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Meaning of the American Elections

Behind the Vote for Carter

Condemn Smith's Terror Raid in Mozambique!

By Ernest Harsch

Rhodesian Prime Minister Ian Smith, for years the chief representative of white supremacy in that country, now claims that he favors a transition to Black majority rule within two years. But at the same time that he was meeting in Geneva with Zimbabwean nationalist leaders, ostensibly to discuss the details of the transition, he issued orders for a sharp escalation of the war against the Zimbabwean freedom struggle.

On October 31, just three days after the formal opening of the Geneva talks, armored Rhodesian units, backed up by helicopter gunships and other air support, crossed the eastern border to strike at seven Zimbabwean camps located in Mozambique. The Rhodesian forces, raiding about sixty miles into Mozambique, penetrated the provinces of Tete in the north and Gaza in the south.

The Mozambique regime condemned the military action as an invasion of "an independent, sovereign state." In this, they have the support of all freedom-seeking organizations and individuals.

The Mozambican press agency reported that heavy attacks continued through November 1, and that Mozambican troops had resisted Rhodesian "tanks, cannon, mortars, infantry, fighter-bombers and cavalry."

After the Rhodesian forces had withdrawn, Assistant Commissioner Mike Edden said at a news conference in Salisbury November 3, "It was simply a military operation designed to sort out people on our immediate border." He claimed that several guerrilla bases and fifty tons of war materials had been destroyed. Other Rhodesian sources said that hundreds of Zimbabwean guerrillas were killed. According to the regime in Mozambique, at least eighteen Mozambican civilians were killed when Rhodesian troops fired on a passenger train in Mapai.

Edden warned that Rhodesian forces would "continue to foray across the border."

This was the second major raid into Mozambique within three months. In early August, a mechanized unit of the Rhodesian army attacked a Zimbabwean camp at Nyazonia. Salisbury claimed that it had killed 300 Zimbabwean guerrillas, 30 Mozambican troops, and 10 civilians. The Mozambique regime charged, however, that the Rhodesians had massacred 618 persons, most of whom were Zimbabwean refugees, including women and children.

The war has also stepped up within Zimbabwe itself. In the two weeks following Smith's September 24 speech promising majority rule, about 120 persons were killed in armed clashes, a steep increase in the rate of fatalities.

In addition to the Zimbabwean freedom fighters killed by Smith's forces, many Black civilians have also been gunned down, allegedly either for violating the curfew or aiding the guerrillas. Civilians have been routinely tortured by Rhodesian troops to extract information on guerrilla movements and to terrorize the population as a whole. About 200,000 Blacks in rural areas have been forced into prison-like "protected villages."

Despite the Smith regime's brutal repression, the Zimbabwean freedom struggle is on the rise.

One indicator of the sentiment among Blacks was the enthusiastic reception given to Bishop Abel Muzorewa, one of the major Zimbabwean leaders, when he returned from exile to Salisbury October 3. More than 100,000 Blacks poured into the streets, chanting "Black power!" A week later, another Zimbabwean leader, Joshua Nkomo, organized a reception of a similar size in Bulawayo. In addition, Rhodesian officials estimate that there are now 3,000 Zimbabwean guerrillas operating within the country, twice the number in July.

According to a report by Colin Legum in the September 27 *Washington Post*, the U.S. Defense Intelligence Agency, the Intelligence and Research Bureau of the State Department, and the Central Intelligence Agency all made estimates of the Smith regime's chances of survival. "The only difference among them," Legum reported, "was in their estimates of the time before Rhodesia's security and economic position finally collapsed."

It was the fear of such a collapse—and the impact it could have throughout the



IAN SMITH

rest of southern Africa—that prompted the American, British, and South African regimes to pressure Smith into making some concessions before it was too late.

Although Smith was forced to agree to Black majority rule within two years, he is still maneuvering to retain as much white control as possible.

In his proposals for the transition to majority rule, Smith called for the establishment of a "multiracial" interim regime in which the military and police forces would continue to be controlled by whites. Whites, moreover, would have veto power over all decisions of the council of state, the supreme body in the interim regime, and would be able to block any unfavorable clauses in a new constitution.

The four main Zimbabwean leaders—Robert Mugabe, Joshua Nkomo, Abel Muzorewa, and Ndabaningi Sithole—were willing to go to Geneva for secret talks with Smith and the British government. Although none of the four leaders demanded immediate independence under Black majority rule, they turned down a British proposal for independence in March 1978, stating that it must be sooner.

Under increasing pressure from the Zimbabwean masses, the four also rejected Smith's proposals, demanding that any interim regime be dominated by Blacks, and that Blacks must control the military and police forces in particular. □

The Murrays Must Not Die!

