

Intercontinental Press

Africa

Asia

Europe

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the Americas

Vol. 14, No. 39

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October 18, 1976

75¢



Police firing on student demonstrators at Bangkok's Thammasat University October 6, as military seized

power. In four-hour bloodbath, at least 39 students were killed, hundreds more injured. See p. 1476.

Students Massacred in Thailand

The 'Mayagüez' Returns to Haunt Ford

By David Frankel

Sixteen months after the event, the Mayagüez affair has returned to the headlines.

Forty-one American servicemen and an unknown number of Cambodians were killed in May 1975 when Ford ordered the "rescue" of the Mayagüez. The ship, a cargo vessel with a crew of forty, had been seized by Cambodian forces after sailing into waters claimed by Cambodia.

Ford, still smarting over the American defeat in Indochina and eager to reassert his readiness to use military force to protect imperialist interests abroad, lost no time in ordering the marines into action. He was not even deterred by the fact that the Mayagüez and its crew had been released before the "rescue" operation began.

"In fact the lives of the crew were a small item in the White House reckoning," Peter Green pointed out at the time in the May 26, 1975, issue of *Intercontinental Press*. He labeled the Mayagüez incident "a cold-blooded provocation."

Even some capitalist commentators noted the glee with which Ford and his advisers greeted the chance to bully the new Cambodian regime. James Reston said in the May 16, 1975, *New York Times*, that "the Administration almost seems grateful for the opportunity to demonstrate that the President can act quickly despite the recent efforts by Congress to limit his authority for military action. Officials here have been bridleing over a lot of silly taunts about the American 'paper tiger' and hope the Marines have answered the charge."

Approval from both parties in Congress was virtually unanimous. Washington columnist James Wieghart gave an indication of the mood in an article in the May 16, 1975, *New York Daily News*.

As he described it, "when Ford entered the Cabinet Room yesterday to inform the assembled congressional leaders of his decision to use force to free the Mayagüez, the legislators—all veterans of similar sessions held by Presidents Johnson and Nixon during the Vietnam years—rose to their feet and applauded before Ford opened his mouth.

"They are like the goose in the barnyard honking at the rising sun, lacking memories and foresight. It is as if yesterday never happened and tomorrow will never come."

However, all that was last year. This year an election campaign is going on, and the same liberals who hailed Ford's



Herblock/Washington Post

murderous assault when it was taking place are not above using the Mayagüez incident now as ammunition against the Republican party.

A study on the Mayagüez affair commissioned by a congressional committee was

released on October 5, on the eve of Ford's debate on foreign policy with Democratic party presidential nominee Jimmy Carter. The report found that Ford was so eager to attack Cambodia that he ignored assurances from a senior Chinese diplomat that Peking was putting pressure on the Cambodians and expected the ship "to be released soon."

In general, the study said, "little weight appears to have been given to indications that the Cambodians might be working out a political solution."

Although the Mayagüez study made a big splash in the American press, the issue was almost completely ignored during the so-called Great Debate on foreign policy October 6. Carter, while criticizing Ford for not making the facts on the incident public sooner, agreed with the action. He insisted that "when the American people are endangered by the actions of a foreign country, just 40 sailors on the Mayagüez, we obviously have to move aggressively and quickly to rescue them."

Carter's reticence was most likely due to the fear that if he said too much, Ford would come back with a statement by Carter at the time of the Mayagüez affair. In any case, Carter told the audience, "... I'm reluctant to comment on the recent report—I haven't read it."

Nor did the two presidential contenders have much to say on other issues. The high point of the debate came when Ford earnestly insisted, "there is no Soviet domination of Eastern Europe and there will never be under a Ford Administration."

New York Times associate editor Max Frankel couldn't believe his ears and asked Ford if he had understood him correctly. Ford, lacking the usual assortment of aides and advisers who earn their living by keeping his foot out of his mouth, reaffirmed the statement. □

Israeli Vigilantes on the West Bank

For almost a year now, the Palestinians on the Israeli-occupied West Bank have been demonstrating for their rights. Although Israeli repression has forced temporary halts to the Palestinian protests, it has failed to break the upsurge and intimidate the Arab population into giving up its struggle.

On October 3 a new series of protests began in Hebron and spread to other West Bank towns, including Nablus, Tulkarm, Jenin, and Ramallah. These protests were particularly noteworthy because they put a spotlight on the development of Zionist vigilante groups and the increasingly prominent role of ultrarightist forces in Israeli politics.

In addition to the dozens of Palestinians beaten and arrested by Israeli occupation

troops during the October 3 protests, seven youths, all from the village of Halhoul, were shot by a Jewish civilian wearing a skullcap and riding with some companions in a pickup truck. Two of those shot were hospitalized in critical condition.

The Israeli government has said it will investigate the vigilante attacks and punish whoever was responsible for them. But the truth is that the government itself has set the stage for such murderous assaults by shooting down unarmed Palestinian protesters both inside Israel and in the occupied territories. The government's responsibility is particularly clear in relation to the ultraright fanatics of the Gush Emunim (Bloc of Believers) who provoked the latest Palestinian protests.

Gush Emunim appeals to biblical au-

thority as justification for annexing occupied Arab land and populating it with Jewish settlements. One such settlement, Kiryat Arba, has been set up by Gush Emunim outside Hebron. Although technically illegal, Kiryat Arba was granted government funds for construction.

Under the protection of the Israeli army, the racist settlers have embarked on a series of calculated provocations. When protests against the Israeli occupation took place this spring, the settlers were urged by their leader, Rabbi Moshe Levinger, to "shoot to hit" if they were stoned by Arabs. On March 17, three Palestinians from Hebron were beaten with chains and bitten by dogs after being captured by the Kiryat Arba settlers.

For the last three months, the Kiryat Arba settlers have been holding armed demonstrations in the Hebron market place. "The fact must be acknowledged," the *Jerusalem Post* admitted in an October 6 editorial, "that tension has been building up between Arab and Jew in Hebron for over a month now and that it was largely due to what Defense Minister Shimon Peres himself termed 'outright provocation' on the part of the Kiryat Arba settlers. . . ."

Of course, the Israeli regime has taken no action against the vigilantes. Gush Emunim has supporters within the Israeli cabinet itself, and it is simply carrying out the government's own policy, although in an embarrassingly frank way.

On October 6, while Hebron's 60,000 Arabs remained locked in their houses under an Israeli military curfew and loudspeakers broadcast Hebrew prayers over the town, the government staged a state funeral for Jewish religious relics allegedly damaged by Muslims protesting similar treatment accorded the Koran by Kiryat Arba settlers.

After the "burial," Levinger shouted, "Hebron is ours, Nablus is ours, Jericho is ours." Meanwhile, leaflets circulating in the crowd argued that the only solution to the problems besetting Israel was the expulsion of the Arabs.

This chauvinist frenzy is a glimpse of things to come in Israel. The task of maintaining a colonial-settler state is pushing the Zionists inexorably toward a regime as repressive as the one in South Africa. □

Six Million Strike in France

More than six million French workers joined in a twenty-four-hour strike October 7 to protest wage controls and other austerity measures recently proposed by the regime. Domestic airline service was halted, as was much of the rail system. Teachers, postal workers, newspaper employees, and large numbers of industrial workers also honored the strike call.

Mass rallies in Paris, Lyons, and Marseille were described in the October 8 *New York Times* as the biggest since the revolutionary upheaval of May 1968.

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

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Published in New York each Monday except last in December, first in January, and third and fourth weeks in August.

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

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

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

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

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

Special rates available for subscriptions to colonial and semicolonial countries.

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

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

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Bangkok Police Massacre Student Demonstrators

By Ernest Harsch

When the Thai military seized power October 6, their first move was to attempt to crush the student movement.

Thousands of students, led by the National Student Center of Thailand (NSCT), had occupied Thammasat University in Bangkok to protest the refusal of Prime Minister Seni Pramoj to expel or arrest former military dictator Thanom Kittikachorn.* Thammasat has long been the center of the Thai student movement.

The police claimed that they were fired on when they went to negotiate with the protesting students. The police then withdrew. *Washington Post* correspondent Lewis M. Simons reported in an October 6 dispatch from Bangkok that the police returned an hour later "having received clearance from Prime Minister Seni and, according to one informed source, 'Even higher.'"

What followed was a cold-blooded massacre. Units of airborne, border patrol, marine, riot, and other specialized police blanketed the campus with heavy automatic weapons fire for four hours. "At times," Simons reported, "it reached a deafening crescendo as policemen let off thousands of rounds."

One team of airborne police fired an eight-foot-long recoilless rifle, which is normally used as an antitank weapon, at a student-occupied building. Police sharpshooters armed with high-powered rifles and sniper scopes shot down individual students.

The police clearly had orders to kill. Simons quoted a photographer, who had spent four years in Vietnam, as commenting, "They were out for blood. It was the worst firefight I've ever seen."

The police were aided in their butchery by a crowd of several thousand rightists, who surrounded the university grounds. Armed with rifles, handguns, swords, and clubs, the rightists fired into the campus and attacked students trying to escape the bloodbath.

The October 7 *New York Daily News* reported that two students "were hanged by rightists, who gouged out their eyes with sticks and cut their throats. Another victim was decapitated."

According to Simons, "Two escapees were snatched and beaten to near-death before being hanged from a tree on the



THANOM KITTIKACHORN: Target of student protests.

edge of the Pramaine Grounds [next to Thammasat University]. Then they, along with two others who were badly beaten but still alive, were doused in gasoline and set aflame to the cheers and applause of the mob."

According to the official death toll, thirty-nine persons, most of them students, were killed during the siege of the university. Hundreds were wounded.

After the police gunfire finally died down, the survivors were herded onto a soccer field in the center of the campus. Simons described what followed:

Swinging rifle butts and kicking with heavy, booted feet, the police forced the male students to strip to the waist and discard their shoes, watches, eyeglasses and religious medallions. "They're Communists," explained one sweating policeman. . . .

The students were forced to crawl on their bellies to the center of the field where they were ordered to lie face down, their hands locked behind their heads. Three white-coated doctors stood by for more than two hours and watched the wounded, many of them bleeding profusely as flies buzzed around them in the broiling sun. . . .

Finally, at about 1 p.m., as a torrential monsoon cloudburst hit, the last of the students were booted onto packed buses and shunted to a police training center on the outskirts of the capital for interrogation.

On October 8, heavily armed soldiers returned to Thammasat and forced out the

last remaining students who had continued to hold out since the initial assault. According to an official announcement the same day, more than 3,000 persons, most of them students, were arrested at the university immediately after the police attack and throughout the city in the days that followed.

Although the military was not directly involved in the assault on Thammasat University, the massacre was clearly the first step in the planned coup. Within a few hours a military junta, headed by Adm. Sa-ngad Chaloryu, had seized power and ousted the civilian regime of Seni Pramoj. The bloodbath at the university was designed to eliminate the most vocal source of opposition to the restoration of direct military rule.

The Thai student movement has been a continual critic of the civilian government and of the military hierarchy and has been a powerful political force in the country for nearly three years.

In October 1973, tens of thousands of university and high-school students held protests organized by the NSCT in defiance of the military regime of Thanom Kittikachorn and Praphas Charusathien. They demanded the release of arrested student leaders and called for a new constitution. More than seventy students and youths died when troops attempted to crush the demonstrations.

The clashes ignited a massive popular upsurge in Bangkok, in which a million or more persons poured into the streets to express their hatred of the military regime. Within a few days the dictatorship was toppled, Thanom and Praphas fled the country, and a civilian regime was installed.

Although the new government still retained many officials from the old dictatorship and the military wielded considerable influence behind the scenes, the civilian regime was forced to make concessions in face of continued student mobilizations.

The students staged protests against corrupt officials, against CIA involvement in Thailand, and against a visit by Japanese Prime Minister Kakuei Tanaka to Bangkok in January 1974. They helped organize trade unions and peasant associations and actively supported strikes. In August 1975, the NSCT forced the regime to release several arrested student and peasant leaders. And in March 1976, Thai students organized mass demonstrations demanding the withdrawal of the last

*Thanom, who was ousted in October 1973 by the massive student and labor upsurge, had returned to Thailand two weeks earlier, allegedly to become a Buddhist monk.

4,000 American troops from the country. A few days later the premier ordered their withdrawal.

When the hated generals tried to come back to Thailand, the students again mobilized. Thanom attempted to return in December 1974, but was chased out after three days of demonstrations. A similar fate befell Praphas in August 1976. However, the student actions against Thanom's second effort to return were cut off by the coup.

The independent mass actions of the student groups, trade unions, and peasant associations that followed the October 1973 upsurge were a source of concern for the Thai ruling class, which did not let these mobilizations go unchecked.

Assassinations and terrorist attacks against political, labor, and peasant activists began about a year after the upsurge and reached a high point in the months preceding the coup. Dozens of persons were shot down in Bangkok and in the provinces. In February, Boonsanong Punyodyana, the general secretary of the Socialist party, became the most prominent victim of the terror squads. Two of the rightist paramilitary groups, the Red Gaurs and Navapol, have direct links with the military (see *Intercontinental Press*, March 29, 1976, p. 505).

Norman Peagam reported in the March 12 *Far Eastern Economic Review*, "According to some observers these attacks, apparently aimed at all groups which stand for social and economic reform, could be designed to contribute to an atmosphere of chaos, instability and insecurity in order to serve as a pretext for military intervention."

By mid-1976, the Thai ruling class had apparently decided that it was time for the military to intervene openly. Simons reported from Bangkok July 23, "Most Thai businessmen would welcome the law and order of a military-supported government, if not an extreme return to the type of military dictatorships that ruled the country for 35 years."

In an October 7 dispatch from Bangkok, *New York Times* reporter David A. Andelman confirmed that the coup had been carefully prepared months in advance: "Sources close to the junta said tonight that the first nine major directives the body issued had been drafted in January."

Among those directives were the abolition of the constitution, the dismissal of all government ministers, the banning of all political parties, the outlawing of all political meetings of more than five persons, and the imposition of censorship of the press. Prime Minister Seni was briefly arrested and a midnight-to-dawn curfew was imposed for one night. Police swept through newsrooms collecting "subversive" literature.

A twenty-four-year-old anti-Communist law, which provides for the death penalty by court-martial, was reimposed. According to Andelman, it is expected that the

students will be tried before military tribunals.

Trying to justify the coup, Sa-ngad declared October 6, "This is for the survival of the country and to prevent Thailand from falling into Communist imperialism." He said that "Vietnamese Communist terrorists" were involved in the student actions, and police claimed that several "Vietnamese-looking" youth were among those arrested.

In face of widespread opposition to direct military rule, the generals have apparently decided to adopt a civilian cover. Sa-ngad announced late on October 8 that King Phumiphol Aduldet had appointed Thanin Kraivichien as the new prime minister. He said that Thanin would take office within two weeks after a full cabinet had been appointed and the situation in the country had been "stabilized."

According to Andelman, in an October 9 dispatch, Thanin stressed in his first speech that the new regime's priorities included the fight against "Communism" and an end to attempts to change the country's constitutional monarchy.

Andelman reported in the October 8 *New*

York Times that it was thought that the generals "would lean far more closely to the West and particularly the United States than the ousted Government of Prime Minister Seni Pramoj. . . ."

That would not be surprising. The Thai generals were armed and trained by Washington.

During the height of the Vietnam War, more than 50,000 American troops were stationed in Thailand and many of the massive bombing raids over Vietnam, Cambodia, and Laos were launched from the seven American air bases in the country. Although these forces were withdrawn from Thailand after the collapse of the U.S.-backed regimes in South Vietnam, Cambodia, and Laos in 1975, about 270 American advisers remain in the country. The Thai military is to receive \$54.1 million in American assistance this year.

Washington did not hesitate to signal its approval of the military coup. According to the October 7 *Daily News*, "A U.S. official in Bangkok said the U.S. would work toward good relations with the coup leaders. . . ." □

\$1.3 Billion Handout to Argentine Dictator

International Banks Bail Out Videla

The International Monetary Fund has approved a \$300 million standby credit for the Argentine military junta. The credit "provides the assurance needed by private bankers in about 14 countries," who are expected to grant additional loans totaling \$1 billion, the *Wall Street Journal* reported October 6.

The biggest backers of the Videla regime are a group of twenty U.S. banks, which will provide \$500 million. This includes \$75 million from Chase Manhattan, \$55 million from Manufacturers Hanover, \$50 million each from Morgan Guaranty and Citibank, \$40 million each from Bank of America and Chemical, \$30 million from Bankers Trust, and smaller sums from other U.S. banks.

The financial arms of the smaller imperialist powers are expected to contribute their share as well. Canadian banks will provide \$66 million; British banks, \$60 million; French banks, \$60 million; West German banks, \$90 million; Spanish banks, \$35 million; Swiss banks, \$61 million; Dutch banks, \$20 million; Scandinavian banks, \$10 million; and Belgian banks, \$16 million.

In addition, a loan of \$76 million is still being negotiated with Japanese banking interests.

Since Argentina has a foreign debt of \$10 billion, the new bank loans will merely cover the interest charges and payments of principal due over the next year.

According to the *Wall Street Journal*, a

key factor in the IMF's decision to grant the \$300 million loan was that the junta is "taking steps to reduce its inflation rate from the 644.2% rate experienced in the 12 months ended in June to about 300%."

The Videla regime, to be sure, blames the inflation on excessive wage demands by Argentine workers. However, an item in a recent issue of *Adelante*, a bulletin of news and opinion published in Buenos Aires, pointed to a more plausible explanation.

Comparing three-month profits in 1975 and 1976 for the following companies, *Adelante* reported these increases: Wells, 1,500%; Alpargatas, 1,300%; Iva, 600%; Vucotextil, 1,500%; Inta, 600%; and Terrabusi, 3,200%. □

Nuclear War Inevitable?

The Stockholm International Peace Research Institute forecast October 8 that within the next nine years about thirty-five countries will be able to make atomic weapons, and that a nuclear war under those circumstances will be inevitable.

Because of differing levels of nuclear sophistication, the institute's report stated, "there will therefore arise many situations in which a successful pre-emptive strike will either be possible, or at least seem to be possible. In such a world, stable nuclear 'deterrence' as we have known it will become impossible, and war will become inevitable."

New Advances in Vietnam's Course Against Capitalism

By Fred Feldman

Vietnam, forcibly carved up for more than a century by French and American imperialism, today is politically united. The Vietnamese National Assembly formally sealed this advance on July 2 by proclaiming the Socialist Republic of Vietnam (SRV), encompassing both the Northern territory of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam (DRV) and the former "Republic of Vietnam" (South). The assembly adopted the red-and-gold star flag of the DRV as the emblem of the new government. The border between the two halves of Vietnam, maintained during the first year after liberation, has been abolished.

The organizations through which the long and costly struggle against foreign domination in the South was carried out—the National Liberation Front, the People's Liberation Army, the People's Revolutionary party, and the Provisional Revolutionary Government—have been fused with their Northern counterparts.

The National Assembly elected a government to rule the united country. Its leading figures were the most prominent members of the government of the DRV. Ton Duc Thang, president of the DRV, retains this post in the SRV, as does Premier Pham Van Dong, Defense Minister Vo Nguyen Giap, and Truong Chinh, president of the Standing Committee of the National Assembly. The key post of first secretary of the Lao Dong (Vietnam Workers) party will be held, as before, by Le Duan.

Representatives of the former Provisional Revolutionary Government occupy lesser posts in the cabinet. Nguyen Thi Binh, foreign minister of the PRG and its most prominent international representative heads the Ministry of Education. Nguyen Van Hieu, the PRG ambassador to China, is minister of culture.

Through these measures the deformed workers state that was established in North Vietnam in the years after 1954 formalized the extension of its political apparatus and control to the South. In doing so it has come face to face with a major contradiction.

In contrast to the North, the economy of the South remains capitalist in nature although it is a weak and battered capitalism. The Vietnamese rulers are thus confronted with the choice of coexisting with capitalist forces in the South or completing the social revolution in the South through the overturn of capitalist property relations and the creation of a planned economy.



Manchester Guardian

Should the Vietnamese leaders decide to coexist with a capitalist economy in the South, the recovery and growth of capitalist forces would be encouraged. Their penetration into the government and into the economy of the North would be facilitated. The ground could thus be prepared for the reactionary overthrow at some future time of all the progressive gains of the Vietnamese revolution, including the planned economy in the North.

In reality, however, Vietnam is moving toward a progressive resolution of this contradiction, despite the hesitations and class-collaborationist practices of the Stalinist leadership. After tolerating capitalist property relations in the South for more than a year, the leaders committed themselves at the July meeting of the National Assembly to "consolidating the dictatorship of the proletariat" throughout the country by speedily overturning capitalist property relations in the South.

The overthrow of capitalism in the South under the present Stalinist leadership will

confront the Southern masses with the further task of joining with the workers and peasants of the North in making an antibureaucratic political revolution.

Class-Collaborationist Program

In carrying out the political reunification of the country and initiating steps that point toward the overthrow of capitalist property relations, the Vietnamese Stalinist leaders have been compelled to move far more quickly than they counted on. Moreover, they have moved in contradiction to the program they have strenuously advocated for many years.

During the long struggle against American imperialism and its local agents, the leaders of the DRV and NLF presented reunification as a long-term goal. The objective of the armed struggle, they insisted, was the establishment of a progressive but nonsocialist regime that would accept the prospect of eventual reunification. In the interim, the coalition would forge a political and economic alliance between the two halves of the country.

This conception was closely linked to the Vietnamese leaders' objective of combining a military struggle based on the peasantry with an alliance with bourgeois forces in the cities. This strategy precluded calling for rapid reunification with the workers state in the North or mobilizing the Southern workers around anticapitalist demands.

A leader of the People's Revolutionary party of South Vietnam summed up this approach in an interview with Wilfred Burchett in 1965, which Burchett quoted in the June 11, 1975, issue of the New York radical weekly the *Guardian*:

Democracy for us means a real national, people's democracy, based on the unity of workers, peasants, intellectuals and patriotic bourgeoisie of all tendencies. We are carrying out a national-democratic revolution with the unity of all sections of the population as a basic element. We have to think of it at two levels: the present rather low level, based on an alliance between workers, peasants and the lower strata of the bourgeoisie, which we consider as a sort of people's democracy; and, on the higher level, of still broader unity which we are aiming at and which we would call a national democratic union to include the upper strata of the bourgeoisie.

Our present people's democratic alliance must approve measures acceptable to this upper strata as well. It may seem strange for outsiders to find communists fighting for the interests of the upper class, but we understand the vital necessi-

ty for national union at the highest level, *not only now during the period of struggle but for the years of postwar reconstruction as well.* [Burchett's emphasis.]

The creation of the Provisional Revolutionary Government in 1969 indicated that the NLF-DRV seriously sought bourgeois support. The PRG offered "to enter into consultation with the political forces representing the various social strata and political tendencies in South Vietnam that are for peace, independence and neutrality . . . with a view to setting up a provisional coalition government. . . ."

