuerzas represivas del MPLA son la policía y las milicias. Según Carreira, el propósito de las milicias, la Organização de Defesa Popular (ODP) es "luchar contra los saboteadores, los elementos divisionistas y aquellos que intenten alterar la orientación táctica estratégica de nuestro movimiento." (Citado en el *Daily News* de Tanzania del 24 de febrero de 1976.) En mayo, Carreira añadió que la ODP era también responsable de la protección de los centros de trabajo.

Como los "comités populares," la ODP está organizada en varios niveles, desde el nivel regional hacia abajo. Los dos cargos más importantes en las unidades regionales los designa directamente el Mando Central de las FAPLA. La ODP regional designa entonces cargos similares en los niveles inferiores. Este proceso de designación continúa hasta las unidades de célula, que están compuestas de cinco personas. Las células se establecen en fábricas, agencias gubernamentales, oficinas, uni-

versidades, granjas, y otros lugares para asegurar un control eficaz sobre toda la población.

Para complementar las unidades de la ODP en las fábricas, el MPLA ha establecido Comissões de Vigilância (CV) bajo el control de la UNTA. Según el folleto del CDALPA, las CV tienen la responsabilidad de "vigilar a los obreros, aumentar la productividad e impedir la distribución de folletos y literatura revolucionarios."

El cuerpo de policía secreta encargado directamente de la represión es la Direcção de Informação e Segurança de Angola (DISA). Muchos de los disidentes encarcelados fueron arrestados por agentes de la DISA.

Los gobiernos soviético y cubano han jugado un papel esencial en la ayuda al MPLA para fortalecer sus fuerzas represivas.

Gran cantidad del equipo pesado que utilizan las FAPLA fue proporcionado por Moscú durante la guerra civil. Fuentes occidentales han estimado el valor de las armas soviéticas en alrededor de 300 millones de dólares. Durante la visita del primer ministro angoleño Lopo do Nascimento a Moscú a finales de mayo, el Kremlin acordó continuar apoyando al régimen de Luanda proporcionándole más ayuda militar.

La importancia que el MPLA le da al apoyo de Moscú quedó reflejada en la composición de la delegación que acompañó a Nascimento. Era la delegación más importante que el MPLA había enviado al extranjero hasta entonces e incluía al ministro de Defensa, al diputado jefe del Estado Mayor de las fuerzas armadas y al jefe de Información y Seguridad.

Según un informe que apareció en el

Jornal Novo del 29 de abril, la cabeza de la DISA, el comandante N'Zage, tomó un curso de "seguridad" en la Unión Soviética. Este entrenamiento soviético fue evidente en la caza de brujas del MPLA contra la izquierda. Las detenciones de miembros de los CAC y de grupos de "poder popular" en Luanda en octubre de 1975 fueron acompañadas por una típica campaña de calumnias estalinista, que retrataba a los disidentes como "partidarios de Trotsky y Bakunin."

Sin embargo, los cubanos han tenido la participación más directa en entrenar y asesorar a la policía y las fuerzas militares del MPLA. Están ayudando al MPLA a reorganizar las antiguas unidades guerrilleras de las FAPLA en un ejército convencional altamente disciplinado.

Según un informe desde Luanda de David B. Ottaway en el *Washington Post* del 26 de mayo, "Los cubanos están ayudando dentro del país en muchos terrenos al nuevo gobierno angoleño, desde el entrenamiento de un cuerpo de seguridad del Estado y una milicia civil hasta la reforma del sistema penitenciario del país." Ottaway informaba que el personal de seguridad cubano también estaba entrenando a la policía angoleña en técnicas de control de masas.

Desde el punto de vista del MPLA, el apoyo político que le dan Moscú y La Habana es una dimensión central de su ayuda. Contribuye a fortalecer la falsa pretensión del MPLA de que su política es "socialista" y le proporciona una cobertura política para sus operaciones de caza de brujas contra la izquierda angoleña.

[Próximo artículo: El Nuevo Peligro de Dominación Imperialista]

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