On November 1 the Supreme Court of Ireland began hearing the appeal of Noel and Marie Murray, the young couple sentenced to hang on the charge of killing an off-duty policeman during a bank robbery. The fate of the Murrays is of vital

interest to every opponent of the barbaric death penalty, and to every partisan of democratic rights.

The Irish government tried the Murrays before the Special Criminal Court, a tribunal set up for the express purpose of

handling political cases after the government failed to obtain convictions in a number of trials. The new tribunal did away with impediments to a quick guilty verdict, such as the right to trial by jury. Rules of evidence were also "streamlined," so that the prosecution could introduce material and arguments that are inadmissible in regular courts.

If the Irish regime is successful in the legal lynching of the Murrays, there can be little doubt that it will go further in using the death penalty against its political opponents.

The character of the proceedings was indicated November 1 when the Supreme Court refused Noel and Marie Murray the right to even attend the hearing on their appeal. "Large numbers of gardai [police] and armed military personnel were on duty" at the site of the appeal, the *Irish Times* reported November 2. "Gardai were posted in the corridors and lawyers and members of the public were stopped and searched as they entered the courts."

The attempt to intimidate those who would express solidarity with the Murrays was combined with vindictive treatment of the prisoners themselves. Marie Murray is being held in a cell measuring 12 feet by 14.5 feet, and two prison officers remain in the cell with her at all times.

A movement for abolition of capital punishment has emerged in response to the plight of the Murrays. A statement opposing the death penalty was published in the *London Times* October 23. It was signed by a number of prominent personalities, including John Arden, Hugh MacDiarmid, Lord Brockway, Lord Soper, Arnold Wesker, Arthur Koestler, J.B. Priestly, Lord Gardiner, Brigid Brophy, Peter Cadogan, David Markham, Hephzibah Menunin, and Peter Reddaway.

On October 26, the *Irish Times* reported that Senator Ruairi Quinn had sought permission from the Labour party parliamentary fraction to introduce a private members' bill to abolish capital punishment.

The newly formed Irish Council for Civil Liberties has also announced the opening of a campaign against the death penalty. At the meeting scheduled for November 2 to inaugurate this campaign, the speakers were Senator Mary Robinson and Michael O'Kennedy, spokesman for foreign affairs of the official opposition party in parliament.

Success in the fight to save the Murrays would be an important victory for the working class and its allies throughout the world, especially at a time when the American ruling class is preparing new executions of its own. The message to Dublin must come through loud and clear:

Stop the hands of the executioners!

The Murrays must not die! □

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Behind the Vote for Carter

By David Frankel

One thing came through clearly in the American presidential election: In the end, the voters had a hard time deciding who was worse, Ford or Carter. "I don't think the people liked either one of the candidates all that much," admitted a Republican party leader in Cleveland when the election was over.

At the close of the first of the so-called great debates between the two capitalist candidates, Ford summed up by saying: "I think the real issue in this campaign . . . is whether you should vote for his [Carter's] promises or my performance in two years in the White House."

A bare majority chose Carter's promises over Ford's record. They voted, above all, for Carter's promise to do something about unemployment and restore prosperity.

The choice, however, was not made enthusiastically. Polls estimated that 20% of the voters were still undecided in the last week of the campaign. The remark of one Massachusetts voter who told reporters, "I'm not that hot for Carter, but I like the other guy less," was typical.

The American ruling class was delighted that people bothered to vote at all. "Voters Jam the Polls," said the main headline of one New York daily. Various states reported "massive" or "astonishing" turnouts, and Chemical Bank, one of the country's largest, took out a full-page advertisement in the November 5 *New York Times* that proclaimed:

"America: 79,000,000

"Apathy: 0

"More than 79 million Americans proved that the predictions of voter apathy were largely unfounded. The people had something to say and they said it. We feel they also said something else: the system works."

Chemical Bank, however, overstated its case.

About 67 million voters abstained, and it is clear that millions of those who finally did vote still felt resentment and dissatisfaction over the lack of a real choice. The actual turnout was the lowest since 1948, when 51% of the eligible voters cast ballots. This year, the turnout was 53.3%, continuing the steady decline in voter participation since 1960, when 63% of the eligible voters came out. The 1976 turnout dropped two percentage points from the 55.4% figure for 1972.

A prime goal of the ruling class in the 1976 election was to restore trust in the government, which was badly shaken by Johnson and Nixon's intervention in the



FORD

Vietnamese civil war and by the Watergate scandal.

This objective was reflected in the opinion voiced by Carl Hathaway, senior vice-president of the Morgan Guaranty Trust Co., that "there is an enormous amount of stability and normalcy in the current situation. This is an orderly transition, through the democratic process, of the seat of power, after all, and hardly any reason to be panicked" (*Wall Street Journal*, November 4).