To smooth the way to such discussions, the PRG insisted that "industrialists and traders must enjoy freedom of enterprise." It promised "to protect the right of ownership of means of production."

This position found its corollary in the PRG's stand on reunification with the North. The PRG's immediate goal was to "reestablish normal relations between South and North Vietnam . . . to maintain economic and cultural relations according to the principle of mutual benefit and mutual help between the two zones."

Reunification, the PRG held, "will be achieved step by step, by peaceful means."

The course of the revolution diverged widely from the schema of the NLF-DRV leaders. No significant bourgeois forces could be found to enter into an alliance with the NLF. Such forces as did enter the alliance remained at the "rather low level" noted by the leader of the People's Revolutionary party quoted above.

Those among the bourgeoisie who were inclined to compromise hesitated to break with Washington. The American imperialists, determined to drown the colonial rebellion in blood, rejected all proposals for a coalition government.

No significant Vietnamese capitalist forces were ready to risk losing the protection offered by the Saigon military-police apparatus, however much they rankled at its venal brutality and its resistance to the most minimal reforms.

The Paris Accords of January 1973 did not change this situation. Despite provisions calling for a tripartite "National Council of National Reconciliation and Concord," Thieu launched massive military offensives against the liberated zones. He counted on the threat of a U.S. military invasion to prevent the DRV from coming to the aid of the beleaguered Southern fighters.

The DRV, however, did not withdraw its material aid to the Southern fighters, although it attempted for a time to shift its emphasis to domestic economic recovery. Antiwar sentiment among the American people, intensified by the Watergate revelations, barred Nixon and then Ford from further escalation of the war.

According to the June 6, 1975, issue of *Far Eastern Economic Review*, "In an off-the-record briefing in Hanoi during July [1974], newsmen from fraternal countries

were told that the Paris Peace Agreement of January 1973 had failed and the third Indochina war had begun."

The Final Months

DRV forces played an increasing role as the fighting intensified. This was owing in part to the fact that the military forces and cadres of the NLF, while retaining wide support in the countryside, had suffered heavy casualties as a result of the 1968 and 1972 offensives and the CIA's "Phoenix" assassination program.

The recently published account by General Van Tien Dung, the DRV's army chief of staff, provides valuable information about the last months of the war. According to Dung, the decision to launch an offensive was made at the beginning of 1975.

An initial campaign that year, consisting heavily of surprise attacks, was to be followed by an all-out offensive aimed at military victory in 1976.

To the surprise of the rebel forces, the first assaults led to the disintegration of Thieu's army. Faced with the opportunity presented by the Saigon army's collapse, the Vietnamese leaders decided to bring the long war to an end on their own terms. Tens of thousands of DRV troops poured across the border to aid in the liberation of Kontum, Hue, Danang, and other cities.

Down to the last possible moment, the NLF-DRV stance left the door open for governmental alliances with bourgeois leaders who would accept the changed relationship of forces. The bourgeoisie preferred to cling to Thieu's crumbling apparatus.

Duong Van Minh, the supposedly neutralist general who took office in the last days of the old regime, called upon his troops to hold their ground against the NLF-DRV forces as he sought to rally the dictatorship's cops and bureaucrats in Saigon. Minh surrendered only when it became clear that the liberation fighters were prepared to storm Saigon.

The DRV and NLF won a sweeping military victory without achieving their long-standing political objective of an alliance with a "progressive" or "patriotic" sector of the Vietnamese bourgeoisie. As the old regime was swept away, many Vietnamese capitalists and bourgeois politicians went into exile, while others sat tight.

Political and military power after April 30, 1975, was wholly in the hands of the Stalinist Lao Dong party, which immediately absorbed the Southern formation, the People's Revolutionary party. Its only allies in the NLF were some petty-bourgeois sympathizers of the Lao Dong. In the eyes of all sectors of the Vietnamese bourgeoisie, the deep roots of the NLF in a massive peasant upheaval and its intimate ties with the workers state in the North had ruled it out as a partner in a viable class-collaborationist regime, despite the

offers made by the Stalinist leaders.

There can be no doubt that the DRV and NLF leaders, on taking political power in South Vietnam, confronted grave economic and social problems in both parts of the country. These conditions could not be quickly overcome without massive infusions of economic and technical assistance from abroad.

A Devastated Country

Millions of tons of U.S. bombs had pounded the rural areas of South Vietnam and virtually the entire DRV. Agriculture had been disrupted. From a significant exporter of rice, South Vietnam had been transformed into an importer.

Today the restoration of agriculture—undoubtedly the first priority for the new regime—requires the painstaking work of filling and replanting twenty-six million bomb craters. Vietnamese still lose their lives digging up, dismantling, and deactivating thousands of unexploded bombs and artillery shells that litter the countryside.

Millions of peasants were forced from the rural areas into the cities by U.S. bombing and search-and-destroy expeditions. In other areas, particularly where the NLF had strong support, the population lived in tunnels for a decade. Traveling through these shattered regions, Jean Lacouture noted the "pale troglodyte" complexion of the inhabitants, many of whom were regularly experiencing sunlight for the first time in years.

The cities, swollen with refugees from the countryside and occupied by foreign military forces, suffered profound distortion of their economic life. Hundreds of thousands of persons were forced to make their living providing services for the Saigon bureaucracy or the American occupiers.

The new authorities made energetic efforts to return refugees to their villages or to settle them in "new economic zones," as the bombed-out and depopulated areas of the countryside are called.

About 1.5 million persons have returned to the countryside thus far. In exchange for the harsh conditions of life and grueling work that await them, the government has offered them ownership of small plots of land.

The American occupation not only rained destruction on the land of an already impoverished people, but left a legacy of disease as well. Malaria as well as instances of bubonic plague have been reported. In the cities, venereal disease afflicts a sizable percentage of the population. Antibiotics and other medicines are in short supply and doctors are few.

Throughout the nation, hundreds of thousands of crippled and maimed civilians and war veterans urgently need assistance. Tens of thousands of orphans must be provided for.

Many of these problems worsened in the

aftermath of the fall of the puppet regime. Economic activity came to a standstill as factories shut down. Some were closed down by their owners as they fled Vietnam; others were processing plants that required raw materials from the United States and other countries. The embargo on trade imposed by Washington after the liberation has helped to block the restoration of production in some of these factories. With the collapse of the Saigon army and bureaucracy, unemployment in the South immediately rose from one million to 3.5 million.

Less attention has been paid to the economic impact of the war on the North. While social dislocation was less severe than in the South because of the revolutionary spirit of the people and the advantages of a planned economy, the economic development and the living standards of the population were hard hit. The cities of the South were largely off limits to American bombers (except for brief periods during the 1968 and 1972 NLF offensives), while the cities of the DRV were primary targets. Except for Hanoi and Haiphong, the urban centers of the North were bombed to the ground.

In the February 13, 1976, *Far Eastern Economic Review*, Nayan Chanda, an Indian journalist, wrote:

The price Hanoi has paid for its political and military victory is economic regression—war has retarded the economic calendar by almost a decade. In 1973, when war ended in the North, production of major sectors of the economy stood at the level of 1965—the year the US began bombing North Vietnam; nearly 70% of the medium and heavy industries had been damaged or destroyed; hundreds of thousands had been rendered homeless; roads, bridges, and railway lines were in a shambles; and the area under cultivation had dropped below the level of 1965. Meanwhile, population had continued to grow, adding 600,000 new mouths to feed every year.

Even the most basic consumer goods are scarce in the North. During last year's unusually bitter winter, cases were reported of persons who froze to death in Hanoi for want of warm clothing.

If Vietnam is to make rapid progress in repairing war damage and constructing a prosperous economy, considerable aid from abroad is essential. The other workers states, which measured out minimal military aid during the U.S. aggression, are not doing much better today in supplying economic assistance.

This grave economic and social situation confronted the new leaders with massive and complex tasks. On the one hand, South Vietnam urgently needed a planned economy to eliminate unemployment, restore production, assure the distribution of basic necessities, and take the initial steps toward industrialization.

At the same time, they had to urgently seek foreign assistance. Here the vast reserve of international support won by the Vietnamese people through their heroic struggle against imperialism provides a

powerful lever for prying assistance out of both the capitalist states and Vietnam's tight-fisted bureaucratic allies.

Thus far, the Lao Dong leadership has sought to solve these problems through methods in line with their deeply rooted Stalinist outlook.

With the fall of the Saigon regime, it was well within the power of the Lao Dong party leaders to unify the country on the governmental level and to mobilize the Southern masses in undertaking a profound social transformation.

From a military point of view, the country was already united, possessing a single army with a single military command. In the first weeks after liberation, the South was governed by this command in the form of the Military Management Committee headed by a DRV general, Tran Van Tra.

The trend toward rapid reunification was strengthened by the tight administrative bonds that were created between the two zones. The South suffered from a severe lack of trained administrators and political cadres. The DRV sent tens of thousands of *can bos* (professional administrators) to the South to take on governmental tasks.

Despite the logic of the events, the Vietnamese Stalinist leaders rejected swift reunification and opposed completing the social revolution in the South through the overturn of capitalist property relations. Instead they attempted to implement the class-collaborationist program of the Provisional Revolutionary Government.

"As for actual reunification between the North and the South," one Southern official told UPI correspondent Alan Dawson May 14, 1975, "it might take years. . . . Our brothers in the North realize we cannot have a regime like that of the North immediately."

Dawson reported May 30, 1975, that North and South Vietnamese officials had concluded that reunification was at least five years away.

In the August 1, 1975, *Far Eastern Economic Review*, Malcolm Salmon quoted a formula "much in vogue" to describe this anomalous situation: "Vietnam has one Party, one army and two governments."

The military victory of the rebel forces in the absence of capitalist allies undermined the reason for existence of the PRG, which was designed precisely as a magnet for bourgeois groupings. Nonetheless the Provisional Revolutionary Government took office in Saigon on June 6, 1975.

Although the Hanoi leaders remained the ultimate authority, the decision to formally turn power over to the PRG amounted to an effort to preserve the fiction of a coalition government designed to protect the property of the remaining capitalists for the time being. It meant an indefinite postponement of the establishment of a planned economy.

A policy decision had been made not

only to preserve two governments in the North and South, but two contradictory social systems as well.

In the September 12, 1975, *Far Eastern Economic Review*, Chanda presented evidence that the class-collaborationist perspective of 1965 was being upheld under the new conditions:

(During the National Liberation Front [NLF] congress in Saigon in late July, an effort was made to emphasize the broad-based nature of the southern regime. An appeal was made to "friends in the bourgeois, commercial, and industrial circles" to unite with the workers to promote [the] people's interests and "to ensure at the same time their legitimate interests.")

Some Western observers and journalists attributed the decision to postpone a full-scale social revolution in the South to fear of the supposed anticommunism of the Southern urban masses. Lao Dong officials have encouraged that belief.

An editorial in an April 1976 issue of the party journal *Hoc Tap* defended the policy of postponing reunification by asserting that "the population in several regions has been kept blind for many years." A year before, in May 1975, an official had sounded the same theme, telling UPI correspondent Dawson that "the Saigoneses have been spoiled by the French and Americans for decades."

Attitude of Workers and Students

In reality the liberation forces were eagerly welcomed by important parts of the populace of Saigon and other cities—particularly in the working-class districts and the universities. This initial sympathy broadened out rapidly as it became evident that the scare stories about an inevitable bloodbath were anticommunist fabrications. Because of the depth of Vietnamese nationalism and the tragic consequences of the division of the country, support for reunification was, if anything, even wider than sympathy for the new government.

In the hours immediately preceding the liberation of Saigon and in the days following it, many factories were abandoned by their owners. Workers, usually under the leadership of NLF cadres, in many cases occupied these factories to prevent the destruction of property and to restore production where possible. Committees of these workers played an important role in the first days in providing a link between the new regime, with its weak organization in the cities, and the urban population.

The stance taken by the Vietnamese leaders and by rank-and-file workers on the future of Vietnamese capitalism has been vividly described in the book *Giai Phong! The Fall and Liberation of Saigon*, by Tiziano Terzani, an Italian journalist who is highly sympathetic to the Vietnamese revolution. Terzani writes:

In the first days the situation in the factories of Saigon was still confused. A declaration by

the new authorities had assured owners that "manufacturers and dealers will have their goods safeguarded and will be able to continue activities profitable to the national economy and to the life of the population." But in some establishments the workers had announced a takeover, and in some cases had even held the first people's trials against the bosses.

Other factories, like the one that produced "eagle" batteries and in which Thieu's wife had been a shareholder, had been seized by revolutionary management committees of workers and employees, after the owners had fled with the Americans.

Technically speaking, and in accordance with a formula approved by the military authorities, this meant "taking charge until the return of the legitimate owners." But since the owners would never return, it was an early form of nationalization.

Something similar had also occurred in some small factories operating with mixed Chinese-Vietnamese capital.

In many other cases, however, the government resisted workers' demands for the expropriation of the capitalists. Terzani continues:

The problem of maintaining foreign ownership and keeping foreign technicians in the factories, at least for a certain period, was felt strongly by the cadres in the center on Le Van Duyet Street [headquarters of the government-sponsored trade-union federation]. In their discussions with workers' committees, which often put forward radical and maximalist positions, they advised prudence and caution.

"First of all, it's important to resume production," they repeated, and this watchword was printed in large capital letters in *Saigon Giai Phong* [the daily established by the Military Management Committee].

The class-collaborationist views of Nguyen Nam Loc, a member of the Executive Committee of the official trade-union federation, were also quoted by Terzani:

When a worker in the course of a discussion asked why the bosses shouldn't be expropriated immediately, Loc replied:

"Now's not the moment. Just now it's a question of reeducating the owners. We must make them understand that their profits come from the workers and should be distributed more fairly. We want to encourage enterprise, not discourage it. That's important at this moment so as to consolidate the people's power."

The policy of preserving capitalism for a time in South Vietnam was not justified by the supposed conservatism of the Saigon masses. On the contrary, the course taken by the Lao Dong party may have been motivated in part by fear of the initiatives these workers might undertake, which might go far beyond the goals of the Stalinists. This fear may have been especially strong in the first months of the regime, when the bureaucratic apparatus in the South was only beginning to be organized and the masses were caught up in the excitement of victory.

The policy of upholding and fostering capitalism held sway throughout the first year of the new regime, despite the

shattered condition of Vietnamese capitalism. French business leaders were advised, according to the June 6, 1975, *Far Eastern*



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Economic Review, that "some French firms would be asked to stay on indefinitely. Heading the PRG list was the Michelin and other rubber plantations in Dau Tieng and Tay Ninh provinces."

The results of this policy in the Son My Tay district on the outskirts of Saigon were described in an article in the April 25, 1976, *New York Times Magazine*:

[Son My Tay] has a score of industrial plants, including four cotton mills, a sugar refinery, a producer of native drugs and an ice-making factory, and some small—mostly family-run—food stores, carpenter shops, repair shops and the like. . . . Except for one plant, all the industries in the district were privately owned under the former regime, and still are.

The pace of land reform conformed to this approach. Chanda wrote in the June 11, 1976, *Far Eastern Economic Review*:

. . . officials in the south insist that except in the case of "traitorous landlords," no excess land had been expropriated. Asked about Ba Kim, one of the few landlords in Nhi Qui village in the Mekong Delta, the local authority replied that he still owned his land but received much less rent from the peasants. . . .

In contrast with the Mekong Delta, where landlessness has not been a problem, the coastal provinces of Binh Dinh and Quang Ngai (now merged and renamed Ngai Binh) have undergone far-reaching land reform. . . .

In the April 30, 1976, issue of the *Washington Post*, Chanda drew a conclusion that has been echoed by virtually every journalist who has observed the South's economic course since liberation:

"Partly as a result of the gradualist approach, partly because of a serious lack of trained managers, it is still the market forces that dominate the economy."

Chanda predicted that this situation could not continue indefinitely: "The present striking contradiction between the ideals of socialism set for the whole country and the continued if subdued existence of the old social-economic structure must be viewed as a passing phase."

Offer 'Peaceful Coexistence' In Return for Economic Aid

In their search for desperately needed assistance, the new rulers of Vietnam have offered "peaceful coexistence" to the United States and its clients in the region. In Stalinist parlance, this includes political support to counterrevolutionary governments.

In the past, this treacherous policy led the DRV and NLF leaders to support the Bandaranaike regime's sweeping repressions of radical youth in 1971, the bourgeois Armed Forces Movement government in Portugal, and other regimes that voiced verbal sympathy with the struggle for freedom in South Vietnam.

The regime's policy toward the United States was enunciated by Pham Van Dong in Hanoi on June 3, 1975, three days before the PRG was officially placed in power in Saigon.

Addressing the opening session of the DRV's National Assembly, the premier demanded that Washington abide by provisions of the Paris Accords (backed by private promises from President Nixon) obliging the United States to contribute to Vietnam's reconstruction. Dong continued:

On this basis, and on the principle of equality and mutual benefit, the Democratic Republic of (North) Vietnam government will normalize its relations with the United States in the spirit of Article 22 of the Paris agreement on Vietnam and will settle the remaining problems with the United States. . . .

We are ready to establish and develop relations in all fields with all other countries throughout the world . . . on the basis of mutual respect for each other's independence and sovereignty and mutual benefit, and peaceful coexistence.

The State Department rejected this overture, cynically describing as "ironic" the appeal for aid from a nation the American imperialists had tried to destroy. Later, Kissinger modified this stance slightly, holding that Washington's response would depend on Vietnam's "conduct" toward imperialism and its allies in Southeast Asia. In the meantime, Washington continued to deny diplomatic recognition to the new government and to bar Vietnam from the United Nations.

The Vietnamese Stalinists clearly signaled the advantages of "peaceful coexistence" when Hanoi hailed Indian President Indira Gandhi's reactionary coup in 1975.

During the first months after taking

power, the Vietnamese leaders demanded that Thailand and other neighboring capitalist states eliminate U.S. military bases that could be used against Vietnam.

Hanoi has now established diplomatic relations with the Philippines and Malaya, while relations with Singapore and Thailand have thawed somewhat.

Far Eastern Economic Review correspondent Chanda wrote in the July 23 issue:

... Hanoi has shown pragmatism in modifying its earlier stand of "no relations until American bases are withdrawn" to the tolerance of bases if they are not directed against Vietnam (it was on this basis that it established diplomatic relations with the Philippines).

Chanda noted the "relief in the Southeast Asian capitals that Hanoi has stopped its verbal attacks on ASEAN [Association of Southeast Asian Nations], and the 'neo-colonial' regimes in the region and has instead expressed interest in developing meaningful cooperation. . . ."

In a further concession to the conditions set by Kissinger, the Vietnamese delegation to the conference of nonaligned nations in August 1976 adopted a restrained tone toward the United States. While these moves do not yet seem to have changed Washington's stance, they moved the editors of the *New York Times* to state September 4:

It might be argued that Vietnam's refreshingly independent, moderately pro-American posture at last month's Third World meetings in Colombo, where rabid America-baiting seemed the favorite parlor game, deserves recognition and encouragement.

The social policy adopted by the victors in Vietnam is consistent with their attempt to achieve "peaceful coexistence" in the international field. By delaying the overthrow of capitalism in the South for as long as possible, the Vietnamese leadership signaled willingness to coexist with capitalism elsewhere. In addition, they may have hoped that protection of capitalist interests would reassure potential foreign investors on the determination of the new leaders to protect future investments.

In describing the perspective for South Vietnam in a major speech on May 15, 1975, Le Duan projected the creation of "a fine national democratic regime, a prosperous national democratic economy" in the South.

This projection was in line with the theory of a two-stage revolution long advocated by the Vietnamese Stalinists. The theory calls for a lengthy period of "national democratic" development guided by a coalition government, a regime that is supposedly suspended between capitalism and the dictatorship of the proletariat. Events in Vietnam have again exposed this class-collaborationist line.

The "stage" of "prosperous national democratic economy" in Vietnam has proved to be a period of stagnation for the

economy, particularly in the cities. About 3.5 million persons out of a population of twenty-one million remain unemployed. The scope of unemployment makes it impossible for the government to effectively combat such evils as crime and prostitution.

Although rationing has prevented starvation, the standard of living in the cities has declined under the impact of unemployment and inflation. The prices of rice, fuel, and other commodities have risen sharply. Businessmen attempted to squeeze maximum profits from the difficult situation through black-market activities, currency manipulation, counterfeiting, and hoarding.

As the economic situation worsened and popular discontent grew, the new government took measures against the most hated sectors of the capitalists. The intense pressures that impelled the leaders to take these anticapitalist steps were described by PRG Prime Minister Huynh Tan Phat in an interview with Wilfred Burchett published in the October 10, 1975, *Far Eastern Economic Review*.

We have plenty of difficulties and our enemies have exploited these to sow dissension and to direct discontent against us over prices and food shortages. We have to admit that we have no real organisation to run economic affairs—nor did the puppet regime have such an organisation. . . .

Everything was in their [the compradors'] hands. They disrupted the markets, artificially created shortages, and sent prices spiralling upwards and there was little we could do about it. They controlled everything from the purchase, transport and distribution of virtually all commodities. . . . Obviously, it was in the interests of the compradors to see our regime fail and probably they even dreamed of the possibility of it being replaced by a reactionary regime. . . .

On August 30 all banks except the government-owned National Bank were shut down. A new currency was established soon afterward.

On September 11, 1975, Phat issued a fourteen-point program aimed at "compradore capitalists who have monopolised and illegally hoarded goods and disrupted the markets." Armed security forces raided the homes of a score of the wealthiest families in the Cholon district of Saigon, and seized substantial hidden stores of goods. The property of these "compradors" was nationalized.

Popular Backing for Anticapitalist Measures

The enthusiasm aroused by such measures indicated that the Saigon masses were eager for anticapitalist measures aimed at getting the stalled economy moving. Wilfred Burchett wrote in the October 17, 1975, *Far Eastern Economic Review*:

By the time many people were on their way to work, workers, businessmen, housewives, and others, paraded through the streets under

banners demanding punishment for hoarders and profiteers, a clean-up of the marketing system, and price controls. One big procession of some 8,000, composed of delegates from most of the trade unions, marched through the central market area, shouting slogans while merchants peered cautiously from behind their shop-windows.

Other groups, obviously from the poorer parts of the city, invaded the exclusive shopping centre of what used to be known as the European area. . . . Among the most militant of the demonstrators were Chinese workers and businessmen in the heart of Cholon—the section of Saigon where about half of South Vietnam's 1 million Chinese live.

General Ma Chi Tho, deputy commander of the Military Management Committee (which continued to function after the PRG assumed power), attempted to relieve fears that these measures meant the end of capitalism in the South. Burchett reported:

He said there was a clear distinction between compradore capitalists who had always served foreign interests and "national" capitalists who had suffered at the hands of the compradors and foreign interests. The latter would have an important role to play in the economic reconstruction of the country, but the principal role would be played by the State.

In the aftermath of this crisis, the Political Consultative Conference on National Reunification was held in Saigon in November 1975. This conference called for elections to a single National Assembly for the entire country to be held in April 1976, a big step toward full reunification.

The "anticompradore campaign" further weakened the capitalists. There was no fundamental change in economic policy, however, although Troung Chinh and others spoke about the importance of moving more speedily toward socialism. Despite the economic reforms of September 1975 and the accelerated steps toward reunification, the economy remained in deep trouble. Chanda, writing in the April 30, 1976, *Washington Post*, reported:

Despite some tough measures against big-business operators of Cholon . . . many of the business community have apparently survived the currency reform last September by quickly dispersing their holdings. Nor has it been possible to unearth their hidden stocks of goods.

After an initial lull of a few months, Cholon is again doing a brisk business. Hoarding and blackmarketing, combined with a general shortage of goods this country has imported in the past, have caused prices to rise. Saigon's industry, which depended heavily on imported raw materials, is now in the doldrums. . . .

Richard Nations, writing from Bangkok in the August 24, 1976, *Financial Times* of London, asserted:

Shortages of essential goods are chronic. The unemployed squeeze a living by queueing at ration shops for hours and then selling their quotas on the open market where prices are much higher than the controlled ones. Antibiotics are almost non-existent except in the burgeoning "under-the-counter" sector.

A black market thrives in dollars at ten times the official exchange rate and diamonds at twice

world market prices. The rich continue to live comfortably, if only through dis-investment.

To make matters worse, Vietnam suffered a setback in agricultural production this year as drought blighted the spring and summer crops. To assure an adequate water supply for the land and sufficient food for the cities, the authorities are attempting to organize the peasants into "work-exchange" teams, an early stage in the development of cooperatives.

Despite the drought, Vietnam has made impressive strides toward the restoration of agriculture, although this promises to be a long and difficult process. Everywhere bridges, canals, and irrigation works are being repaired, land is being reclaimed, and new roads built.

Policy Shift Toward a Planned Economy

The first steps toward the reorganization of agricultural production on a cooperative basis increased the pressure on the government to move toward a more thoroughgoing land reform and to establish planned industrial production in the cities. The social tensions generated by widespread unemployment in the cities also press the leaders in this direction.

The possibilities of long-term cooperation with the remaining capitalists were dealt a blow when a small group of Catholics seized a church—apparently in sympathy with right-wing elements who have been trying to keep a grip on the church apparatus—and fought a gun battle with security forces in Saigon on February 13, 1976. Although they were immediately repudiated by the official church hierarchy, the incident was a warning that there might still be procapitalist forces, however weak, who were ready to take advantage of the continuing social dislocation.

Vietnam's appeals for foreign aid have had some success, but this has not ended the crisis in the unplanned urban economy. Japanese, French, and other capitalists have evinced interest in participating in the development of Vietnam's off-shore oil resources. However, massive foreign investment does not seem to be in the offing. South Vietnam's isolated, disorganized, and stagnant capitalist economy—closely bound to the nationalized and planned economy in the North—offers neither the stability nor the profitability that capitalist investors seek.

Signs of a sharp new turn in economic policy began to appear in May. Vo Van Kiet, chairman of the Saigon People's Revolutionary Committee, sought to assure worried city dwellers that a sweeping attack on unemployment would soon be launched. A Saigon radio broadcast reported in the May 21, 1976, *New York Times* quoted him as saying:

To root out the unemployment problem and to turn Saigon into a productive city, we need a ring of industrial and agricultural zones around

Saigon. To make this a reality, we need two million workers from the Saigon area.

These workers will be employed in factories, agricultural areas, power stations, water works, sanitation and communications centers and so on.

An undertaking of this scope could hardly be carried out if South Vietnam's economy were to remain capitalist.

During the June 24-July 3, 1976, meeting



LE DUAN

of the National Assembly, which formally completed the administrative reunification of the country and adopted a five-year economic plan, Le Duan announced:

In the south we must immediately abolish the comprador bourgeoisie and the remnants of the feudal landlord classes, undertake the socialist transformation of private capitalist industry and commerce, agriculture, handicraft and small trade through appropriate measures and steps, combine transformation with building in order actively to steer the economy of the south into the orbit of socialism, and integrate the economies of both zones in a single system of large-scale socialist production.

Turning Point for Vietnam

Such a policy would represent a turning point for the Vietnamese revolution, the abolition of the primacy of capitalism in the social and economic life of the Southern masses. It would mark a new qualitative advance, following upon the expulsion of the capitalists from political power on April 30, 1975.

To accomplish changes of this scope, the regime will have to mobilize the Vietnamese workers and poor peasants on an even larger scale than was done during the campaign against the "compradores" in September 1975. Only the working class is

capable of taking command away from the capitalists in the factories, counteracting their resistance, demoralizing their remaining followers, and providing a popular base for a new social order.

For this reason even the most bureaucratic and antipopular Stalinist regimes, such as those established by the Red Army in Eastern Europe after World War II, have had to rely to some degree on workers' mobilizations in overturning capitalist property relations.

This presents problems for the Lao Dong party leaders, however, for their regime in the North rests on the exclusion of the workers from political power. Consciously modeling their political structure on the bureaucratic regimes in the Soviet Union and China, the Vietnamese leaders have sought to protect the privileged position of the ruling bureaucratic caste. The Stalinist leaders, compelled by circumstances to move toward carrying out a social overturn in the South, fear that the workers will not accept bureaucratic control in doing away with capitalism, but may challenge the supremacy of the bureaucracy itself. This fear contributes to their delays and hesitations.

Although the urban working class of South Vietnam was not directly involved in the military confrontations that finally brought the neocolonialist regime down, it is not without a militant tradition of its own. From 1963, when the masses in Saigon and elsewhere staged demonstrations that helped topple Diem, no regime has been able to firmly establish its totalitarian control over the urban masses, despite the brutal repression carried out by Thieu and his predecessors.

Strikes, including general strikes, and workers demonstrations have taken place. Students, Buddhists, Catholics, and war veterans protested the corruption and injustices of the regime. Many political tendencies existed in the underground and the tradition and ideas left by Trotskyists like Ta Thu Thau were not without influence. Having fought so long, the masses may prove resistant to bowing their necks to the bureaucracy's yoke.

One indication of such resistance is the widespread criticism of the highhandedness and, in some instances, corruption of the bureaucrats. Some of these complaints have found their way into the Saigon press. In response to these charges, the government has launched an "antibureaucratic" publicity campaign denouncing the derelictions of lower-ranking officials. This campaign has been reflected in the North as well. By turning lower-ranking and inexperienced officials into scapegoats, the Lao Dong party leaders hope to deflect criticism from the dictatorial command exercised by the tops and from the bureaucratic system of rule as a whole.

Mobilizations against the remnants of Southern capitalism could undermine the stability of the Lao Dong party's power base in the North, where the regime has

confronted growing discontent with the slow pace of economic advance.

Political considerations of this type may have motivated the "East European observer" who told Chanda that the Vietnamese leadership's "pragmatic" policy in the South may have "averted a possible Budapest." The carrying out of the overturn of capitalism in the South is closely intertwined with the tasks of the political revolution in the North.

Fear of Workers Democracy

The Vietnamese Stalinist leaders have not carried out sweeping repressions in the South thus far. Their actions, however, have been consistent with their deep and long-standing antagonism to workers democracy. They have betrayed no inclination to give the masses a decisive voice or, indeed, any voice at all in the shaping of the policies that guide the regime.

The local committees established in May 1975 with the fall of the Saigon government are closely controlled by cadres of the Lao Dong party and its fronts. These organizations provide the Lao Dong with a mass base for carrying out its policies or for use against recalcitrant bourgeois elements, but they neither debate nor decide political, economic, and social policy.

The trade unions perform similar functions. According to Father Tu, an organizer of the Trade Union Federation of Liberation, the federation's task "will be to keep watch over the life of the workers, to forge a bond with all levels of government." (Quoted in Terzani's *Giai Phong!*)

All political parties that existed under the old regime, including the oppositional parties of the "third force," have been abolished. The Military Management Committee ordered all former members of these parties to "register their names and turn over any weapons, documents and all properties, including transmission equipment. . . ."

The new rulers have made no provision for political tendencies to exercise their right to form parties that support the revolution while criticizing or opposing the policies of the Lao Dong party.

The elections held April 25 for the National Assembly were another signal of the Lao Dong party leadership's unwillingness to concede a decisive voice to the masses. Individual electoral campaigning was barred. The army newspaper *Quan Doi Nhan Dan* declared, "Our National Assembly is a unified bloc that will have absolutely no factions representing private or regional interests, no conflicting viewpoints or opposition organisations."

On some occasions, the antidemocratic policies of the regime have met with unexpected opposition. An instance of this was the response to a May 15, 1975, order by the Office of Information and Culture in Saigon barring the circulation, sale, and lending of all publications printed during

the American occupation and under the puppet regime. Student supporters of the government ransacked libraries and private homes in search of materials that fell under the ban. Prohibited books were publicly burnt in bonfires. At this point, Tiziano Terzani reports in *Giai Phong!*, "the population began to protest."

The government then made a modest retreat, issuing a new order that permitted scientific and technical books and classical foreign works "that are not counterrevolutionary, except publications of an existentialist or corrupting nature." The new law permitted "history books about our country that do not contain falsehoods about the Revolution."

Instead of completely eliminating disapproved literature, however, the government's edict has created a sizable illegal market for it. Max Austerlitz wrote in the April 25, 1976, *New York Times Magazine*:

The old bookshops have closed, but, thanks to the initiative of some enterprising merchants, literature for all tastes may be found spread neatly on the sidewalks—back copies of Playboy next to U.S. News & World Report, "The Gulag Archipelago" next to the Encyclopaedia Britannica and a fair sampling of practically every book on Vietnam, in English or French, published over the past 30 years.

'Hoc Tap'

Hoc Tap or "reeducation" is another practice of the Lao Dong leaders which contradicts the norms of workers democracy. In its mildest form, *hoc tap* means attendance at lectures on the NLF, the DRV, and their struggle for independence against the French and American invaders, along with descriptions of the benefits ascribable to the new regime and its policies. In this form, virtually the entire urban population is expected to pass through *hoc tap*, which continues until each individual is regarded to have sincerely repented relations with the neocolonial regime, if any, and to have reached full support of the objectives of the new government.

Whatever its uses in introducing the population to the policies and goals of their new rulers, the system of "reeducation" has a built-in tendency to classify virtually the entire urban population as tainted to some degree or other by association with the old Saigon regime. This extends even to those who actively opposed the regime through the organizational forms that were available to city dwellers (union struggles, Buddhist and Catholic protests, and so forth).

It inculcates into the masses and the leading cadres a sense of the "moral superiority" of the Lao Dong and NLF cadres over the urban population, which was supposedly deeply corrupted by life under the neocolonial regime.

Terzani, who was very favorably impressed by the practice of *hoc tap*, notes in *Giai Phong!* that the new authorities were

"convinced that decades of foreign occupation had infected and destroyed the consciousness of the southerners. . . ."

This attitude toward the urban population was reflected in the widespread use of the term "puppet" to apply to rank-and-file soldiers of the Saigon army and even the most minor government employees, a practice that the government now claims to be discouraging.

This view of the urban masses is especially dangerous because of the possibilities opened by the new advance in the revolution. While peasant rebels under capable military leadership proved able to deeply undermine and (with major aid from the DRV) finally smash the old government, the building of a new society requires the leadership of another class, the urban workers. The concepts that underlie *hoc tap* provide a ready-made excuse for stifling the initiatives of this class and for imposing bureaucratic tutelage over it.

The Bolsheviks under Lenin and Trotsky had a different approach to winning the support of the masses. They knew that the allegiance of workers and peasants can be won and maintained only by actions against the landlords, capitalists, and imperialists, and not by requiring the masses to repent supposed past derelictions or compelling them to attend propaganda lectures.

The approach of the Vietnamese Stalinists also differs from the practice of Fidel Castro, who led a rural guerrilla struggle to success. Castro relied on the support and mobilizations of the urban masses. He did not view them as suspect because of their failure to pull up stakes and join his army in the countryside or in the underground. He did not view the urban masses with fear and suspicion—he did not represent a bureaucratic caste hostile to the basic interests of the urban masses.

'Collective Reeducation'

The most severe form of *hoc tap* is "collective reeducation" in camps in the northern regions of Vietnam. This treatment appears to have been reserved primarily for former Saigon politicians (including some bourgeois opponents of the Thieu regime), government officials, and military officers of the old regime. More than 200,000 persons have now been held in such camps for a year.

While some of these people are undoubtedly guilty of real war crimes against the Vietnamese people, few have been charged with, tried for, or convicted of any crime.

A May 25 decree extended the term of "reeducation" to three years. According to an article by Bernard Gwertzman in the June 12, 1976, *New York Times*, the decree stated:

Those who had committed many crimes against the people and dangerous chief evildoers who incurred many blood debts with the patriots, who make no significant progress and

who still show an unchanged stubborn nature will be brought before the law by the revolutionary administration for appropriate punishment.

The sole judge of whether an internee has made "significant progress" or suffers from an "unchanged stubborn nature" will be chiefs of the monolithic ruling party.

In his report in the July 15, 1976, *New York Review of Books*, Terzani said:

... the protracted period of detention has aroused doubts about the policy of "national reconciliation and concord" announced by the revolutionary authorities after Giai Phong. This is particularly felt in Saigon where almost every family has someone in the camps.

He warns:

The reeducation camps are now being used, it is claimed, to adapt people of the old regime to a new way of life, and are thus justified not only as necessary and "positive," but as only temporary. They could become, however, permanent "institutions" where those who are so stubborn or "insane" as to oppose revolutionary changes will continue to be isolated.

The danger that the Stalinists will turn to large-scale political repression will be especially great as the regime carries out its promise to move against the remaining landlords and capitalists.

In the East European countries and China, the equivalent period saw the imposition of tight police regimes, eliminating the very narrow leeway for dissent that had been allowed earlier. The task of suppressing active procapitalist counterrevolutionaries was used as a pretext for assaults on democratic rights aimed at preserving bureaucratic rule against the masses.

In Eastern Europe, Stalin followed up the overturn of capitalism with sweeping purges aimed at eliminating all potential dissidence. In 1952, when the Maoists were beginning to undertake the measures that eventually led to the elimination of capitalism, they ordered the arrest and imprisonment without charges or trial of dozens of Trotskyists.

If the Vietnamese Stalinists do carry out similar repressions, it can be expected that the victims, whatever their actual political orientation, will be charged with being collaborators and agents of the imperialists and their former Saigon clients. Dissidents in the North who criticized bureaucratic practices have had to confront the charge of being "spies and psychological warfare cadres for the U.S./Dien clique" and have been given prison terms for "re-education." (See Nhu Phong, "North Vietnam: Intellectuals, Writers, and Artists," *China Quarterly*, January-March 1962.)

As the Vietnamese revolution advances, the issue of workers' democracy will become more acute.

For instance Le Duan has indicated that the people of the South may have to accept a lower standard of living for a time. In view of the grave problems confronting the

country, this may prove to be the case but it is not Le Duan's decision to make. It is the Vietnamese people who have the right to decide. If austerity proves necessary,



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should not the privileges of the bureaucracy be cut to the bone before the bare living standards of the masses are sacrificed?

The workers and peasants in Vietnam, struggling to complete the destruction of landlordism and capitalism and to establish effective economic planning, will tend to form rank-and-file-controlled committees. They will seek to exercise their right to debate issues, to read and write what they like, and to form tendencies and parties without official interference.

Revolutionary Marxists will certainly support their efforts to build such committees and to oppose all efforts by the government to subject them to bureaucratic control, as the government has done with the committees established under Lao Dong sponsorship.

One of the sharpest phases of the struggle may well involve the right of the masses to elect and recall all officials, a demand that was first sounded at the time of the Paris Commune in 1871. Against the monolithic parliament erected as a showpiece by the Lao Dong party, the workers and peasants will certainly press for a soviet form of government.

A soviet regime enjoying the enthusiastic support of millions of workers and peasants can mobilize immense human forces, one of the requisites to solving Vietnam's problems. Such a regime, having nothing to fear from the people, will do its utmost to open up educational oppor-

tunities, foster the advancement of culture, and guarantee freedom of discussion. The revolution must be a school of unfettered thought!

The struggle for these rights and institutions of workers democracy in the South can play a role in inspiring the masses of the North to advance along similar lines in the struggle against bureaucratism.

The Vietnamese revolution urgently needs economic assistance from the capitalist world. For a time it may be necessary to offer economic concessions to foreign capital, particularly in developing Vietnam's oil resources. In addition, concessions to small traders and the peasantry may have to be made.

But these needs do not justify the leadership's delay in overturning capitalism and landlordism in the South. In Vietnam it is illusory to count on economic development along "national democratic" lines. The history of revolutions in the colonial world has demonstrated conclusively that a *planned economy* is a prerequisite for swift, balanced economic reconstruction and full employment.

Nor does the need for foreign capital justify the Lao Dong leadership's stubborn adherence to the reactionary policy of "socialism in one country" and the Stalinist practice of "peaceful coexistence" with the imperialist powers.

During the years of the New Economic Policy in the Soviet Union, Lenin and Trotsky favored making temporary concessions to foreign capital and the market economy; but they stressed the fact that the way out of poverty and economic isolation for the Soviet Union was on the road of the world revolution, and in particular the socialist revolution in the advanced capitalist countries. Diplomatic maneuvers were not allowed to determine the political strategy, positions, and program of the Bolshevik party and the Third International.

The Lao Dong party, because it represents the interests of a crystallized bureaucratic caste established in the North, which has extended its control to the South, is incapable of establishing workers democracy. A new revolutionary party, firmly rooted among the Vietnamese workers, is required for that.

Socialists and all those who oppose new imperialist wars like the one in Vietnam must keep up the demand that Washington meet its obligation to aid in the reconstruction of Vietnam. Restitution must be made for the damage inflicted on Vietnam, although America can never fully repay the Vietnamese for the death and destruction wrought on this small country under Johnson, Nixon, and Ford.

In addition to demanding massive aid for Vietnam, opponents of imperialism must call upon Washington to recognize the new government, end the trade embargo, and get out of Southeast Asia, where the Pentagon still threatens the peoples of Indochina. □

Divide and Rule in South Africa

By Ernest Harsch

[First of two articles]

The white minority regime in South Africa has taken another step in its long campaign to deny all political rights to the country's Black majority.

On May 26, the government of Prime Minister John Vorster introduced into Parliament the Status of the Transkei Bill, which is aimed at turning an estimated 3 million Africans into "foreigners" in their own country, without even the minimal rights still allowed to them as South African citizens. The bill stipulates that when the Transkei, one of South Africa's ten Bantustans, gains its nominal "independence" on October 26, every African who has been assigned to the Transkei "shall cease to be a South African citizen."

This applies to the 1.7 million Xhosas and Sothos now living in the Transkei, as well as to the 1.3 million living in the so-called "white" areas of the country, many of whom were born and have lived their entire lives outside of the Transkei. The bill states that any African who is "culturally or otherwise associated" with a Transkei "citizen" will also be deprived of his or her South African citizenship.

The Vorster regime's assault on the rights of Black South Africans is not limited to those who are deemed to be part of the Transkei "homeland." Its target is the entire African population, which now numbers about 17.8 million. If the regime is successful in taking away the citizenship of the three million Africans affected by the Transkei bill, those assigned to the other nine "homelands" will receive similar treatment when the rest of the Bantustans are granted their "independence."

Anticipating resistance to this new measure, Minister of Bantu Administration and Development Michiel C. Botha, who is in overall charge of administering the regime's apartheid policies, warned Africans who do not accept Transkeian citizenship to "watch out." He said that they could be "rendered stateless."

Johannesburg *Star* correspondent John Patten commented in a report in the June 12 weekly edition, "Implicit in Mr Botha's statement also appears to be a threat that Blacks living in South Africa who are eligible for Transkei citizenship but do not opt to accept it, may be forced to leave."

By launching this attack on the fundamental right of Africans to be citizens of their own country, Botha was simply carrying out a pledge he made in February 1970. Referring to the few remaining African rights, he told the House of

Assembly, "I am going to remove each and every one of them."

This campaign to deny Africans "each and every one" of their political rights in "white" South Africa is at the heart of Pretoria's Bantustan policy.

In order to maintain its system of white supremacy in face of mounting internal unrest, the apartheid regime has embarked on a grand strategy of divide and rule, segregating the African population into a number of small, scattered, and impoverished enclaves. The white authorities thereby hope to forestall the emergence of a broad, united struggle by the Black majority against white minority rule. At the same time, the Bantustan policy retains the largest—and richest—part of the country for the exclusive exploitation by whites.

According to the architects of the Bantustan scheme, all "non-productive" and "superfluous" Africans are to be herded into the reserves. The rest—those upon whom the mines and industries depend for their supply of cheap labor—are to be allowed in "white" South Africa, but only so long as they are employed there.

Deputy Minister of Bantu Administration and Development Dr. P. Koornhof summarized this policy shortly after the adoption of the Bantu Citizenship Act in 1970: "I am afraid to say that the . . . African males from the homelands have no rights whatsoever in South Africa. Their rights are in their own homelands, and they are in South Africa only to sell their labour."

The Spoils of Conquest

Official South African historians claim that most of the country was originally uninhabited when the Dutch and British settlers first arrived there in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Since white settlers were supposedly the first claimants, whites are now considered the legal owners of vast tracts of land, including the most fertile and mineral-rich parts of the country. The Africans, it is claimed, lived for the most part only in those areas of South Africa now demarcated as the Bantustans.

According to this logic, Pretoria's Bantustan policy is essentially a humanitarian effort to protect the ancestral African "homelands" from white encroachment and domination. The ultimate goal, the Vorster regime claims, is to enable the Africans to achieve their "national self-determination."

The apartheid regime's version of South Africa's past is pure fiction, concocted to provide historical justification for the white conquest of the African population and the theft of their land.

When the first Dutch expedition arrived near what is now Cape Town in 1652 it immediately encountered the Khoi-Khoi (called "Hottentots" by the racist settlers). Just seven years later, the settlers launched the first war against the Khoi-Khoi, seizing their traditional grazing lands. From then on, the history of the country was marked by massacres and bloody conquests as the whites progressively occupied more and more of the land inhabited and utilized by various African peoples.

In what is now western Cape Province, the settlers embarked on a campaign of annihilation against the native inhabitants, much as the white colonists in the early United States did against the American Indians. By the early eighteenth century, the Khoi-Khoi had been virtually wiped out by the wars and a devastating smallpox epidemic.

The wars against the San (Bushmen), if anything, were even more brutal. In *South Africa: A Political and Economic History*,¹ Alex Hepple points out that by the mid- to late-eighteenth century

the eradication of the Bushmen had become routine. . . . White farmers who occupied the land far north of the original coastal settlements made it their deliberate objective to clear the Bushmen out. They convinced themselves that they were dealing with a species of baboon, to be hunted down like other wild animals. The unfortunate tribesmen who lingered within range of the burghers' rifles were shot on sight.

Only a few of the Khoi-Khoi and San managed to escape the settlers' guns by fleeing into the Kalahari Desert. The Western Cape is today virtually depopulated of Africans.

In the Eastern Cape, Natal, Orange Free State, and Transvaal, the settlers pushed the African peoples off the rich farm land and into the most inhospitable parts of the country—the 13 percent now allotted to them.

In a series of brutal wars that lasted nearly a century, most of the Xhosas were driven from the Great Fish River to the Buffalo River, confined to the areas that are now called the Transkei and Ciskei.

1. (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, Publishers, 1968), p. 47.

Massabalala B. Yengwa summarized the further advance of white "civilization" in his essay, "The Bantustans—South Africa's 'Bantu Homelands' Policy":²

The Zulus who inhabited the whole of Natal and parts of the Transvaal, down to the borders of Pondoland fought many battles with the Boer *Voortrekkers* and the English. After their final defeat in 1879 their land was divided up between the English and Boer settlers and only a portion of what is now known as Zululand [KwaZulu] was left for the occupation of the Zulus. The Zulus living between the Tugela River and Umzimkulu River were also forced into "Native Reserves" scattered between farms owned by Whites. The Orange Free State once occupied by the Basutos is now owned by Whites except for two small areas in Thaba'Nchu and Witzieshoek. In the Transvaal the land once occupied by the Udebeles [Ndebeles], Tswanas, Bapedi and Swazis is now almost entirely White owned except for small settlements.

The white conquest of the African lands was codified in the Native Land Act of 1913 and the Native Trust and Land Act of 1936, which formalized the limitation of African-owned land to 13 percent of the country.

From the Reserves to the Cities

The dispossession of the African population was not aimed at driving all Africans out of "white" South Africa, but at creating a class of propertyless wage earners. The capitalist development of the country and its emergence as an imperialist power was totally dependent on a large supply of cheap, Black labor for the farms, mines, and industries.

Through overcrowding and the imposition of various taxes, Africans were forced off the land in the reserves to work for wages, either on white-owned farms or in the mines. In the short period from 1890 to 1899, the number of Africans employed in the gold mines jumped from 14,000 to 97,000.

According to Heribert Adam,³ "When Sir [Theophilus] Shepstone first designed native reserves in the middle of the nineteenth century, it was his intention not only to curb the African pressure through partition but also to provide rural workers. The destruction of the traditional subsistence economy, either through the colonial takeover of the land or through tax bills, forced the native population to look for cash income in the money economy."

As South Africa's economic development and industrialization progressed, more and

more Africans were drawn into the "white" parts of the country. Today, about two-thirds of all Africans live outside of the Bantustans. Of that number, more than half live in the cities. In fact, there are more Blacks living in the "white" urban areas than there are white. According to official estimates, Africans are being urbanized at a rate of nearly 5 percent a year.

The working-class component of this African population has also increased. Between 1945 and 1970, the number of Africans employed in the manufacturing sector alone more than tripled. By 1972, the number of African workers in all sectors stood at 6.2 million, bringing the total Black proletariat (including Indians and Coloureds⁴) to more than 7 million.

The tremendous strength of this African working class and urban population poses a potential threat to the continued existence of the apartheid system. And the white authorities are very well aware of that fact.

A 1958 report on the consequences of industrial concentration pointed out: "The effect of the massing of large numbers of people, who are inadequately housed and fed, whose social and family life are disintegrated, who are forced to travel long distances to and from their work, and who consequently fall an easy prey to immorality and political subversion, represents the social costs of industrialization in this country."⁵

Pretoria's fears of "political subversion" among Blacks were not ill-founded. Blacks have mounted a series of mass struggles against the apartheid system. Although the regime was successful in suppressing Black political activism for a number of years in the wake of the 1960 Sharpeville massacre, the resistance to white minority rule has again been on the rise since the early 1970s. An important part of these new struggles has been the massive participation by Black workers, who have carried out hundreds of strikes in the past few years. The large-scale rebellions in Soweto and other Black townships beginning in June were only the most recent and graphic example of the heightened Black militancy.

Verwoerd's Answer

Pretoria's response to this unrest has been to strengthen its powers of repression and control over Blacks and to extend

4. South Africa's Black population is composed of 17.8 million Africans, 2.3 million Coloureds, and 710,000 Indians. The Coloureds are descendants of the early Dutch settlers, indentured workers from India, Malay slaves, and native Khoi-Khoi, San, and other African peoples.

5. Quoted in *Bantustans: The Fragmentation of South Africa*, by Christopher Hill, (London: Oxford University Press, 1964), p. 29.

racial segregation—euphemistically called "separate development" or "plural democracy"—into all spheres of society. This meant revoking the last remaining rights that Africans had in "white" South Africa and countering, as much as possible, the drift of "superfluous" Africans to the cities. The Bantustan policy, as it developed over the past few decades, was a cornerstone of this strategy, together with the tightening of the pass laws and the rules governing the movement of migrant labor.

In line with the regime's contention that Africans are able to exercise their rights in the "homelands," each step in the elaboration of the Bantustan scheme was accompanied by a further attack on African rights in the country as a whole.

When the 1936 Native Land and Trust Act was adopted, Africans were taken off the common voting roll in Cape Province, the only part of South Africa where they had been allowed to vote (if they met the high property qualifications, that is). With the passage of the 1951 Bantu Authorities Act came the abolition of the Native Representatives Council, a token African advisory body. In 1959, the same year the Promotion of Bantu Self-Government Act was passed, all "Native representatives"⁶ were eliminated from Parliament.

The adoption of the Bantustan system was thus as much a form of political domination as it was of geographical segregation. During the parliamentary debate on the Promotion of Bantu Self-Government Act in 1959, Dr. L.I. Coertze, a member of the ruling National party and an expert on constitutional law, said, "It makes no difference where a member of . . . [an] ethnic group finds himself . . . It has nothing at all to do with borders . . . He can be governed wherever he is."

When the Promotion of Bantu Self-Government Act was passed, there was no mention by Pretoria of ever granting "independence" to the Bantustans. But barely two years later, as a result of domestic upheaval and the international protests that followed the Sharpeville massacre, Prime Minister Hendrik F. Verwoerd began to talk of turning the Bantustans into "separate Black states" for the first time.

Verwoerd no doubt hoped that by using the magic word "independence" he would be able to deflect some of the international criticisms of the apartheid regime. Verwoerd referred to these international and domestic pressures in 1961 when he said of the new Bantustan approach: "This is not what we would have preferred to see. This is a form of fragmentation which we would rather not have had if it was within our control to avoid it . . . In the light of the

6. The "Native representatives" were actually three white members of Parliament who were chosen by a separate African electoral roll to "represent" Africans.

forces to which South Africa is being subjected, there is, however, no doubt as to what must be done in the course of time."

While the rhetoric of the Bantustan policy may have changed, Verwoerd made it clear that the content—white supremacy—would remain the same. In his biography of Verwoerd,⁷ Hepple wrote:

He explained that his proposed self-governing Bantustans were no more than an extension of the traditional segregation policy, that white paramountcy would remain and the flow of cheap black labour would continue. He declared that the "adjustment" within his policy had become necessary because of the changing world situation and the emancipation of Africans elsewhere on the continent. He told his right-wing that it would have been easier for the Whites if they could have continued to rule the country as the undisputed masters, treating the Non-whites as protected persons under their guardianship; but events had impelled him "to seek a solution in a continuation of what was actually the old course, namely separation."

'National Units'

What characterized the Bantustan policy of the Verwoerd and Vorster regimes was not so much the segregation between whites and Blacks—that had been a feature of South African society for many years—but the efforts to heighten and create divisions among the Africans themselves.⁸ It was basically a strategy of divide and rule.

The 1959 Promotion of Bantu Self-Government Act proclaimed the existence of eight "national units" in South Africa (a ninth has since been created with the establishment of the Ndebele "nation"). The regime's division of Africans into these "national units" is entirely artificial and arbitrary.

Africans living in the reserves or the "white" cities were given no choice or say in which "nation" they would be assigned to, let alone if they wanted to be assigned to any at all. It is the very opposite of real national self-determination.

Pretoria's main purpose in introducing these classifications was to obstruct the trends toward political and social unity among Africans. Because of the level of capitalist development in South Africa, the various African nationalities that existed in pre-colonial times have become more intertwined there than anywhere else on the African continent. Although distinct Zulu, Xhosa, Sotho, and other nationality groups still exist to some extent, particularly in the rural areas, the language and cultural barriers between them are rapidly breaking down.

This is especially true in the cities.

7. Alexander Hepple, *Verwoerd*, (Baltimore: Penguin Books, 1967), p. 189.

8. Pretoria also has a long-standing policy of fostering frictions between the Africans and the other two sectors of the Black population, the Coloureds and the Indians.

Africans from different parts of the country, who originally spoke different languages, were drawn to the urban areas in search of jobs. They lived together, intermarried, and shared a common experience as an oppressed race and exploited class, often over many generations.

An indication of how far this breakdown has already gone was provided in a 1972 report by Dr. Melville Edelstein, a South African sociologist. He found that 88.5 percent of African children and parents preferred English as the main language of instruction in schools, rather than Afrikaans (which is seen as the language of the oppressor) or any of the African languages.

In his study of the African population in the Johannesburg area,⁹ Philip Mayer found that "exclusive tribal patriotism seems to have almost died in Soweto, if we consider only explicitly formulated ideologies and main institutional forms. Ideologically, it is race and class oppositions that are claimed to matter, while ethnic oppositions are denied or simply shrugged off."

This process has disturbed the white authorities. *South Africa 1975: Official Yearbook of the Republic of South Africa*¹⁰ noted with alarm that the mass urbanization of Africans had led to "a disquieting collapse of those ethnic values basic to the maintenance of social stability."

It was to reintroduce such "ethnic values" that Pretoria established the nine "national units." But these designated "national units" are only loosely based on the pre-colonial African nationalities. According to Pretoria, the Xhosa "nation" is composed not only of the Xhosa, but also of the Thembu, Mpondo, Mpondomise, Bomvana, Mfengu, and six other peoples. In their study of the Transkei,¹¹ Gwendolen Carter, Thomas Karis, and Newell Stultz noted that while they all speak Xhosa-related languages, they have different histories and cultures.

The Xhosa "national unit," moreover, is not all in one "homeland." Some Xhosas have been assigned to the Transkei and some to the Ciskei. Nor is the Transkei exclusively for Xhosa-speakers; some Sothos have also been assigned there.

In choosing their criterion for African "nationhood," the white supremacists have also tried to break down the existing interrelations between the various African peoples. The Zulus, Xhosas, and Swazis, for instance, all speak languages in the

9. "Class, Status, and Ethnicity as Perceived by Johannesburg Africans," in *Change in Contemporary South Africa*, eds. Leonard Thompson and Jeffrey Butler (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1975), p. 152.

10. (Pretoria: South African Department of Information, 1975), p. 101.

11. *South Africa's Transkei: The Politics of Domestic Colonialism*, (Evanston, Ill.: Northwestern University Press, 1967), p. 81.

Nguni-language group, but have been isolated into separate Bantustans. The Sotho-language group has been divided into two main "national units," the North Sotho and South Sotho.

Describing the resettlement schemes in the northern Transvaal, Cosmas Desmond pointed out:¹²

In some areas, Tsongas, Northern Sotho and Zulus are found living together, and elsewhere there are other permutations. The northeastern tip of the region, predominantly Venda and Tsonga in population, is the most mixed area of all.

This intermingling is not in keeping with the policy of Tribal Authorities, and the Government have been making efforts for some time to disentangle all the ethnic groups into separate "nations."

Desmond also pointed out that the regime, by appearing to favor the Vendas, had been successful in creating frictions between them and the Tsongas.

In a letter to the editor published in the September 10 *New York Times*, Gail J. Morlan also described how Pretoria fostered strife among Africans. "I saw this in action in 1966 and 1967 when I lived on the edge of an African reserve in the northern Transvaal," she said. "One method of increasing antagonism between groups was to change the borders, taking land from one, giving it to another, and then reversing this process. The blacks were forced into competition with each other over scarce land and tensions grew."

Besides creating artificial divisions, Pretoria has sought to keep the "homelands" as fragmented and scattered as possible. Even the Transkei, Pretoria's "showpiece" Bantustan, is to be composed of two land areas. According to a report submitted to the United Nations by the British Anti-Apartheid Movement,¹³ the ten Bantustans are now fragmented into 113 separate pieces, although the regime says that it plans to "consolidate" them into thirty-six. The Bantustan with the largest population, KwaZulu, is to be composed of ten fragments even after the "consolidation" process is completed.

In order to extend the Bantustan divisions to the cities, the Urban Bantu Councils Act was adopted in 1961, providing for the establishment of councils in the Black townships on the basis of the "national units." Representatives of the tribal chiefs are appointed to these councils to link the urban Africans with their respective "homelands." Within the African townships and in the workers quarters in the mining compounds, African housing

12. *The Discarded People: An Account of African Resettlement in South Africa*, (Harmondsworth, Middlesex: Penguin Books, 1971), p. 181.

13. "The Bantustan Programme: Its Domestic and International Implications." Published in *Sechaba*, official organ of the African National Congress of South Africa. London, first quarter 1976.

is now segregated along similar lines.

From the regime's viewpoint, this policy has already shown a few favorable, though limited, results. During the past few years there have been a series of ethnic clashes, particularly among African miners, that have left scores of Africans dead. Pretoria hopes that by fostering this type of fratricidal conflict it will be able to weaken the Black struggle against white rule itself.

Policemen for White Supremacy

At the same time that Pretoria escalated its attempts to fragment the African population, it also moved to adopt a more indirect form of rule, resurrecting the conservative tribal chiefs to positions of nominal authority so as to create a buffer between the African masses and the white regime.

Govan Mbeki, a leader of the banned African National Congress who is now serving a life sentence on Robben Island, described this new policy in *South Africa: The Peasants' Revolt*:¹⁴

The traditional system in South Africa had been one of direct rule: White government officials sat over the Chiefs. Everyone knew that the Commissioner was the boss. Yet now the White government official had become too visible and accessible a target for anti-government action. The need was clearly to devise a system under which the Africans appeared to be managing their own affairs. . . .

It turned out to be a hybrid of direct and indirect rule. It was given the grand name of *self-development*. [Emphasis in original.]

In the late nineteenth century, the settler regime viewed the traditional tribal chiefs as obstacles to the greater employment of Africans in the wage economy, and thus set out to weaken their social position. The rapid absorption of the African reserves into the capitalist economy led to the proletarianization of the African population as a whole and virtually destroyed the self-sufficiency of the African peasantry, upon which the tribal structures rested. This further eroded whatever authority the chiefs had left.

With the Bantu Authorities Act of 1951, however, Pretoria sought to reestablish the chiefs in the new role of African policemen for apartheid.

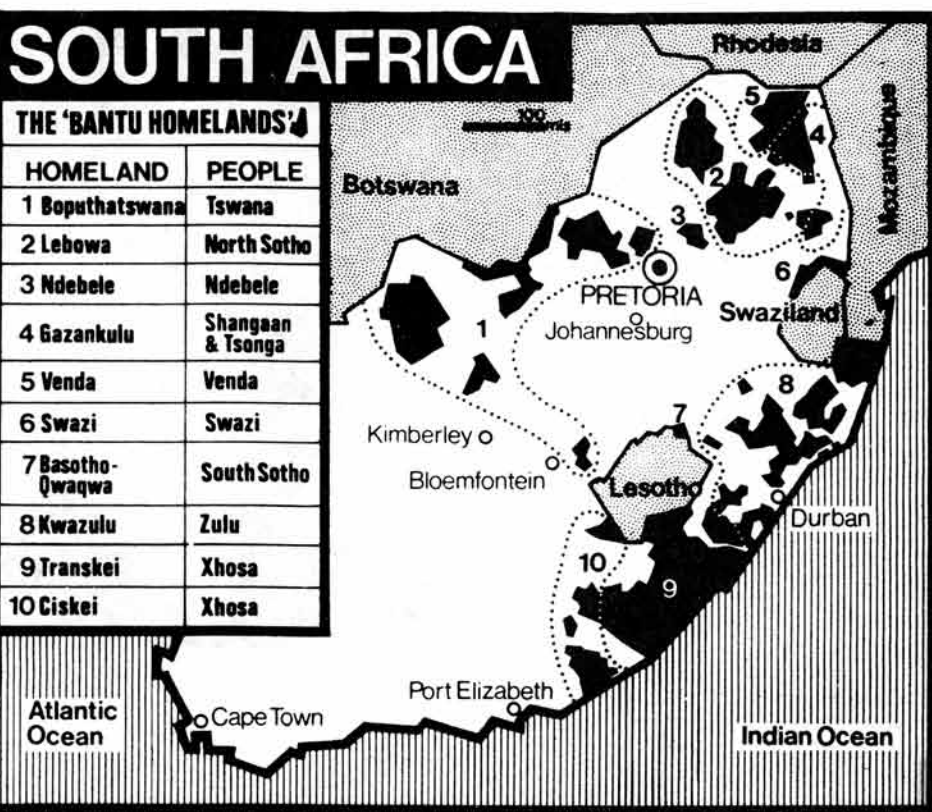
The act set up a pyramid of appointed bodies—called authorities—at the tribal, district, regional, and territorial levels. There is one Territorial Authority for each Bantustan. All chiefs under the act gain their office as a result of government appointment and can be deposed at any time.

In most cases, Pretoria appointed chiefs who had some traditional claim as tribal figureheads. If a particular chief was uncooperative, he was either banished or a

SOUTH AFRICA

THE 'BANTU HOMELANDS'

HOMELAND	PEOPLE
1 Boputhatswana	Tswana
2 Lebowa	North Sotho
3 Ndebele	Ndebele
4 Gazankulu	Shangaan & Tsonga
5 Venda	Venda
6 Swazi	Swazi
7 Basotho-Qwaqwa	South Sotho
8 Kwazulu	Zulu
9 Transkei	Xhosa
10 Ciskei	Xhosa



Manchester Guardian

lesser chief was promoted to head the authority instead. Some tribal groupings, such as the Mfengu in the Transkei, had no acknowledged chiefs, however, and Pretoria was forced to "find" some.

When the various Bantustans were granted "self-government" (the Transkei became the first in 1963), legislative assemblies were set up in which only a minority of the members were elected. To ensure effective control, Pretoria gave the appointed chiefs the dominant position.

Even under this "self-government," Pretoria retained direct control of security, foreign relations, defense, labor, finance, industry, railways, and postal services. It also had the power to veto or supervise any act of the Bantustan legislative assemblies.

In *Education for Barbarism in South Africa*,¹⁵ I.B. Tabata described the real duties of the chiefs:

In effect they are to constitute a glorified police force, and more, with powers to search, arrest, prosecute, convict and even order corporal punishment on grown-up men. They are to spy on people's lives, report to the magistrate what the people are saying amongst themselves, what meetings have been held and what strangers have been seen in their village and where they slept the night. . . . Under the Pass laws it is their duty to order the women to apply for their book of passes and see to it that they carry it about on their persons.

The chief magistrate of the Transkei told a group of chiefs and headmen in January 1959, "Use moderate violence . . . just like a good policeman would do."

Pretoria has also tried to take advantage of what little political influence the tribal chiefs have in urban areas to dampen struggles there. For instance, Chief Gatsha Buthelezi of KwaZulu has deplored strikes by African workers and during the recent Soweto rebellions called for the formation of Black "community guards" to resist the young Black militants who were leading the protests.

Although the chiefs were now given a few limited powers, Pretoria made it clear who the real master was. Shortly after the Bantu Authorities system was adopted in the Transkei, the chief magistrate told the chiefs: "We are now giving you the horse to ride (when I say 'we' I mean the Government); but do not forget while you are riding it that the Government will be behind with a big sjambok [a heavy whip]. . . ."

Pretoria's control over the purse strings is another inducement to the chiefs to obey orders. Beginning in 1950, the white regime began to buy the chiefs off, steadily increasing their salaries. When the Transkei was declared "self-governing," the four paramount chiefs and the chief minister were each paid about \$5,600 a year, a fortune in the context of the Transkei's poverty, and even more than what a white Bantu Affairs Commissioner received.

14. (Baltimore: Penguin Books, 1964), pp. 37-38.

15. (London: Pall Mall Press, 1960), p. 14.

All the Bantustan "governments" rely on Pretoria for 65-85 percent of their revenue. In fiscal 1975, \$91 million of the Transkei's \$131.7 million budget was contributed by Pretoria in the form of grants.

Besides giving the tribal chiefs a stake in the maintenance of the status quo, Pretoria has used the Bantustans to provide a controlled outlet for the aspirations of African intellectuals and petty-bourgeois elements. In "white" South Africa, the small handful of African professionals quickly become frustrated by the apartheid color bar, leading to disgruntlement and often to active opposition to the regime. By allowing these layers to acquire posts in the Bantustan administrations or to establish small businesses in the Bantustans, Pretoria has sought to open a small safety-valve to ease such frustrations.

Peasant Resistance

Mbeki commented that "when a people have developed to a stage which discards chieftainship, when their social development contradicts the need for such an institution, then to force it on them is not liberation but enslavement." The imposition of the Tribal Authorities system was thus met with considerable resistance from the African populations living in the Bantustans.

One of the first major peasant revolts in the "homelands" broke out in 1950 in Witzieshoek (now known as Basotho Qwaqwa), a small Bantustan on the border of Lesotho. Provoked by Pretoria's land policy in the area, the clashes left fourteen Africans and two policemen dead. The leaders of the revolt, including Chief Paulus Mopeli, were banished from the reserve.

In 1957, the racist regime attempted to extend the pass laws to women, leading to mass protests by women in the Marico district of what is now the Bophuthatswana Bantustan. The subsequent repression forced many inhabitants of the area to flee into the neighboring country of Botswana.

In Sekhukhuneland, in the northern Transvaal, the residents rebelled in late 1957 and early 1958 against the imposition of the Bantu Authorities system. There were protests in many villages. Large mobile police units patrolled the area and raided villages. In one incident alone, more than 200 persons were arrested. Eleven leaders of the revolt were sentenced to death, but domestic and international protests forced Pretoria to commute the sentences to life imprisonment.

In the Tokazi district of KwaZulu, there were clashes between supporters and opponents of the Bantu Authorities system in the late 1950s. A number of persons were sentenced to death and the entire community in Tokazi was uprooted and forced to move elsewhere. This resistance



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even compelled many chiefs to express opposition to Pretoria's scheme. According to Hepple's history of South Africa:

In Zululand there is considerable opposition to the Bantu Authorities system. Less than half the tribes have accepted the establishment of tribal authorities. The paramount chief, Cyprian Bhekezulu, summoned a meeting of about 200 chiefs in March 1963 to consider the establishment of a Zulu Territorial Authority. The majority of those who attended expressed the view that the matter required a referendum of all Zulus, both in and outside the Zulu areas [pp. 120-121].

The broadest opposition to the Bantustan policy erupted in Pretoria's "show-piece" itself. Resistance in the Transkei surfaced in Pondoland as early as 1953, when Mngqingo, an opponent of Pretoria's land program, formed a large peasant army. He was later arrested and deported.

In September 1957, a meeting of several thousand Pondos in Bizana district rejected the entire Bantu Authorities scheme, under the slogan of "Bantu Authorities will operate over our dead bodies." This unrest boiled over in March 1960, when peasants began to hold regular mass meetings, refused to pay taxes, burned huts of collaborators, and attacked progovernment tribal officials. By September the ferment had spilled over into Thembuland and threatened to affect other parts of the Transkei as well.

As with all the other protests, the apartheid regime responded with brutal repression. In one incident alone, police attacked a mass rally, murdering eleven persons, some of whom were shot through the back of their heads. In November 1960, a state of emergency was declared throughout the Transkei, abolishing all

civil liberties. Nearly 5,000 persons were arrested; more than twenty were executed.

While the apartheid authorities were able to crush the most active resistance, they were unable to stifle all signs of opposition. After Pretoria drew up a draft "constitution" for the Transkei, a mass meeting of Thembus in August 1962 found the document "unacceptable."

Pretoria was determined to push through with its "self-government" scheme for the Transkei, however, and went ahead with general elections in 1963. The government's favored candidate for chief minister was Kaiser Matanzima, who supported Pretoria's Bantustan policy and who termed Verwoerd a "friend of the African people."

Although the elections were held under the state of emergency—which prohibited meetings without permission and imposed penalties for statements "disrespectful to chiefs"—the candidates to the Legislative Assembly who were known opponents of "separate development" won a sweeping victory, indicating that mass opposition to the Bantustan policy was still deep. But since the appointed tribal chiefs already had an automatic majority in the assembly, and since most of them backed Pretoria's policy, Matanzima was able to emerge as the new chief minister.

The emergency regulations imposed in the Transkei in 1960 are still in effect today, and similar repressive measures have been adopted in the KwaZulu and Gazankulu "homelands."

To ensure that no embarrassing criticisms are raised during the Transkei's "independence" ceremonies in October, Matanzima had a number of members of the opposition Democratic party arrested July 26, including Hector Ncokazi, the leader of the party. Ncokazi is an opponent of the phony "independence" scheme. If they are still in prison, they will be prevented from participating in the debate on the new Transkei "constitution" and will be unable to run in the elections scheduled to be held before the "independence" date.

The suppression of dissent in the "homelands"—where Africans are supposed to be able to exercise their political rights—is further testimony to the fraud of Pretoria's entire Bantustan policy. Its "national self-determination" for the Bantustans is being carried out against the will of the country's African majority.

[Next: The Fraud of 'Separate Development']

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

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

Mao Tsetung in the Early Years

By Theodore Edwards

[This is the conclusion of a two-part article.]

* * *

The debacle in Wuhan, following on the heels of the Shanghai massacre, marked the defeat of the Chinese revolution of 1925-27. A prolonged ebb began in the revolutionary consciousness of the masses. It was crucial that the Chinese Communist Party, having met the actual revolution with a policy of capitulation to the forces of Chinese capitalism, should at least know how to retreat in good order in the period of reaction that was opening.

Stalin had replaced the old leadership, but he would permit no discussion of the policy he had foisted on the CCP. And in true bureaucratic fashion, he now ordered an abrupt turn to ultraleft insurrectionism in a desperate gamble for victory through audacious action.

As the defeat in China became more and more undeniable, Stalin countered by extending this bureaucratic ultraleftism to all the parties of the Comintern during the years 1928-34. It resulted in Germany in the disastrous refusal of the mass German CP to seek a united front with the Social Democrats against the rise of Hitler. As a consequence, Hitler walked to power without a fight from the largest organized working class in the Western world.

The Maoists, however, insist on treating the Chinese experience with "Third Period" Stalinism, as it was called, as nothing but the individual "errors" of some CCP leaders, having nothing to do with Stalin or the Comintern. Thus a 1971 pamphlet on the fiftieth anniversary of the founding of the CCP tells us that "... there occurred Chu Chiu-pai's 'Left' putschist line between the end of 1927 and the beginning of 1928, Li Li-san's 'Left' opportunist line between June and September 1930, and Wang Ming's 'Left' opportunist line between 1931 and 1934. . . . As a result, our Party suffered a loss of 90 percent in the Red areas, and the Red Army was compelled to leave and embark on the Long March."³¹

This is the same method of blaming scapegoats by which Stalin avoided any analysis of the debacle of 1927. The defeat suffered as a result of the arbitrary

decision in the fall of 1927 to embark on the building of rural "soviet" areas was handled in the same way. The goal was doomed to failure inasmuch as the urban mass movement was in sharp decline. The disorganization of the Kuomintang regime permitted the CCP "soviet areas" to survive for a few years, but once a measure of stability was established and Chiang Kai-shek succeeded in bringing the Northern warlords into the KMT, the "soviet areas" were faced with certain defeat whatever tactics this or that leader might employ to defend them.

The events of 1925-27 showed that a revolutionary party could be built in a very short period of time in China. In 1921, at its foundation, the CCP had fifty members. In early 1924, it had 400 adherents. By early 1927, when it led a successful insurrection in Shanghai, the CCP counted close to 60,000 members, with another 35,000 in the youth organization. In effect the party led tens of millions of workers and peasants throughout the country.³²

Left to its own devices, the CCP could very well have led the Chinese proletariat to power in the 1920s. The working class showed its capacity for organization and its revolutionary dynamism in Canton, Shanghai, Wuhan, and elsewhere in boycotts, strikes, mass actions, and insurrections. Only the criminal policies imposed by Stalin upon the young CCP kept the workers from fulfilling their historic mission.

Stalin refused to admit either the defeat that had been suffered or the counterrevolutionary character of the Chinese national bourgeoisie. Trotsky's criticisms of the KMT-CCP alliance were countered by asserting in the face of all evidence that the KMT was still an effective instrument to carry the Chinese revolution forward. In practice, this meant that the CCP was now to consider itself the *real* KMT, designating the Wuhan and Nanking governments a *sham* KMT.³³

Whereas Trotsky held that the catastrophes that had befallen the city workers under the CCP leadership signified an ebb in the revolution, requiring rearguard defensive struggles for democratic rights, Stalin insisted that the revolutionary wave was still rising and called for armed

insurrections in the cities and the countryside. This policy was put into effect by the so-called Emergency Political Bureau under Ch'u Ch'iu-pai, called into being by the new Comintern representative, Lominadze, at the August 7, 1927, "Emergency Conference." The result was a series of ill-prepared and unsuccessful adventures: the Nanchang uprising, the Autumn Harvest actions, attempted general strikes in Shanghai, Changsha, and elsewhere, and finally the disastrous Canton Commune of December 1927.

The Nanchang uprising was a military putsch. The aim was to take over the capital city of Kiangsi Province in the expectation that this would electrify the entire area south of the Yangtze, transforming the situation at one blow.

The rebels struck before dawn on August 1 and occupied the city without a struggle—and without the involvement of the population. Because so many future leaders of the Chinese Red Army participated—including Ho Lung, Yeh T'ing, Chu Te, Chou En-lai, Ch'en Yi, and Lin Piao—the anniversary of this putsch is now celebrated as Army Day in China. Mao has even been hailed as firing the first shot against the Kuomintang at Nanchang. But this is fiction. Mao was absent, and the rebels fought under the KMT banner, issuing declarations in the name of the KMT and setting up a fictitious KMT "Revolutionary Committee" that supposedly included none other than General Chang Fa-k'uei—the KMT commander against whom the mutiny was directed!

The rebellion was quickly defeated. Beginning with 30,000 men, the rebels set off southward. A few hundred arrived at Canton in time for the abortive uprising in December. A slightly larger force, under Chu Te, circled back to Hunan to join forces in April 1928 with Mao's band which had holed up in the Chinggang mountains after the failure of the Autumn Harvest uprisings in which Mao had participated.

While these CCP-led uprisings stressed "armed struggle," their social program was highly conservative. This was indicated not only by their attempt to pass themselves off as representatives of the Kuomintang, but by their agrarian program. At Nanchang, the rebels called only for rent reductions—for payments to landlords of no more than 30 percent of the crop—and confiscations of estates larger

32. Harrison, *The Long March to Power*, pp. 98-99.

33. Benjamin I. Schwartz, *Chinese Communism and the Rise of Mao*, pp. 86-90.

31. *Commemorate the 50th Anniversary of the Communist Party of China* (Peking: Foreign Languages Press, July 1971), pp. 9-10.

than 200 mou (32 acres). This was a retreat even from the April KMT reform proposals in Wuhan, which called for limits of 50 to 100 mou.³⁴

Mao's own application of the "Third Period" Stalinist line—his tactical panacea of "surrounding the cities from the countryside"—proved to be no more successful. Mao organized about 3,000 men for the Autumn Harvest uprisings, which began on September 8, 1927, in the local district towns of east Hunan with the aim of converging on the provincial capital at Changsha. Mao's forces were defeated when the population of Changsha failed to respond. During the last weeks of 1927, with less than a thousand men, Mao succeeded in reaching the mountain fastness of Chinggang on the Hunan-Kiangsi border.

In this period, which Stalin and the CCP leadership characterized as a new revolutionary wave justifying a course of insurrections, the membership of the CCP dropped from 58,000 to 4,000.³⁵ As usual, individual errors were held responsible. Mao, for example, was dropped as an alternate member of the CCP Political Bureau for his failure to take Changsha.

The finish of the CCP as a force in the urban working class in the 1920s and 1930s came in the events of December 11-13, 1927, in Canton, inspired directly by Stalin. Stalin needed a victory to report to the Fifteenth Congress of the Russian Party, to coincide with the expulsion of the Trotskyist Left Opposition.

In Canton, on the eleventh, a few thousand Communists took control of the city and set up a handpicked "soviet" that issued proclamations of an extremely radical nature, including orders for workers' control and nationalization of industry. They were crushed in three days, since they enjoyed neither the support of the urban masses nor possessed any reserves.

The Ninth Plenum of the Executive Committee of the Comintern, held in Moscow February 9-25, 1928, had to take cognizance of the fact that it was no longer possible for Stalin to maintain that a "direct revolutionary situation" existed in China. All the debacles since the August 7 conference could no longer be passed off as successes. However, to admit that an ebb tide had set in would have been to concede that Trotsky had been right all along.

Thus, it fell to Bukharin to explain that, while the first wave had passed (admitting that it "ended in heavy defeats for the workers and peasants in several revolutionary centers"), the revolution was experiencing only a momentary trough

and a new upsurge was imminent.³⁶ The official resolution declared: "The party must prepare itself for a violent surge forward of new revolutionary waves."³⁷

Trotsky, replying to this from his forced exile in Soviet Central Asia, wrote:

"The consequences of defeat cannot be removed merely by revising the tactic. The revolution is now subsiding. The half-concealing resolution of the ECCI, the bombast about imminent revolutionary onslaughts, while countless people are being executed and a terrific commercial and industrial crisis rages in China, are criminal light-mindedness and nothing else. After three major defeats an economic crisis does not rouse, but on the contrary, depresses the proletariat which, as it is, has already been bled white, while the executions only destroy the politically weakened party. We are entering in China into a period of reflux. . . ."³⁸

The Stalin-Bukharin formulation allowed the Comintern to censure the Ch'u Ch'iu-pai leadership for "putschism" without mentioning that Ch'u was merely following Comintern directives. Since Moscow was directly involved in calling for the Canton Commune, it was designated a "heroic rear-guard action" (rather than a putsch) that brought the wave to a halt.

The Sixth National Congress of the CCP took place in June and July 1928 under Stalin's close supervision, in Moscow. It deposed the Ch'u Ch'iu-pai leadership, designated a figurehead, Hsiang Chung-fa, as general secretary, and set up a new Politbureau. In general, it adopted the shift in line made at the Ninth Plenum of the ECCI, designating the task of the CCP as "preparing for armed insurrections" so as to achieve an initial victory "in one or several provinces."³⁹

Aside from this conjunctural evaluation, the Sixth Congress of the CCP also maintained as many of Stalin's theoretical positions as possible. It continued the use of the formula "democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry" to describe the kind of government the CCP aspired to create in China.

This formula had been coined by Lenin in Russia in 1905, as a designation for a

workers' and peasants' government that would issue from a revolutionary insurrection against the landlords and capitalists. Stalin, however, redefined this to mean a coalition between a Communist Party and a capitalist party to uphold capitalism.

This same congress asserted that the revolution in China was still only bourgeois-democratic in nature—that it would not result in a socialist nationalization of industry as the Russian revolution had done. And this despite the fact that the "national bourgeoisie," as the congress put it, had gone over to the "feudal camp" and become an enemy of the bourgeois revolution.

Mao Tsetung continued to preach these class-collaborationist theories until his death, ignoring the experience of the two great revolutions he lived through, in which the bourgeoisie showed itself to be not an ally but an implacable enemy of the working class and even of the anti-imperialist, "bourgeois-democratic" revolution.

This seeming blindness can be explained by the social affinity between the petty-bourgeois nationalist current represented by Mao, which was absorbed into the Stalinist movement, and the world capitalist system.

Since it was the fountainhead of the Stalinist concepts still in favor in Peking, the Sixth Congress of the CCP enjoys an exalted position in Maoist historiography. Even in 1936, Mao Tsetung took pains to point out: "With the new line adopted at that [Sixth] congress, Chu Teh and I were in complete agreement."⁴⁰

Mao referred in particular to the fact that the Sixth Congress was willing to endorse his and Chu Te's guerrilla activity in the hinterlands. The endorsement flowed from the desire to see some forward motion somewhere, and did not involve any consideration of the total isolation this rural orientation would impose on the CCP, severing it from its urban, working-class base. In later years Mao would elevate this isolation from the proletariat to the level of a strategy—"surrounding the cities from the countryside"—by way of an after-the-fact rationalization.

Having established himself in such a rural base area toward the end of 1927, Mao, without disagreeing with Stalinist theory or practice, had to face the question of how to survive in such surroundings. Mao's answers were those of the Stalinist bureaucrats most intimately linked to the armed detachments.

But Mao's special center of power in the rural military also opposed him to those of the central party leadership whose power bases lay elsewhere. The ensuing conflicts between the various parts of the CCP bureaucracy have been misconstrued by some as a hidden or even open break with

34. Harrison, *The Long March to Power*, p. 128.

35. *Chinese Studies in History* (White Plains, New York, Summer 1971), p. 529.

36. Schwartz, *Chinese Communism and the Rise of Mao*, p. 110.

37. "Ninth Plenum of the ECCI Resolution on China," in Jane Degras, ed., *The Communist International, 1919-1943, Documents* (London: Frank Cass and Co., 1960) vol. II, p. 438.

38. "Summary and Perspectives of the Chinese Revolution" (June 1928), in *Leon Trotsky on China*, p. 313.

39. Harrison, *The Long March to Power*, pp. 158-59; and Brandt, et al., *A Documentary History of Chinese Communism*, pp. 132, 143.

40. Snow, *Red Star Over China*, p. 153.

Moscow on the part of Mao. As a matter of fact, everyone involved, with the exception of the Chinese Trotskyists, vied for Moscow's favor, and the disagreements moved strictly on the tactical level of how best to carry out the Comintern line.

Factionalism in the Stalinized CCP

Leaving aside those that had left the CCP, at least five major groupings emerged in the party in 1928:⁴¹ (1) the central leadership faction, soon dominated by Li Li-san; (2) two allied trade union groupings, led by Ho Meng-hsiung and Lo Chang-lung, respectively, centered mainly in Shanghai and Kiangsu province, concerned with winning workers away from the influence of the "yellow" trade unions set up by the KMT; (3) a Youth League group headed by Jen Pih-shih; (4) the "Red Army" (or "real power") formation of Mao, Chu Te, P'eng Te-huai, and Ho Lung; and (5) the Trotskyist opposition.

Within the CCP the Trotskyists were organized as the Left Opposition faction, led by Ch'en Tu-hsiu and Peng Shu-tse. Ch'en's great prestige as the party's founder and his popularity among the ranks made it difficult for the Stalinist leadership to expel him outright. Ch'en and Peng openly rejected Stalin's class-collaborationist policy that had led to the defeat in 1925-27, as well as the two-stage theory of revolution. They argued for a perspective of a socialist revolution in China through the independent mobilization of the workers and the peasantry. At the same time, they recognized the ebb of the mass movement and urged opposition to the Comintern's ultraleft course, calling for a campaign in defense of democratic rights and for rebuilding the trade unions to preserve the party's proletarian base.

Ch'en, Peng, and the other Trotskyists were finally expelled from the CCP in November 1929. Ch'en immediately published an "Appeal to All the Comrades of the Chinese Communist Party," which explained Stalin's role in China, refuted the charges against him, and called for a fundamental reorientation of the party.⁴²

After their expulsion, Ch'en Tu-hsiu and Peng Shu-tse began independent organization among the workers of Shanghai and other cities, and made contact with several groups of Chinese students who had recently returned from the Soviet Union, where they had been won to Trotskyism by the Soviet Left Opposition.⁴³ These groups united in May 1931 to form the Communist

League of China. The Chinese Trotskyists made rapid gains among the working class, winning half the industrial cells of the CCP in Shanghai. But the Stalinized



Der Spiegel

MAO TSETUNG: Photo taken in 1925.

CCP opened a campaign of physical attacks on the Trotskyists, which, combined with the terror of the Chiang Kai-shek regime, dealt heavy blows to the young movement. Ten of the Communist League's central leaders were arrested by the Kuomintang in October 1932. After a two-year trial before a civil court in Nanking, Ch'en and Peng were sentenced to thirteen years in prison for their revolutionary activity. They served five years, and were released only after their prison had been bombed by the Japanese at the beginning of the Sino-Japanese War in 1937.⁴⁴

Following the expulsion of the Trotskyists, power struggles became an endemic feature of the internal life of the CCP, with each of the remaining groupings held together not so much by clear-cut political or programmatic considerations as by organizational clique purposes, although the evolution of the Ho and Lo factions tended to be in a progressive direction, as we shall see.

Throughout 1929, Li Li-san, a strong-willed personality, used his control of the apparatus to carry out the "Third Period" instructions emanating from Moscow.

44. Chen Pi-lan, "Looking Back Over My Years with Peng Shu-tse," in *The Chinese Revolution*, part I (New York: Education for Socialists bulletin, Socialist Workers Party, 1972), pp. 15-16.

While exhorting the CCP to "make every effort to restore the party's working-class base" (which by April 1929 had shrunk to 3 percent of the membership) by fighting for the purely economic demands of the workers,⁴⁵ the Comintern also demanded that preparations for armed insurrections be made!

In July 1929, KMT officers serving under the Manchurian warlord Chang Hsueh-liang seized complete control of the USSR-China managed Chinese Eastern Railway, connecting Siberia with Vladivostok by way of Manchuria. Japan backed Chang. Stung by the encroachment on Soviet interests, and considering itself in a position of strength because of the continuing internal strife in China between the warlords and the KMT, Moscow issued directives calling for accelerated preparations for insurrection. A Comintern letter to the Chinese Political Bureau of October 26, 1929, called on the CCP to "strengthen and extend guerrilla warfare, especially in . . . Manchuria. . . . Avoiding a recurrence of the *putschist* mistakes, which on the whole have already been overcome, the Party must encourage and accentuate class conflicts in every way . . . transforming the revolutionary struggle to an even higher stage of development."⁴⁶

A Soviet force under General Galen (V. K. Blücher) restored Russian control over the railway in November.

Toward the end of 1929 and early 1930, at least a dozen Communist-controlled armed groups came into being in seven provinces in central and south China. The peasant guerrilla armies under CCP control were promptly dubbed "Red Armies" in imitation of the working-class military force created by the Russian revolution. But in China these armies contained almost no workers. By April 1930 the CCP's armed units had grown to as many as 70,000 troops.⁴⁷

Protected to a certain extent by their great numbers and by their diffusion over the countryside, the peasants had not been crushed by the counterrevolution as completely as had the workers. Driven to desperation because of the dearth of land, chafing under the yoke of the militarists and government officials, ground down by usurious loans, the peasants continued to rise in the interior of China. But it was only the afterglow of the defeated revolution.

Under pressure from the Comintern, the CCP issued a directive for the seizure of large cities by the "Red Armies."⁴⁸

41. Harrison, *The Long March to Power*, p. 151.

42. This letter is reprinted as an appendix to *Leon Trotsky on China*.

43. Sheng, Yueh, *Sun Yat-sen University in Moscow and the Chinese Revolution: A Personal Account* (New York: Paragon Books, 1971), pp. 164ff.

45. Schwartz, *Chinese Communism and the Rise of Mao*, pp. 128-29.

46. Cited in Harrison, *The Long March to Power*, p. 168.

47. *Ibid.*, p. 164.

48. *Ibid.*, pp. 168-69.

In February 1930, the Political Bureau of the CCP set into motion a push for coordinated attacks and uprisings in various cities, linking urban strikes and guerrilla attacks, directed toward Wuhan with the aim of triggering a nationwide revolution.

The later effort to restrict this "Li Li-san line" to the period from June to September 1930 and to lay the responsibility solely on Li's shoulders continues to this day by apologists for both Moscow and Peking. The purpose is to hide the complicity of all concerned in that suicidal policy.

When the actions proposed or actually taken by the Li Li-san de facto leadership,⁴⁹ such as "Red Army" attacks on cities or urban putsches by Communist workers, threatened the very existence of their forces, the CCP military and trade-union leaders had second thoughts. Moscow, too, became alarmed at the implications of its own directives when Li called for concrete aid from the USSR, including Russian military intervention. This, he predicted, would result in the entry of Japanese and British imperialism into the fray, thus triggering the world revolution.⁵⁰

Despite Mao's later efforts to manufacture differences between himself and Li in 1930, no such divergences on fundamental questions existed at the time.⁵¹ If Ho Meng-hsiung and his "real work" faction criticized the policy openly, Mao's "opposition" was of a different type, consisting of verbal agreement while refusing to yield control over military matters to the central leadership, carrying out orders in a minimum, foot-dragging fashion with a maximum of caution.

Mao did make light of Li Li-san's professed concern about the peasant composition of the "Red Armies" and the lack of proletarians in the CCP, contending that "proletarian leadership" could be maintained among the peasant soldiers, even without the proletariat, by proper educational techniques. Current Soviet sources point to such arguments as examples of Mao's petty-bourgeois and peasant deviations. They also contend that Mao was in reality a principal supporter of the "Li Li-san line."⁵²

What is beyond dispute is that Stalin

49. Hsiang Chung-fa formally was general secretary of the CCP.

50. Harrison, *The Long March to Power*, pp. 554-55.

51. See *ibid.*, pp. 170-71.

52. Moscow's case on this question is presented in L.P. Delyusin, et al., eds., *Comintern i Vostok* (The Comintern and the East) (Moscow: 1969). The concern about proletarian leadership of the "Red Armies" was a smokescreen for the quarrel over which factional grouping would control the military forces.

himself was the instigator of the "Li Li-san line," approving it completely—until it resulted in failure. A letter from the ECCI of July 23, 1930, proposed to the CCP leadership the basic policy later condemned as "Li Li-sanism." The letter read in part:

"The new upsurge in the Chinese revolutionary movement has become an indisputable fact. . . . in the initial stage there is a certain weakness, namely, the fighting masses cannot at the very beginning occupy the industrial centers. . . . in the future, according to political and military circumstances, one or several political or industrial centers can be occupied."⁵³

The so-called Li Li-san line was later denounced as being nothing more than a call to seize cities. The test of the policy came with the occupation of Changsha on July 25. On August 5, P'eng Te-huai's forces withdrew under KMT pressure and Mao and Chu Te made only halfhearted attempts to carry out directives to take Nanchang and retake Changsha.

Li Li-san was not as easily deposed as his predecessor, Ch'u Ch'iu-pai. The Third Plenum of the CCP, held in late September 1930, adopted a report by Chou En-lai supporting the "Li Li-san line" and admitting only minor mistakes of timing and organization. But an ECCI directive of November 16, 1930, portrayed Li Li-san as having willfully misinterpreted the unflinchingly correct line of the Kremlin. This sleight-of-hand trick was accomplished by culling Li's past pronouncements for heresies and "semi-Trotskyist" deviations. After being recalled to Moscow, Li Li-san dutifully confessed and recanted all his errors, taking upon himself the onus for Stalin's mistakes.⁵⁴

Li was replaced by still another appointee of the Stalinized Comintern. The new representative of the Comintern in China at this time was Pavel Mif, former director of the Sun Yat-sen University in Moscow. Mif brought with him a group of his former students, known contemptuously by their factional opponents as the "Twenty-eight Bolsheviks." At the Fourth Plenum, in January 1931, Mif succeeded in having his protégés, headed by Wang Ming, elevated to leadership in the party.⁵⁵

The Wang Ming leadership dominated the central leading bodies until the Long March period of 1934-36. But the oppositional factions of Ho Meng-hsiung and Lo Chang-lung actually enjoyed the support

53. Cited by Harold Isaacs, *The Tragedy of the Chinese Revolution* (New York: Atheneum, 1966), p. 330.

54. Li Li-san remained nominally on the Central Committee until the "Cultural Revolution."

55. Harrison, *The Long March to Power*, p. 187. (Wang Ming, as he is generally known, was a pseudonym of Ch'en Shao-yu.)

of most of the rank and file in early 1931. Protesting the undemocratic nature of the Fourth Plenum, Ho formed an emergency committee and demanded a new party conference and the recall of Mif. However, while meeting in conference in Shanghai, Ho and other leaders of the dissidents were arrested by the British police, who handed them over to the KMT. They were promptly executed. Lo Chang-lung charged that the Wang Ming clique had tipped off the police to rid themselves of their opponents. Lo then was expelled from the party and in turn established a rival organization that had branches in six provinces in eastern and northern China. It disappeared after Lo was arrested by the KMT in April 1933.⁵⁶

It was during the factional fights of the late 1920s and early 1930s that the leadership apparatus of the CCP adopted not only the general Stalinist practice of expelling dissenters for their political views, but of creating an actual police formation for use within the party, on the model of Stalin's GPU.

In 1930, extensive purges had been ordered by Li Li-san of what he termed Trotskyist, liquidationist, and rightist circles in the party ranks. After the Fourth Plenum, another series of expulsions took place of alleged supporters of the Li Li-san line, of Lo's supporters, of Trotskyists, and of so-called Third Party elements.⁵⁷

After July 1927, the CCP had established its own secret police whose initial function was to detect KMT police agents infiltrating the party. Chiang's undercover operatives had caused the arrest of tens of thousands of party members.⁵⁸

The CCP secret police (called the "Special Affairs" department; after 1938: the "Social Affairs" department) was headed by Chou En-lai and K'ang Sheng in the ensuing period. The party secret police soon came to be used against critics of the party leadership. The CCP leaders intro-

56. Klein and Clark, *Biographic Dictionary of Chinese Communism*, vol. I, pp. 635-37. Klein and Clark are mistaken in speculating that Lo Chang-lung is Liu Chia-lien, a Trotskyist who fled China in 1948 and was lured to his death in North Vietnam by Ho Chi Minh's forces. Liu was an entirely different person.

57. The Third Party was founded by Teng Yenta, a leader of the Wuhan Kuomintang who broke with Wang Ching-wei and fled to Moscow after the suppression of the CCP in July 1927. It was later headed by T'an P'ing-shan, who had been the CCP minister of agriculture in the Wuhan government. It sought a "middle course" between the CCP and Chiang Kai-shek.

58. From 1927 to 1937 the KMT claimed to have arrested 24,000 party members and 155,525 sympathizers. CCP sources accuse the KMT of killing 300,000 in the same period. (See Hsu Kai-yu, *Chou En-lai: China's Gray Eminence* [New York: Doubleday, 1968], pp. 94-95, and Harrison, *The Long March to Power*, p. 220.)

duced the method of falsely denouncing political opponents within the Communist movement as "capitalist agents." When the party was in the process of hunting down and dispatching real capitalist agents, the Stalinists found it expedient to include on their list political dissenters who had been framed-up on the same charge by the party leadership. This practice was especially true in the "soviet" areas where governmental power was in the hands of the CCP. Mao became one of the accomplished practitioners of such Stalinist police methods in his climb to the top of the CCP hierarchy.

The Kiangsi "Soviet"

In 1928 Mao maintained his leading position in the Ching kangshan party apparatus only with difficulty. Late the previous year, he had lost his post to representatives of the Hunan party committee acting in behalf of the central leadership. In September 1928 he succeeded in ousting these opponents in his first major coup, which gave him control of the then Fourth Red Army.

Near the end of 1930 the most bloody internal struggle in the history of the CCP prior to the Cultural Revolution took place. This was the famous "Fut'ien Incident" in which Mao used military force to crush a rival political opposition within the Kiangsi "Soviet" area.

In his 1936 interviews with Edgar Snow, Mao told his side of the story:

"Part of the Third Corps favoured following out [Li Li-san's] line, and demanded the separation of the Third Corps from the rest of the army. P'eng Teh-huai fought vigorously against this tendency, however, and succeeded in maintaining the unity of the forces under his command. . . . But the 20th Army, led by Liu Ti-tsao, rose in open revolt, arrested the chairman of the Kiangsi Soviet, arrested many officers and officials, and attacked us politically, on the basis of the Li Li-san line. This occurred at Fu Tien and is known as the Fu Tien Incident. . . . the events produced a sensation, and to many it must have seemed that the fate of the revolution depended on the outcome of this struggle. However, the revolt was quickly suppressed, due to the loyalty of the Third Army, to the general solidarity of the Party and the Red troops, and to the support of the peasantry. Liu Ti-tsao was arrested, and other rebels disarmed and liquidated."⁵⁹

Mao leaves out a few facts here. He does not mention that the first act in this clash was the arrest, by Mao's troops, in mid-November of 4,400 members of the Twentieth Corps of the "Red Army" on trumped-up charges of being unrepentant supporters of the Li Li-san line and of *also*

being agents of the Kuomintang's counter-revolutionary Anti-Bolshevik League. This was a typical Stalinist frame-up, and was later repudiated as false by an official



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party investigation (under the new Wang Ming leadership, which had no love either for Li Li-san or for the KMT).⁶⁰

It was in response to these illegal arrests that the "revolt" took place. The aim of the rebels was to free the unjustly imprisoned local leaders. Mao's forces counterattacked but were unable to suppress the dissidents for several months, although the Maoists carried out widespread executions of captured opponents. From May until July 1931 Mao staged mass trials of the defeated communist rebels.⁶¹

What is significant here is not that differences could reach an intensity that led to a physical struggle. The Maoist apologists would like to reduce the Fut'ien Incident to a platitude of that kind. What it does show is Mao's readiness to use violence against fellow party members before a discussion had even opened, to lie about his victims' positions to other members of his party and to the masses he claimed to lead, and finally to endanger the revolution in order to preserve his own position of power.

This last was graphically if unintentionally revealed by Mao himself in his

60. Harrison, *The Long March to Power*, pp. 214-15.

61. Ronald Suleski, "The Fu-t'ien Incident," University of Michigan Papers in Chinese Studies, no. 4 (Ann Arbor, 1969), pp. 12-14. Warren Kuo, *Analytical History of the CCP*, four volumes (Taipei, 1966), pp. 298 ff., 328-38, 365-67.

writings on the war between the Kiangsi "Soviet" and Chiang Kai-shek. The Fut'ien Incident took place while the KMT national government carried on three "Extermination Campaigns" against the "soviet" areas: in December 1930-January 1931; in February-May 1931, and in July-September 1931. Whereas in his story to Edgar Snow Mao claimed that his forces won at Fut'ien in part because they had the "support of the peasantry," in writing on the actual battles with Chiang's troops, Mao had to explain to his readers why he did not dare to establish a battlefield at Fut'ien. Here is what he said:

"It was not advisable to open up a battlefield in Futien and Tungku where the inhabitants, misled by the A.-B. [Anti-Bolshevik] Group, had as yet no faith in the Red Army and were even opposed to it."⁶²

This resurrection (in 1936!) of the slander about the "Anti-Bolshevik" conspiracy, discredited by the official CCP investigation in 1931, is here used against the peasants of Fut'ien to explain away their demoralization after the bureaucratic power struggle that took place in their region.

It is worth noting that while the actual political differences between the Fut'ien "rebels" and Mao remain obscure, the demands of the former on the peasant question are known and were as follows:

"Oppose the rich peasants!" "Divide the land equally!" "Oppose the capture of the government by landlords and rich peasants!"⁶³

These indicate, for one thing, the conservative character of Mao's land policy in this period, and also give the lie to the claim that these were "Li Li-sanists," inasmuch as Li was often criticized for his conservative line on agrarian reform. But it is small wonder that the peasants, seeing the champions of these demands executed by the Maoists, and a military government imposed on them, "were even opposed" to Mao's "Red Army."

The inner-party debates over the Fut'ien Incident reveal quite graphically the differences between Mao's "soviets" and the democratic self-organization of the workers in their own councils as occurred in the Russian revolution. The impetus given to bureaucratism in a poverty-stricken rural setting becomes obvious when this contrast is made. Instead of already organized workers, belonging to different political tendencies and prepared to ensure that their representatives actually defend their interests, we see an amorphous, scattered peasantry ruled by a self-appointed "communist" leadership at the head of a tightly centralized military command structure.

This relationship between rulers and ruled was solidified in the years in the

62. Mao Tse-tung, *Selected Works* (London: Lawrence & Wishart, 1955), vol. I, p. 227.

63. Cited in Schwartz, *Chinese Communism and the Rise of Mao*, pp. 175-76.

59. Snow, *Red Star Over China*, pp. 162-63.

countryside and then imported into the cities after the fall of Chiang Kai-shek. It has been the backbone of the Chinese Stalinist bureaucratic system. Naturally the commanders did not neglect their own physical comforts along the way.

The central leadership of the CCP attempted at first to mediate the internal dispute caused by Mao's actions at Fut'ien. After September 1931, however, Mao's conduct was more openly criticized and even Mao supporters such as Chu Te and Teng Fa condemned him for sending many Communists to their deaths.

The First Conference of Party Branches in the Soviet Areas, held late in 1931, condemned Mao's use of force against party members and against the masses. In February 1931, the CCP Central Bureau had ruled on the Fut'ien Incident that it was "hard to support the subjective conclusion that the incident was an anti-Bolshevik and liquidationist revolt" and that "Without further proof, the incident was arbitrarily used to incriminate 'anyone as an anti-Bolshevik liquidationist.'"⁶⁴ In January 1932, the Central Bureau harshly castigated Mao for using the presence in the area of some agents of the Anti-Bolshevik Group to maintain a reign of terror.

The resolution denounced the "dangerous practice of treating suppression of counterrevolutionaries as a central task. In fighting the anti-Bolsheviks, the indiscriminate use of prisoners' confessions and of physical torture has made counterreaction work a subjective proposition; . . . consequently, many revolutionary organizations and offices have been destroyed in the fight against the anti-Bolsheviks. . . . No effort has been made to mobilize, educate, and win over the masses. On the contrary, a reign of terror has been created among the masses, permitting them to be utilized by counterrevolutionaries. . . .

"The method of fighting the anti-Bolsheviks and social democrats has not only been oversimplified but also has degenerated. For instance, unchecked confessions have been depended upon as the sole evidence to arrest suspects, especially workers and peasants; physical torture has become the means to exact confessions, and capital punishment has been meted out without discretion. The most serious problem is a fear within the Party that makes comrades suspicious of each other."⁶⁵

This is a precise description of the methods of the Moscow trials, which still lay five years in the future in the Soviet Union. Mao, in fact, introduced these practices into the Communist movement in advance of Stalin, which is one reason why his initiative on this score was still

condemned by the party leadership in 1931. Later these would become the standard operating procedures of world Stalinism.

The Fut'ien purge strengthened Mao's hand against his local opposition in Kiangsi, a stepping stone on the way to control of the party as a whole. It secured his election as chairman of the Central Executive Committee of the "Chinese Soviet Republic" proclaimed by the "First All-China Congress of Soviets" in November 1931, in Juichin. He also became the chairman of the Council of People's Commissars.

The national party leadership, however, still remained in the hands of Mif's protégés, supported by Chou En-lai, Chang Kuo-t'ao, and others. They were quick to move in on Mao's fief. As national leading figures in the CCP shifted their area of work to Kiangsi, Mao progressively lost key positions in the military apparatus, and after January 1934 he lost his chairmanship in the government as well.

It was not until the January 1935 party conference at Tsunyi, during the Long March, after the collapse of the Kiangsi "Soviet" that Mao would regain some of his former positions. Mao's reduction in status after 1931 was not the result of political disagreements, however; it was because he was regarded as a provincial figure in the party leadership and the central party leaders simply took over the administration of the Kiangsi base when they transferred operations there from Shanghai. At the time, Mao said nothing about any "Wang Ming 'Left' opportunist line." After the Tsunyi conference, Mao did begin to talk about tactical military errors committed by the Wang Ming leadership, but it was not until 1944 that he openly criticized Wang Ming by name.

The current version of early party history, with Mao always prophetically in opposition to all the errors, was invented only in 1945, when Mao finally consolidated his hold on the party leadership. A 1945 resolution on party history, written by Mao and adopted by the Central Committee, thoroughly revised and falsified the story of the Kiangsi period.⁶⁶

Having secured firm personal domination of the party leadership during the *cheng-feng* (rectification) movement of 1942-44 (designed to rectify "erroneous" tendencies in the party), Mao set about to make scapegoats of the Wang Ming clique for the Kiangsi debacle. His purpose was twofold—to discredit them for all time as potential rivals and also to build for himself the myth of omniscience and infallibility à la Stalin.

The real history of the Kiangsi period, as

revealed in documents of the time, shows that Mao, unlike Ho Meng-hsiung and Lo Chang-lung, never questioned the authority of the Comintern and of the central party leadership chosen by it. Insofar as he "struggled" with others in the party leadership, it was not over the essentials of Stalinism, which he did not disagree with. Nor was it ever an open and honest political battle such as Marx or Lenin waged against their political opponents, in which the party ranks and the masses of workers outside the party could read the opposed positions and make up their own minds. Instead, Mao's method of struggle was like Stalin's: moves in the dark, slander campaigns, public agreement combined with secret sabotage.

The essence of these methods is contempt for the ranks and for the masses, who are deliberately excluded from participating in decisions or even understanding the implications of decisions that have been reached by such methods.

For the record, at the Fifth Plenum and the Second All-China Congress of Soviets, both held in Juichin in January 1934, Mao gave his full and public endorsement to the "correct line" of the Central Committee headed by Wang Ming.⁶⁷ This carries more weight than Mao's claims, ten years later, that he led an opposition to Wang Ming.

Mao's endorsements of the party leadership at the Fifth Plenum have since disappeared from his *Selected Works*. The same is true of the report of his approval in early 1933 of the CCP Central Committee's criticism of Lo Ming, the only prominent member of the CCP to advocate guerrilla warfare as opposed to positional warfare in confronting Chiang Kai-shek's annihilation campaigns. This is significant because Mao would later explain away the defeat of the Kiangsi "Soviet" by Wang Ming's insistence on using positional warfare and Wang's alleged rejection of Mao's proposal to use guerrilla tactics instead.

In reality the Kiangsi "Soviet" fell not because of faulty military tactics but because it was from the first an adventure, an isolated enclave too close to the centers of Kuomintang power to be tolerated. Moreover, it was cut off from working-class support in China's cities that could have stayed Chiang's hand. But even if Mao were of the opinion that guerrilla warfare could have salvaged the Kiangsi base in 1934, he said nothing about this until long after the defeat.

The CCP lost its base among the city workers in the early 1930s not solely because of repression. It was even more a result of the party's ultraleft and sectarian policies. It ignored the workers' elementary

64. Cited in Harrison, *The Long March to Power*, p. 215.

65. Cited in *ibid.*, p. 216.

66. See William F. Dorrill, "Transfer of Legitimacy in the CCP: Origins of the Maoist Myth," in John Wilson Lewis, ed., *Party Leadership and Revolutionary Power in China*, pp. 81 ff.

67. Hsiao Tso-liang, *Power Relations Within the Chinese Communist Movement, 1930-34* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1961), p. 272.

economic demands, abstained from working in the trade unions that embraced the majority of workers, frittered away whatever combativity remained in adventurous actions, refused to enter into united-front actions with other working class and anti-imperialist forces. The workers' movement and the peasant revolts were thus isolated from each other.

The CCP in the end deserted the city workers altogether and shifted its cadres to the countryside. It came to control a force of peasant guerrillas who fought many heroic battles. But alone, in the conditions of the early 1930s, they could not hope to sustain a government and territory in the heart of Kuomintang China. Chiang Kai-shek was able at the end of 1934 to crush the isolated peasant "soviets." The CCP set off on the Long March of 6,600 miles into North China.

Leon Trotsky, the coleader with Lenin of the Russian revolution and the founder of the Soviet Red Army, sought in the period of the Kiangsi "Soviet" to assess its social character and its revolutionary potential. In the fall of 1932 he wrote:

"The peasant movement has created its own armies, has seized great territories, and has installed its own institutions. In the event of further successes—and all of us, of course, passionately desire such successes—the movement will become linked up with the urban and industrial centers and, through that very fact, it will come face to face with the working class. What will be the nature of this encounter? Is it certain that its character will be peaceful and friendly?"⁶⁸

The workers and the peasants remain two separate and distinct classes. The workers are brought together by capitalist production, the individual peasant proprietors are dispersed. The workers can administer the factories only collectively, the peasants desire their own individual piece of land. Workers through their trade unions and parties learn to make their own decisions and to act socially and politically in unison. The peasantry, while periodically erupting in rebellion against the local tyranny of the landlords and usurers, does not through its ordinary conditions of life enter into such associations, and when it takes part as a force in national politics it invariably does so under the leadership of one of the urban classes: the workers, the bourgeoisie, or the urban petty bourgeoisie. It is a matter of critical importance which urban class wins the leadership of the peasants. And if it is to be the workers, it must be through the workers' actual mass organizations.

Trotsky examined the "worker-peasant alliance" represented by the CCP military leadership in Kiangsi:

"But after all aren't there communists at

the head of the Chinese Red armies? Doesn't this by itself exclude the possibility of conflicts between the peasant detach-



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ments and the workers' organizations? No, that does not exclude it. The fact that individual communists are in the leadership of the present armies does not at all transform the social character of these armies, even if their communist leaders bear a definite proletarian stamp. And how do matters stand in China?

"Among the communist leaders of Red detachments there indubitably are many declassed intellectuals and semi-intellectuals who have not gone through the school of proletarian struggle. For two or three years they live the lives of partisan commanders and commissars; they wage battles, seize territories, etc. They absorb the spirit of their environment. Meanwhile the majority of the rank-and-file communists in the Red detachments unquestionably consist of peasants, who assume the name communist in all honesty and sincerity but who in actuality remain revolutionary paupers or revolutionary petty proprietors. In politics he who judges by denominations and labels and not by social facts is lost. All the more so when the politics concerned is carried out arms in hand."⁶⁹

Trotsky drew these conclusions from this situation:

"The commanding stratum of the Chinese 'Red Army' has no doubt succeeded in inculcating itself with the habit of issuing commands. The absence of a strong revolutionary party and of mass organizations of the proletariat renders control over the commanding stratum virtually impossible. The commanders and commissars appear in the guise of absolute masters of the situation and upon occupying cities

will be rather apt to look down from above upon the workers. . . .

"Thus, in China the causes and grounds for conflicts between the army, which is peasant in composition and petty bourgeois in leadership, and the workers not only are not eliminated but, on the contrary, all the circumstances are such as to greatly increase the possibility and even the inevitability of such conflicts; and in addition the chances of the proletariat are far less favorable to begin with than was the case in Russia."⁷⁰

Trotsky sketches here the first form of the petty-bourgeois Stalinist caste taking shape in the hinterlands of China.

The CCP would eventually win state power from Chiang Kai-shek. This took place fifteen years after the fall of Kiangsi, when the collapse of the Japanese imperialist invaders left a power vacuum in much of North China that was filled by Mao's forces, and when Chiang, not Mao, launched a civil war in July 1946 (against the protests of his American advisers).

There was a legacy of the Kiangsi "Soviet" period. And it was not the revolutionary preparation of the CCP for final victory, as the Maoist propagandists would have it. That victory was a result of circumstances still unforeseen that would grow out of the dislocations of World War II. The real legacy of Kiangsi was a structure of military-bureaucratic power in which the masses exercised no decision-making role. The CCP, based on the peasant "Red Army," took the cities in the final civil war without the participation of the Chinese workers and ruled thereafter without bothering to consult them.

Mao and his party became the instrumentality of a great social revolution that propelled a quarter of the human race out of stagnation and oppression. But the motor of the revolution was the Chinese masses. The CCP was thrust forward in violation of its theory and of its program, and under threat of being by-passed. □

70. *Ibid.*, pp. 526-27.

Nigerian Regime Unveils Constitution

The military government of Lt. Gen. Olusegun Obasanjo released the draft of a new constitution October 7. It promised a return to civilian rule in Nigeria by October 1979, although previous promises of this type have been postponed.

The constitution stresses "national unity," and forbids political parties from taking names or mottoes suggesting tribal affiliations. Another step to prevent the rise of parties representing specific national groups within Nigeria is a provision subjecting political parties to governing committees that would have to be composed of members from at least two-thirds of the states.

68. Leon Trotsky, "Peasant War in China and the Proletariat" (September 22, 1932), in *Leon Trotsky on China*, p. 523.

69. *Ibid.*, pp. 524-25.

AROUND THE WORLD



Peking Continues Factional Course

The Maoist bureaucrats in Peking took another opportunity to reaffirm their blindly factional course against the Soviet Union when Chinese Foreign Minister Chiao Kuan-hua addressed the United Nations General Assembly October 5. Chiao answered Soviet Foreign Minister Andrei A. Gromyko, who had spoken of the "positive impact" normalization of Soviet-Chinese relations would have, with a lengthy denunciation of "Soviet social-imperialism."

New York Times correspondent Peter Grose pointed out that "the United States, by contrast, emerged relatively unscathed from China's first major foreign-policy address since Mao's death."

He added that "when it came to specific situations—southern Africa, European security and such—the criticism of American policy was muted and indirect."

Powell Says Repatriate Immigrants

Enoch Powell, Britain's most notorious racist leader, called for shipping one million nonwhite immigrants back to the West Indies and Asia in a speech before a Tory party club October 4. Powell, who estimated the cost of his project at \$1.7 billion, said:

"Physical and violent conflict must

sooner or later supervene where an indigenous population sees no end to the progressive occupation of its heartland by aliens with whom they do not identify themselves and who do not identify themselves with them."

There are about two million Black and brown immigrants among Britain's population of 55 million. The immigrant population has recently come under growing attack by racist forces.

Life Under the Park Regime

Although most political prisoners in South Korea whose cases have been publicized are students, intellectuals, or clergymen, the repression carried out by the Park Chung Hee dictatorship affects much broader layers of society. A sketch of everyday life under the Park regime was given by Andrew H. Malcolm in the September 26 *New York Times*.

"Country folk are stopped up to a half dozen times per journey to show their identification," Malcolm reported. "Slum workers are tortured by police to admit their allegiance to Communism. Prayer meetings are broken up, or interrupted by agents photographing every worshipper. Families under suspicion are followed 24 hours a day. . . . The tails are purposely less than unobtrusive to inhibit activities and conversations; [they sometimes] join a sidewalk group as a listener, without invitation."

Malcolm also reports that "the economy is booming, [but] it is based on incredibly low wages, which the so-called unions do nothing about . . . because any labor movement agitation is smashed strongly with arrests, trials and imprisonment as Communist spies."

Communist Veteran Scores Kremlin for Betraying Ideals of Revolution

Arnosht Kolman, a Communist for fifty-eight years, has denounced the leadership of the Soviet Communist party for betraying the ideals of the Bolshevik revolution. Born in Prague eighty-four years ago, Kolman came to Russia as a prisoner of war during World War I and joined the Bolshevik party in 1918.

Imprisoned during the last years of the Stalin era, Kolman was later rehabilitated and served as director of the Institute of Philosophy in Prague. He retired in 1963 and returned to the Soviet Union to live.

Kolman, who has asked for political asylum in Sweden, made public October 6 an open letter to Soviet Communist party chief Leonid Brezhnev. In the letter, Kolman said that he "began to understand how deeply distorted the party had become," as a result of the Khrushchev revelations detailing Stalin's crimes. He became totally disillusioned after the invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968.

"I understood that the Soviet Communist Party had long since ceased to be a political party, that it had been transformed into a 'mutual benefit society for the early fulfillment of the five-year plan.' Its members, the congresses, even the Central Committee have virtually no influence over the shaping of policies, which are determined by you personally from your high ruling perch," Kolman said in his letter to Brezhnev.

"And in any case," he added, "about what sort of socialism can one talk in the Soviet Union, when the place of the former capitalist and landowner exploiting classes has been taken by the privileged castes of the party and state bureaucracies? They are drowning in wealth, live isolated from the people, above them, and contemptuous of ordinary folk not wishing to and incapable of understanding their needs and suffering."

Palestinians Protest

Palestinians living under Israeli rule joined together in protest September 28. The action, originally called by the officials of Arab towns and villages in the Galilee region to demand the dismissal of a particularly racist Israeli government official, spread to the Israeli-occupied Gaza Strip and the West Bank.

Demonstrations took place in Nablus, Hebron, Gaza, and Tulkarm. *Washington Post* correspondent H.D.S. Greenway went to Nablus, where shops and schools were all closed. "Like Northern Ireland and South Africa," he noted, "it is the children who are most involved in these affairs—often to the chagrin of their more conservative parents, who do not love the Israeli but do not want trouble either."

Number of Poor in U.S. Rises

An increase of 2.5 million persons in the number living below the official poverty level was reported by the U.S. Census Bureau September 25. It was the biggest



ENOCH POWELL: Britain's No. 1 racist.

increase in the seventeen years that the government has been keeping track of this statistic.

The government-defined poverty level—an income below \$5,500 a year for a family of four—is set at a level that is far below what is actually necessary for the provision of adequate food, clothing, and shelter. Nevertheless, 12.3 percent of the American people—roughly one-eighth of the population—were in this category in 1975. Thirty-one percent of the poor were Black, although Blacks are less than 12 percent of the population according to the Census Bureau.

Government figures also showed that the purchasing power of the average American working family decreased by 2.6 percent, following a 3.5 percent drop in 1974. The real income of American families has decreased during four of the last six years, and is no greater today than in 1967.

Vorster Regime Lied on Soweto Deaths

At least 353 persons were gunned down by South African police in the African township of Soweto this June, not 176 as Johannesburg authorities announced at the time. Tsietsi Mashinini, president of the Soweto Student Council, told a London news conference October 5 that he and two colleagues were able to make their own casualty count.

"We went to the mortuary each day and managed to read the numbers which were being put on to the foreheads of the people who had died. I saw these numbers going up to 353 and that was after the first three days of the shooting," Mashinini said.

He described one incident he saw, in which an eight-year-old girl had raised her fist in the Black power salute as a vehicle filled with riot police passed. The police "stopped and opened fire on that child. On Saturday we went to the mortuary and found the body of the little girl and found the body riddled with bullets."

Iran to Get Two Nuclear Reactors

French President Valéry Giscard d'Estaing and the shah of Iran signed a contract October 6 under which the French will build two nuclear reactors at Darkovin, near the oil port of Abadan. The twin plants will have a capacity of 900 megawatts each and will cost \$1.2 billion. The contract also provides for a nuclear research center at Isfahan, south of Tehran, and for the training of Iranian scientists and technicians.

Iranian Prime Minister Amir Abbas Hoveida assured those who cared to listen that "the atomic bomb does not interest us. We want to master nuclear technology."

Two Cape Verdeans Killed in Portugal

An attack on Cape Verdean workers at a tungsten mine in central Portugal October

6 left two Cape Verdeans dead and seven others seriously injured. The Cape Verde Islands, a former colony of Portugal, won their independence following the overthrow of the Salazarist dictatorship in April 1974. However, both Black and racially mixed Cape Verdeans continue to suffer from discrimination within Portugal, where they are relegated to the worst jobs.



FALLDIN: Has second thoughts on election promise to curtail nuclear power program.

Sweden: The Election Is Over . . .

On October 8, less than three weeks after winning the Swedish elections, Prime Minister Thorbjorn Falldin delivered a policy speech to Parliament in which he reneged on one of his principal promises during the election campaign.

Falldin had vowed to end the Swedish nuclear power program, attacking it on the ground that disposal of atomic waste and other safety problems had not yet been solved. In his speech, however, Falldin withdrew his opposition to allowing the Barseback 2 nuclear reactor in southern Sweden to begin operation next year.

Philippine Dissidents Call for Boycott of Vote on Martial Law

Philippine President Ferdinand Marcos has scheduled his fourth referendum on the continuation of martial law for October 16, but some voters have had enough of the dictator's plebiscites. One Manila office worker explained, "I always vote 'no' but it's always entered at the precinct as 'yes.' Martial law doesn't allow you to say 'no.'"

Although failure to vote is punishable by up to six months in prison, a number of groups have called for a boycott of the October 16 referendum. The Civil Liberties

Union—a group of former parliamentarians and legal experts—has announced that it "will take no part" in the vote, and a statement calling for a boycott has also been issued by the executive boards of the Catholic religious orders in the Philippines.

The Catholics' statement said, "We believe any referendum held under these oppressive circumstances cannot but be a vicious farce, a most unconscionable mockery too of our people's dignity. We will not participate in an act that further degrades and debases us and our people."

Chinese Regime Reports 'Sabotage'

Radio broadcasts monitored in Hong Kong have reported unrest in at least four Chinese provinces following the death of Mao Tsetung September 9. "Sabotage" by "class enemies" was reported in the adjoining provinces of Kiangsu, Chekiang, and Kiangsi.

Kiangsu includes the city of Shanghai and the important industrial area north of it. The provincial capital of Chekiang is Hangchow, where the regime ordered army troops into the factories to break a strike by the workers last year.

A broadcast from Kiangsi monitored September 26 said, "We must resolutely suppress the counterrevolutionaries and those who engage in beating, smashing and looting. We must deal hard blows at the class enemies who spread rumors to confuse and poison people's minds and who disrupt social order."

The broadcast also referred to the type of factional political activity that had occurred during the Cultural Revolution, saying, "it is not allowed to establish ties, to build mountain strongholds or to organize fighting groups in any form."

A broadcast from Tsinghai Province, which borders Tibet, was also monitored. It said, "It is necessary to resolutely expose and deal blows at a tiny group of class enemies who spread rumors to create confusion, disrupt public order, instigate a stoppage of work and production and engage in other sabotage."

Gandhi's Police Shut Down Newspaper

Armed policemen padlocked the presses of *The Indian Express* in New Delhi October 4. The action came just two days after the newspaper got a court order to restore its electricity after a two-day blackout.

The Express has been subjected to an ongoing campaign of harassment by the Gandhi dictatorship because of its refusal to replace several top editors. On October 6, the newspaper won a court order freeing its presses, but in the meantime it had been prevented from putting out its 80,000-copy New Delhi edition. *The Express* also publishes editions in seven other Indian cities, which were not interfered with.

Nueva Ofensiva de Assad en Líbano

Por David Frankel

[El siguiente artículo apareció en el número del 11 de octubre de nuestra revista, con el título "Assad's New Offensive in Lebanon." La traducción es de *Intercontinental Press*.]

Después de un año y medio de lucha, está claro que la guerra civil en Líbano se acerca a un punto crucial. Con la ayuda del presidente sirio Hafez al-Assad, los derechos cristianos esperan ahora una victoria militar.

En el norte de Líbano, las fuerzas de los palestinos y los musulmanes de izquierda están cercadas en un pequeño enclave alrededor de la ciudad de Trípoli. En el sur, que ha sido durante largo tiempo un fortín de los palestinos, los falangistas han comenzado a levantar cabeza. Han recibido armas y entrenamiento de Israel, y dirigentes falangistas dicen que pronto emprenderán la ofensiva en la región meridional.

Pero lo que cambió la relación de fuerzas en la guerra civil fue la rápida victoria de las fuerzas sirias y de la derecha libanesa en la batalla de las montañas al este de Beirut. El 28 de septiembre, tropas sirias y derechos libaneses, respaldados por fuego masivo de artillería y por lo menos noventa tanques de fabricación soviética, emprendieron una ofensiva contra las posiciones de los palestinos en las montañas.

En dos días de lucha, las fuerzas palestinas fueron expulsadas de un saliente de diecinueve kilómetros de longitud, su última posición importante al norte de la carretera de Beirut a Damasco. Las tropas sirias que ocupaban la parte oriental de Líbano pudieron entonces unirse con los derechos cristianos en el oeste, y ahora las fuerzas proimperialistas amenazan el último pequeño tramo de la carretera de Beirut a Damasco que aún está en poder de los palestinos y los izquierdistas musulmanes.

Todavía más importante, Beirut mismo está amenazado con el sitio. Una nota del 30 de septiembre de la agencia United Press International citó a un palestino que dijo: "La pérdida de Tel Zaatar fue un golpe a nuestro prestigio. Pero el frente de las montañas es una verdadera pérdida estratégica." (Tel Zaatar, un campo de refugiados palestinos en Beirut, resistió un sitio de cincuenta y cinco días antes de caer ante los ataques de los derechos en agosto.)

A la vez que mantenía el carácter escalonado que ha tenido su intervención en Líbano hasta ahora, Assad ordenó a sus

tropas que detuvieran la ofensiva después de que consiguieron expulsar a los palestinos de sus posiciones clave en las montañas. Cuando los derechos cristianos intentaron continuar el ataque por sí mismos el 1 de octubre, tuvieron que retirarse con severas pérdidas.

La táctica de Assad de alternar la presión militar y las negociaciones ha llevado a algunos comentaristas a sugerir que está intentando "reducir el movimiento palestino a un tamaño controlable," como lo planteó Geoffrey Godsell en el *Christian Science Monitor* del 4 de octubre. De forma parecida, el corresponsal del *New York Times* Henry Tanner argumenta que "los sirios querían 'amaestrar' al movimiento [palestino], no liquidarlo."

Es cierto que a Assad le gustaría darse el lujo de tener una Organización de Liberación Palestina amaestrada, que pudiera utilizar como peón en las negociaciones con Israel y en sus relaciones con otros regímenes árabes. Y ha llamado a la sustitución de la actual dirección de la OLP.

Pero no es solamente el movimiento palestino de liberación nacional el que está amenazado por las acciones de Assad. Toda la comunidad palestina en Líbano está en peligro de muerte. Cualquiera que sean las intenciones de Assad (y hay razones para suponer lo peor) su política en Líbano llevará inexorablemente a una masacre sangrienta, si tiene éxito.

Los palestinos ya han probado que son un peligro siempre presente, en lo que respecta a los aliados derechos de Assad en Líbano. Tanto el movimiento palestino de liberación nacional como la población que le da origen son una amenaza para el régimen cristiano maronita que ha gobernado Líbano durante los últimos treinta años.

Si los derechos maronitas recuperan la supremacía en Líbano, solamente será cuestión de tiempo antes de que intenten ajustar cuentas. Un joven palestino que estaba combatiendo en las montañas demostró que estaba consciente de esto cuando dijo: ¿Qué podemos hacer? ¿Adónde podremos ir si no luchamos? ¿Al mar? Los israelíes harían agujeros en nuestros barcos" (*New York Times*, 30 de septiembre).

El presidente egipcio Anwar al-Sadat acusó a Assad el 28 de septiembre de intentar "liquidar la resistencia palestina en Líbano" con su nueva ofensiva. Dijo: "El único vencedor es Israel."

La declaración era exacta, pero el mismo

Sadat, junto con el resto de los gobernantes árabes, ha estado haciendo un juego cínico. A la vez que ha apoyado verbalmente la causa palestina, no ha hecho ningún esfuerzo real por detener a Assad. Por el contrario, Sadat se comprometió a apoyar plenamente a Elias Sarkis, el nuevo presidente de Líbano, elegido con el apoyo sirio y que ha aprobado explícitamente la presencia del ejército de Assad en Líbano.

El régimen de Arabia Saudita hizo un gesto de hipocresía similar, anunciando la retirada de sus tropas estacionadas en los altos del Golán, como forma ostensible de protesta por la ofensiva de Assad.

El Kremlin, que también declara su apoyo a los palestinos, se ha limitado a reprochar a Assad en cartas, y a pedirle que se retire de Líbano. El ejército sirio depende completamente de equipo de fabricación soviética, pero Moscú no ha hecho nada para cortar los suministros.

Mientras tanto, el Departamento de Estado de los Estados Unidos y el régimen israelí están observando los acontecimientos de Líbano con abierta satisfacción. Con los palestinos rodeados en tierra, bloqueados por mar y aparentemente sin recursos en su última posición, los imperialistas tienen ilusiones de eliminar al fin el bloque más importante que obstaculiza un arreglo impuesto en el Medio Oriente.

Sin embargo, los palestinos todavía no han sido derrotados. A este respecto, Assad se enfrenta a un dilema que puede incluso producir su caída. Si se intenta mover rápidamente contra las posiciones palestinas en Beirut y Saida, se arriesga a sufrir muchas bajas y una oposición en las filas de su ejército. A la vez, cuanto más dure la intervención en Líbano, mayores son los problemas con que Assad se enfrenta en su país.

Se ha informado que alrededor de 100 palestinos están en las cárceles sirias por realizar actividades contra la intervención de Assad en Líbano. El nerviosismo sobre el apoyo con que cuenta en su propio país se reflejó en la decisión de Assad de llevar a cabo ahorcamientos públicos el 27 de septiembre, los primeros realizados en Damasco en once años. Las víctimas fueron tres guerrilleros que tomaron rehenes e intentaron intercambiarlos por prisioneros de Assad.

Pero incluso si los palestinos son derrotados militarmente en Líbano, el problema de Palestina seguirá persiguiendo a los que lo quieren ver enterrado de una vez por todas. Después de la guerra árabe-israelí de 1948-49, incluso el nombre de Palestina desapareció del mapa. En 1967, el régimen israelí se fortaleció por medio de una victoria militar sobre sus oponentes árabes. En 1970, el movimiento de liberación palestino en Jordania fue derrotado, y sus organizaciones destruidas. Pero, en cualquier caso, el problema de Palestina continúa estando en el centro de la política del Medio Oriente. □

Huelga General de 600,000 en el País Vasco

Por Tony Thomas

[El siguiente artículo apareció en el número del 11 de octubre de nuestra revista, con el título "600,000 Join General Strike in Basque Country." La traducción es de *Intercontinental Press*.]

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El 27 de septiembre, todo el País Vasco en el estado español estalló en una huelga general masiva como protesta por la represión política y la negativa a concederle al pueblo vasco sus derechos nacionales.

Rouge, el diario trotskista francés, informó que 600,000 obreros, "quizás toda la clase obrera del País Vasco," respondió a la convocatoria de huelga general.

Rouge describía el ambiente durante la huelga: "En Vizcaya, Navarra, Alava y Guipúzcoa [las cuatro provincias vascas], el paro fue total. Por todas partes se veía lo mismo: las cortinas y persianas de tiendas cerradas, sólo funcionaban unos pocos autobuses transportando huelguistas, y por todas partes había asambleas, reuniones."

Una información en *Le Monde* del 23 de septiembre decía que "todas las organizaciones políticas de la oposición en el País Vasco, desde los socialistas moderados hasta la ETA,"¹ habían convocado a la huelga el 21 de septiembre. La fecha que se eligió para la huelga era el primer aniversario de la ejecución, el 27 de septiembre de 1975, de tres miembros del FRAP² y dos miembros de la ETA, acusados de "terrorismo" por el régimen fascista.

Una reivindicación especialmente importante de la huelga era la liberación de los presos políticos vascos. Una información de Henry Giniger que apareció en el *New York Times* del 28 de septiembre, estimaba que de los cientos de prisioneros políticos que hay en España, "la mayoría son vascos convictos de los llamados 'crímenes de sangre,' a quienes no ha abarcado la amnistía [de julio de 1976]." Entre estos "crímenes" está el "terrorismo," que abarca cualquier conflicto físico con la policía, o la pertenencia a una organización que el régimen franquista acuse de "terrorismo."

Durante la huelga se produjeron numerosas manifestaciones y enfrentamientos con la policía en todo el País Vasco, según informó Giniger. Grupos de obreros dirigi-

dos por el Partido Comunista y por el Partido Socialista intentaron reunirse pacíficamente en algunas plazas de las ciudades, pero fueron dispersados por la policía antidisturbios que tenía órdenes de no permitir manifestaciones callejeras.

En Baracaldo, ciudad del cinturón industrial de Bilbao, 3,000 huelguistas escuchaban en silencio mientras los oradores decían que "mientras un solo hijo de nuestro pueblo esté en la cárcel, nosotros los demócratas estamos obligados a luchar por él." Tras veinte minutos más de discursos, llegó la policía y atacó violentamente la manifestación.

Rouge informó que en Guernica la policía atacó a una manifestación que iba hacia el ayuntamiento gritando "Amnistía, Libertad."

El 27 de septiembre también se realizó una huelga general en las Islas Canarias. La convocatoria a la huelga se produjo después de que la policía asesinó a Bartolomé García, estudiante de veintiún años, supuestamente por una equivocación al identificarlo. La policía realizó registros en las casas de luchadores por la autonomía de las Islas Canarias, bajo el pretexto de que estaban buscando al secuestrador de un industrial local.

Veinticinco mil personas asistieron al funeral de García el 25 de septiembre. Inmediatamente después del funeral, la policía atacó a grupos de activistas por la autonomía canaria. Una información en *Le Monde* del 28 de septiembre decía: "Los enfrentamientos más violentos produjeron varios heridos entre los manifestantes y seis entre la policía, que habían sido alcanzados por piedras."

Giniger informaba en el *New York Times* del 29 de septiembre que "miles" de personas suspendieron su trabajo como protesta por el ataque de la policía. Dijo que "este movimiento de protesta fue otro ejemplo de cómo la policía había llegado a estar bajo fuego, después de largo tiempo de impunidad hacia la crítica."

En otra protesta más por la brutalidad del régimen, decenas de miles de trabajadores se pusieron en huelga en Madrid el 1 de octubre, protestando por el asesinato de un estudiante de psicología a manos de una banda fascista el 27 de septiembre.

El estudiante Carlos González Martínez fue asesinado como resultado de un ataque del grupo llamado Guerrilleros de Cristo Rey contra una pequeña manifestación con motivo del aniversario de la ejecución de los militantes de ETA y FRAP en 1975. No quedó claro si Martínez había partici-

pado en la manifestación o solamente pasaba por allí.

Los Guerrilleros de Cristo Rey son un grupo fascista armado que tiene lazos muy estrechos con la policía.

Hubo diferentes apreciaciones sobre el tamaño de la protesta en Madrid. "Un cálculo del gobierno puso el número de huelguistas en 25,000; un portavoz de las Comisiones Obreras dijo que eran 200,000," informaba Giniger en una nota publicada el 1 de octubre.

Escribió que las reivindicaciones que originaron el día "de paros en el trabajo, ritmos lentos, actividad de piquetes y manifestaciones callejeras (ocasionalmente dispersadas por policía antimotines) se ampliaron para incluir reivindicaciones de plenas libertades democráticas y la legalización de los embrionarios sindicatos obreros no gubernamentales que hay en el país."

Giniger describía algunos de los problemas de la organización de la huelga:

Incluso las Comisiones Obreras, dominadas por el Partido Comunista, y la socialista Unión General de Trabajadores, parecían estar poco animadas ante la acción de hoy. Solamente la extrema izquierda entusiasta parecía querer referirse a la acción como una huelga general.

Un portavoz obrero dijo que la directriz política para la "jornada de lucha" tan apresuradamente convocada había sido bastante confusa; la decisión fundamental en general la tomaron los dirigentes locales en el cinturón industrial de las afueras de Madrid. Como resultado, los obreros metalúrgicos, impresores y de la construcción en el cinturón industrial, militantes y bastante bien organizados, estuvieron a la cabeza de la protesta.

Otra señal del ascenso de la militancia obrera en el estado español fue la huelga postal de ocho días que terminó el 29 de septiembre.

Las reivindicaciones de los huelguistas incluían alza de salarios, libertad de los huelguistas detenidos, y cumplimiento por parte del gobierno de un acuerdo al que se había llegado en julio entre las autoridades de Correos y la comisión obrera que representaba a los trabajadores. El gobierno dijo que no estaba obligado a cumplir las concesiones que se hubieran hecho a la comisión obrera, que es una organización ilegal bajo el régimen fascista.

La huelga comenzó en Madrid y se extendió a otras once ciudades, incluyendo Barcelona, Bilbao, Málaga y Sevilla. Se cree que aproximadamente veinte mil trabajadores postales participaron en la huelga, deteniendo el servicio postal y telegráfico.

1. Euzkadi ta Azkatasuna (Patria Vasca y Libertad).

2. Frente Revolucionario Antifascista y Patriótico.

El 25 de septiembre se produjeron en Madrid enfrentamientos entre los huelguistas y la policía, durante una protesta contra la introducción de "voluntarios" para romper la huelga. Esa misma tarde, la policía atacó a dos mil huelguistas que intentaban manifestarse ante la Dirección General de Seguridad en la plaza de la Puerta del Sol en Madrid.

Giniger informaba en el *New York Times* del 26 de septiembre, que la policía disparó contra los manifestantes y arrestó a Gerónimo Lorente, un dirigente de la huelga. El día anterior, Andrés Martín Moya, otro dirigente de la huelga, también fue arrestado.

Una nota en el *New York Times* con fecha del 29 de septiembre informaba sobre

el resultado de la huelga: "No se podía conseguir ningún detalle sobre los acuerdos a que se llegó tras la huelga. Fuentes informadas hablaron de un compromiso sobre las demandas de los carteros por un alza salarial, y la liberación de los detenidos."

El continuo descontento entre las nacionalidades oprimidas, los obreros y la juventud, muestran que los capitalistas españoles no tienen mucho de que sentirse contentos. A pesar de la represión y de los intentos de frenar el auge de las luchas con promesas de reforma, las masas continúan movilizándose para luchar por los derechos que se les han negado durante cuatro décadas. □

Decisión del Congreso de Texas

'La Raza' Demandará al Gobierno

Por Harry Ring

[La siguiente es una traducción del artículo "Raza Unida will sue to end illegal spying," que apareció en el número del 1 de octubre del semanario socialista norteamericano *The Militant*. La traducción es de *Intercontinental Press*.]

El Partido de La Raza Unida de Texas va a demandar al gobierno federal por daños resultantes de la vigilancia ilegal, hostigamiento y victimización de que ha sido objeto.

El congreso estatal del partido, celebrado en Seguin, Texas, el 18 y 19 de septiembre, aprobó unánimemente la decisión de presentar la demanda.

José Angel Gutiérrez, juez del Condado Zavala, dijo al congreso que expedientes que han obtenido del FBI y la CIA en base al Acta sobre la Libertad de Información confirman que hay "un esfuerzo deliberado, consciente y planeado para destruir al partido."

Gutiérrez, fundador del partido en Crystal City, dijo que había conseguido esos expedientes, con un total de aproximadamente cien páginas, a nivel individual y en su calidad de presidente nacional del Partido de La Raza Unida.

El Dr. Armando Gutiérrez, de la Universidad de Texas en Austin, presentó ante el congreso la proposición de que se emprendiera la acción legal. El dirige el comité de defensa legal del partido y fue electo vicepresidente estatal en el congreso.

Durante mucho tiempo, dijo Armando Gutiérrez, el partido no se ha tomado a sí mismo con tanta seriedad como lo han hecho sus enemigos. Es necesario reconocer, continuó, que quienes gobiernan esta sociedad consideran al Partido de La Raza

Unida como una amenaza interna muy importante.

La decisión de tratar de sacar a la luz las acciones del gobierno contra el partido fue motivada en gran parte por las recientes revelaciones sobre otros movimientos, dijo Armando Gutiérrez.

Recomendó a los delegados la lectura del libro *Cointelpro: The FBI's Secret War on Political Freedom* [*Cointelpro: La Guerra Secreta del FBI contra la Libertad Política*], que reproduce documentos secretos del gobierno obtenidos por el Socialist Workers Party [Partido Socialista de los Trabajadores—SWP] como resultado del juicio que ha lanzado contra el espionaje y el hostigamiento del gobierno.

Siguió diciendo que después de estudiar *Cointelpro*, los dirigentes de La Raza leyeron lo que les pasó "a grupos como el Socialist Workers Party y el Black Panther Party [Partido de las Panteras Negras], que de cierta manera se parecen a nosotros, bien sea porque se dirigen a un grupo en particular, o porque tienen una posición muy crítica hacia el gobierno, o porque tratan de movilizar a los chicanos para aumentar su poder. Encontramos que en estos grupos se había realizado una serie de actividades para desorganizarlos."

El Dr. Gutiérrez recordó que el FBI había admitido recientemente que aún mantenía sesenta y seis informadores infiltrados en el SWP.

Describió ante el congreso los diferentes trucos sucios utilizados contra miembros del SWP que han sido revelados en los expedientes políticos.

"Después de ver eso nos dijimos: 'Revisemos el pasado del partido, veamos lo que le ha pasado al partido desde su creación

en 1970,'" dijo Gutiérrez.

Dos activistas de La Raza fueron asesinados, recordó Gutiérrez. Varios miembros del partido han sido despedidos de su trabajo o están amenazados con el despido.

Además, declaró que ha habido casos de personas que han sido victimizadas por la policía. Dijo que el caso más reciente es el de Ignacio "Nacho" Pérez, un viejo miembro de La Raza que fue acusado de ayudar a escapar a un "extranjero ilegal."

Señaló las nuevas maniobras del procurador general del estado para destruir al partido, iniciando un juicio contra varias personalidades del Partido de La Raza Unida de Crystal City bajo acusaciones de corrupción municipal.

Y añadió que más recientemente se produjo el corrosivo ataque en que el Gobernador [de Texas] Dolph Briscoe calumnió al partido.

"Creo," terminó diciendo Armando Gutiérrez, "que en los próximos meses el término 'Operación Caos' va a volverse muy conocido en el movimiento chicano." Ese era el nombre de un programa de desorganización contra los disidentes internos.

José Angel Gutiérrez dijo al congreso que hasta ahora han recibido aproximadamente cien páginas de expedientes de la CIA. En los expedientes se documentaba la vigilancia del gobierno contra el Partido de La Raza Unida nacionalmente y en Texas.

Dijo que se han infiltrado informadores en las delegaciones texanas que han asistido a reuniones en otras partes del país y en las delegaciones del partido que visitaron México y Cuba.

Refiriéndose a las agencias federales responsables de esos hechos, Gutiérrez declaró: "Esta gente nos está observando. Nos está vigilando . . . y no porque tengan las buenas intenciones de proteger nuestra seguridad, ¡sino para destruirnos deliberadamente!"

El congreso adoptó una serie de resoluciones sobre puntos políticos y sociales. El siguiente es un resumen de las principales resoluciones:

- Como La Raza Unida no tiene una planilla electoral propia, permanecerá independiente en las elecciones de 1976, sin apoyar a ningún candidato.

- Una resolución presentada por Mujeres Unidas manifestó públicamente el apoyo total del partido a la campaña por la ratificación del Equal Rights Amendment [enmienda constitucional que daría igualdad de derechos a las mujeres], tanto en Texas como a nivel nacional.

- El congreso exigió que ya no se excluya a los niños de las escuelas sobre la base de que son "extranjeros ilegales."

- El Partido manifestó públicamente su apoyo al Committee for Artistic and Intellectual Freedom in Iran [Comité por la Libertad Artística e Intelectual en Irán—CAIFI], en su lucha por movilizar a la opinión pública norteamericana contra la dictadura asesina del shah. □

Reyes, Dictadores y Presidentes de Luto por Mao

Por David Frankel

[El siguiente artículo apareció en el número del 11 de octubre de nuestra revista, con el título "Kings, Presidents, Tsinhorn Dictators Mourn Mao's Death." La traducción es de *Intercontinental Press*.]

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La muerte de Mao Tsetung el 9 de septiembre fue la ocasión para una muestra de condolencias oficiales que hubiera sido digna de Winston Churchill, Charles de Gaulle o Franklin D. Roosevelt. Reyes, presidentes y primeros ministros—gobernantes encargados de defender el capitalismo en los cuatro rincones del mundo—rindieron vehemente tributo al hombre que, según sus seguidores, había dedicado su vida "a la emancipación de las nacionalidades y los pueblos oprimidos de todo el mundo y a la causa del comunismo" (Hsinhua, 10 de septiembre).

Entre todos los que guardaron luto alrededor del mundo, destacaban las reliquias de un pasado feudal, en la actualidad al servicio del orden capitalista. Hsinhua, la agencia de prensa oficial china, registró las condolencias del Rey Olav V de Noruega, del Rey Hassan II de Marruecos, del Rey Balduino de Bélgica, de la Reina Isabel II de Inglaterra, de la Reina Margarita II de Dinamarca, y del Gran Duque, Su Alteza Real Juan de Luxemburgo, para nombrar solamente a unos pocos.

La realeza ya no tiene las prerrogativas que tuvo, y muchas de estas cabezas coronadas debieron sentir cierta envidia hacia el poder absoluto de que disfrutaba Mao antes de su muerte. El Rey Juan Carlos I de España, sucesor designado del dictador fascista Francisco Franco, expresó su confianza en "que la imagen del presidente sirva para siempre como modelo y orientación para su pueblo."

El rey, que sin duda estaría complacido si pudiera asegurar su permanencia en los próximos años, para no hablar de la eternidad, fue personalmente a la embajada china a depositar una corona de flores en memoria de Mao.

Mao, "el gran maestro del proletariado internacional, y de las naciones y pueblos oprimidos," tenía otro amigo real: el Shah-in-Shah (rey de reyes) Mohamed Reza Pahlevi. El shah, un experto en el tema de las nacionalidades oprimidas, mantiene a los kurdos, a los turcos de Azerbaidján y a los baluchis bajo su reino de terror, además de los propios persas. Pero Mao pasaba gustoso por alto la opresión de las

nacionalidades y la tortura de los opositores iraníes, por su interés en las relaciones diplomáticas amistosas con el shah, y nada podía complacer más al mismo shah que el hecho de estar en buenos términos con cualquier "comunista" que apoyase su régimen.

En un mensaje con fecha del 10 de septiembre, expresando su "profunda y sincera pena," Pahlevi alabó "el ilustre papel del presidente en el establecimiento de la República Popular de China . . . que ha inaugurado una nueva era de grandeza y prosperidad" y que "quedará escrito para siempre como uno de los capítulos más brillantes en la historia de China."

Entre la lista de admiradores de Mao que publicó Hsinhua también estaba el General Suharto, un hombre que llegó a ser presidente de Indonesia en 1965 asesinando a un millón de personas. Suharto dijo acerca de Mao: "Será recordado por el mundo como un estadista de estatura histórica que rindió gran servicio al pueblo y al estado de la República Popular de China."

Las banderas ondearon a media asta y se decretaron periodos de luto nacional por Mao en Argentina, Siria y Sri Lanka. Sirimavo Bandaranaike, primera ministra de Sri Lanka, debe haber recordado con una gratitud especial la ayuda económica y militar que le ofreció Mao en 1971, cuando su régimen se enfrentó a una rebelión de la juventud radicalizada.

El dictador de Filipinas, Fernando Marcos, cuyo régimen acaba de ser acusado por Amnistía Internacional de torturar a los prisioneros políticos, añadió su nombre a los que lamentaron la pérdida del Presidente Mao. Marcos fue recibido como invitado de honor en Pekín el año pasado.

Pero, ciertamente, el principal honor para este hombre que, según Hsinhua, "abrió una nueva vía para la causa de la liberación de las nacionalidades y los pueblos oprimidos," llegó el 10 de septiembre. Este día, Hsinhua informó: ". . . el subsecretario chileno del interior, Enrique Montero . . . declaró los días 12, 13 y 14 de septiembre días de luto oficial nacional por el Presidente Mao Tsetung, con las banderas en todos los edificios nacionales ondeando a media asta."

El periodo de luto nacional fue anunciado por el ministro del interior, que está a cargo de la policía y las prisiones. Quizás entonces, los miles de prisioneros políticos que hay en los campos de concentración de la junta y en sus cámaras de tortura recibieran copias del pequeño libro rojo de

Mao, para apreciar mejor la sabiduría del que Hsinhua llama el "gran, glorioso y correcto partido marxista-leninista que en la actualidad dirige la República Popular de China."

Los sucesores de Mao no pueden ser acusados de ignorar el problema de quiénes estaban enviando mensajes de condolencia por la muerte del "mayor marxista de la era contemporánea." Cuando sintieron que era necesaria una fuerte protesta política para mostrar dónde estaban sus simpatías, fueron enérgicos y no dudaron. El 14 de septiembre, los burócratas de Pekín rechazaron los mensajes de los partidos comunistas de la Unión Soviética, Polonia, Alemania Oriental, Bulgaria, Hungría, Checoslovaquia y Mongolia.

No mostraron ningún escrúpulo parecido cuando se trató de recibir los homenajes de los gobiernos imperialistas, de sus partidos y de sus políticos. Así, Hsinhua publicó los comentarios de Richard Nixon sobre la muerte de Mao inmediatamente debajo de los del Presidente Ford. Nixon llamó a Mao "un hombre único en una generación de grandes dirigentes revolucionarios," y en particular señaló el acuerdo que negoció con Mao a expensas de la revolución vietnamita en 1972.

"La nueva relación que establecimos entonces," dijo Nixon, "fue un tributo a . . . una amplia visión por su parte."

Ford también alabó los logros de la distensión, diciendo que "los norteamericanos recordarán que fue bajo el Presidente Mao que China actuó junto con los Estados Unidos para terminar con una generación de hostilidad y para emprender una era nueva y más positiva en las relaciones entre nuestros dos países."

El ex-primer ministro japonés Kakuei Tanaka, y el actual Primer Ministro Takeo Miki, a pesar de que están muy ocupados con el escándalo de los pagos de la compañía Lockheed, encontraron tiempo para ensalzar a Mao. Tanaka dijo que estaba "profundamente apenado" por el deceso de Mao, y recordó que "para terminar con décadas de historia desafortunada de las relaciones entre China y Japón, visité Pekín como representante de Japón."

Miki calificó a Mao como "un gran estadista mundial" y dijo: "En la actualidad, cuando las relaciones entre Japón y China se están desarrollando, estoy sinceramente conmovido ante la muerte de este gran dirigente."

También llegaron alabanzas del primer ministro australiano Malcolm Fraser, que declaró que bajo "la guía y la inspiración

[de Mao] China recuperó su respeto nacional y su influencia internacional. El fue la mano que guió a China en los años recientes, cuando ésta llegó a jugar un papel principal en los asuntos mundiales.”

“... un gran estadista de renombre mundial” fue la forma en que el primer ministro británico James Callaghan describió a Mao.

Merece la pena contrastar la reacción del imperialismo hacia la muerte de Mao con su reacción ante la muerte de León Trotsky. El 23 de agosto de 1940, el *New York Times*, por ejemplo, declaraba que el asesinato de Trotsky no fue “más despiadado que la revolución rusa que este consumado incendiario en el exilio encendió y mantuvo ardiendo hace una genera-

ción. . . . No le bastó sumergir a Rusia en sangre y sufrimiento; todo el mundo tenía que soportar un mar de violencia para que se pudiera asegurar el triunfo del proletariado.”

El veneno del *New York Times* era típico. Trotsky era un “incendiario” y no un “estadista.” En el periodo que ha transcurrido desde entonces, los imperialistas no han cambiado sus puntos de vista sobre la amenaza de la revolución, como demostraron ampliamente los acontecimientos de Vietnam. La diferencia en la forma en que se refieren a Trotsky y a Mao es la diferencia entre su odio por un enemigo, y la apreciación por los servicios prestados. □

El KAF se opuso al sectarismo de los maoistas entre la juventud radicalizada, como se puede ver por un debate realizado en Estocolmo del que informa el 17 de septiembre *Dagens Nyheter*, el principal diario del país.

“La sala estaba llena; había personas de pie en los pasillos para escuchar el debate entre los trotskistas del KAF y los marxistas-leninistas del SKP.

“El KAF considera que es importante que Suecia no tenga un gobierno de los partidos burgueses, y cree que sería bueno que el VPK consiga suficientes votos para quedar en el Parlamento. El SKP sostiene que los socialdemócratas son un partido burgués, y que el VPK es sólo su auxiliar.”

Después de la derrota de los partidos obreros, el KAF comentaba en el número del 21 de septiembre de su semanario *Internationalen*:

“‘El voto de la juventud hizo que ganáramos las elecciones,’ dijo por televisión [el político burgués] Gösta Bohman, sonriendo maliciosamente. Y ésa es la triste verdad. La derrota no puede explicarse por el problema de la energía atómica o por los escándalos. La razón es el consistente desarme de todo el movimiento obrero.

“‘Pretendiendo que las clases habían sido abolidas, negándose a abordar los problemas más apremiantes del movimiento obrero, la socialdemocracia logró empujar a parte de la juventud a los brazos de los partidos burgueses.’”

Se dijo que el punto más discutido de las elecciones fue el programa del gobierno para construir plantas de energía atómica. Palme sostenía que las plantas eran necesarias para asegurar el desarrollo independiente de Suecia, puesto que el país no tiene suficientes recursos energéticos. Falldin argumentaba que la radioactividad de las plantas podía poner en peligro a las generaciones futuras.

Algunos dirigentes del amplio movimiento contra la contaminación apoyaron al Partido del Centro por este punto. Sin embargo, los otros partidos burgueses estuvieron abiertamente a favor de la construcción de las plantas, y la asociación patronal de Suecia hizo una declaración pública justo antes de las elecciones defendiendo la necesidad de que se construyeran plantas atómicas. Obviamente, el resultado de las elecciones no va a cambiar la determinación de los capitalistas suecos de continuar ese programa.

En el tema de la energía nuclear, Palme, como defensor del capitalismo sueco, quedó atrapado. No está claro cuántos votos ganaron los partidos burgueses a causa de esto. Pero probablemente este tema hizo que muchos jóvenes dejaran de votar por los partidos obreros. Por esta razón, el tema de la energía nuclear era indicativo. El reformismo de los socialdemócratas ha ocasionado que la juventud se sienta cada vez más ajena al movimiento obrero, cuya vitalidad depende de ésta. □

Suecia: Derrota Electoral de la Socialdemocracia

Por Gerry Foley

Por primera vez en cuarenta y cuatro años, el 19 de septiembre una coalición de partidos burgueses ganó suficientes votos en las elecciones suecas para formar un gobierno abiertamente procapitalista.

La derrota del “socialismo sueco” fue recibida con regocijo en los círculos capitalistas de Suecia y de todo el mundo. Una nota de Associated Press de fecha 20 de septiembre informaba:

“Algunos funcionarios norteamericanos expresaron en voz baja su satisfacción por la derrota del Primer Ministro Palme. Aunque las relaciones habían mejorado consistentemente durante los dos últimos años, el Sr. Palme nunca fue popular entre algunos funcionarios norteamericanos.”

La política internacional “progresista” de Palme permitió a los capitalistas suecos obtener tratos muy ventajosos con algunos de los gobiernos más nacionalistas de los países coloniales, a expensas de las potencias imperialistas mayores. Sin embargo, lo que sin duda molestaba más a Washington, eran las concesiones políticas que tenía que hacer el gobierno sueco para seguir esa línea.

Por ejemplo, la oposición del gobierno de Palme a la guerra de Vietnam debilitó la posición del imperialismo norteamericano. El que Estocolmo defendiera a los refugiados chilenos también salvó a varios activistas políticos, como el revolucionario peruano Hugo Blanco, a quien Washington hubiera preferido ver silenciado.

En la misma Suecia, incluso los capitalistas que habían aceptado durante décadas dar concesiones importantes a los trabajadores, empiezan a prever la necesidad de hacer cortes en los servicios sociales y de hacer retroceder al movimiento obrero tanto en el nivel económico como en el político.

A pesar de las fanfarrias de los capitalistas por la derrota de la socialdemocracia

en Suecia, el porcentaje de votos que perdió el 19 de septiembre es realmente pequeño. Sin embargo, la base electoral del partido se había venido erosionando desde hacía varios años, e incluso una pequeña pérdida bastó para que la balanza favoreciera a los partidos burgueses. Los socialdemócratas perdieron 0.8% en la votación, comparado con 1973; y el Partido Comunista, que apoyaba al gabinete sin participar en él, perdió 0.6%.

Por otro lado, el mayor partido de la coalición burguesa, el Partido del Centro dirigido por el nuevo primer ministro, Thorbjorn Falldin, de hecho también sufrió una pequeña pérdida. Sin embargo, el Folkeparti (liberal) aumentó su voto de 9.4% a 11%, y los Moderados (conservadores) aumentaron del 14.3% al 15.6%.

En las elecciones de 1973, el voto del PC había aumentado ligeramente. Un factor que puede haber influido para que perdiera votos este año, es el creciente fraccionalismo entre la dirección, que trata de presentar una imagen más “democrática” y menos vinculada a Moscú, y los irredimibles veteranos estalinistas.

El Sveriges Kommunistiska Parti [Partido Comunista de Suecia—SKP] de orientación maoista, que cuenta con el apoyo de varios miles de jóvenes activistas, concentró sus ataques contra el PC (llamado Venstreparti Kommunisterna—VPK, Partido de Izquierda de los Comunistas). Parece que el reducido número de votos que de por sí obtiene el SKP fue incluso menor en esta ocasión.

La Sección Sueca de la Cuarta Internacional, la Kommunistiska Arbetarförbundet (KAF—Liga Comunista Obrera), presentó candidatos en casi todas las zonas. Centró su campaña en llamar a establecer un combativo movimiento obrero democrático para enfrentar la ofensiva burguesa.