But it remains to be seen whether Carter can restore the confidence undermined by his predecessors.

How Carter Ran, and How He Was Elected

The program that Carter ran on was not substantially different from Ford's. Each insisted that he would maintain the stronger military establishment. Both men opposed the right of women to abortion. Both supported the death penalty. And neither promised any new initiatives regarding Black rights. On help to victims of the economic crisis, Carter hedged in his promises.

However, Carter was elected on a program different from the one he ran on. In their attempt to find some difference between the two candidates, and in their

dissatisfaction with the way things are going under Ford, the low-income voters singled out Carter's vague promises for a change and his insistence that he would "put America back to work."

Carter was elected to bring jobs and stop the cutbacks in social programs.

The statistics on how people voted show how dominant the economic issue was in deciding the election. An NBC News poll found that 87% of those who pulled the lever for Carter gave jobs as a reason. A CBS News poll found that only one income group—voters from families earning more than \$20,000 a year—gave Ford a majority (62%) of its votes. In contrast, families earning less than \$8,000 a year gave Carter 62% of their votes.

The vote in the \$12,000 to \$20,000 bracket divided half and half between Ford and Carter, while those in the \$8,000 to \$12,000 category gave Carter a 57% majority. (That the race was so close despite these statistics reflects the fact that the percentage of those who vote rises with income.)

The American workers sought to advance their own interests within the capitalist two-party trap. This becomes even clearer if the Black vote and the trade-union vote are singled out.

Labor Bureaucrats Go All-Out for Carter

Carter made a strong appeal to the labor vote in his speech accepting the Democratic party nomination. "Our party," he said, "was built out of the sweatshops of the old Lower East Side, the dark mills of New Hampshire, the blazing hearths of Illinois, the coal mines of Pennsylvania, the hard-scrabble farms of the southern coastal plains, and the unlimited frontiers of America."

The trade-union bureaucracy went all-out for Carter, carrying out what *New York Times* reporter Warren Weaver called "the biggest, most expensive, best organized and most sophisticated campaign that organized labor has ever conducted in support of a presidential candidate."

Unions distributed more than 80 million pieces of literature backing Carter's bid for the White House. Shop stewards and union officers were instructed to put the arm on local members during lunch breaks and on the job. Union newspapers functioned as campaign leaflets for the Carter-Mondale ticket.

"Protect Your Jobs! Vote Carter-Mondale," the Michigan *AFL-CIO News* urged in its final issue before the election.

"WE NEED CARTER!" said the headline of the New York *Public Employee Press*. A quote from union leader Victor Gotbaum was displayed: "The stakes are enormous for City workers; jobs, pensions, and the future of our City are on the line."

The campaign of the union tops in behalf of Carter met with success because of the feeling in the ranks that a change was needed. NBC estimated that 64% of

trade unionists voted for Carter, while CBS gave the figure of 62%.

Without the votes from labor, Carter could not have won. Trade-union support provided the margin of difference for Carter in Pennsylvania and New York, for example. The loss of either one of these states would have cost him the election. Ohio, another key industrial state, was also won by Carter because of his trade-union support.

It was a convincing demonstration of the potential political power of the American trade-union movement—and of how that power remains harnessed to the service of the Democratic party, instead of to the independent labor party that is so badly needed.

'We Shall Overcome'

Even more impressive than the labor vote for Carter was the Black vote. NBC estimated that 92% of Blacks who voted cast their ballots for Carter, while CBS put the figure at 83%. The Center for Joint Political Studies, a Washington-based group that follows Black voting patterns, reported that Carter took 93% of the Black vote.

As with the labor vote, Carter wooed Blacks and Hispanics from the beginning. At the close of the Democratic party national convention, Carter, Mondale, and the other party hacks joined hands with Coretta Scott King, the widow of Martin Luther King, Jr.; Black congressman and former civil-rights activist Andrew Young; United Farm Workers President César Chávez, and others. They all sang "We Shall Overcome," the song made famous by the civil-rights movement.

With double the unemployment rate of whites, Blacks were even more responsive to Carter's promises about the economy. Moreover, cutbacks in government spending in everything from child care and school lunches to welfare and job training have hit the oppressed minorities the hardest. Finally, Ford's competition with Ronald Reagan for the racist vote in the Republican primaries also hurt him among Blacks.

Seeing no alternative, those of the oppressed national minorities who went to the polls backed Carter—and their votes, like those of the trade unionists, were essential to Carter's victory.

In Pennsylvania, for example, Carter won by only 123,000 votes. Blacks in Philadelphia alone gave him 178,000 votes.

In Ohio, where Carter's lead was only 7,500 votes, Representative Louis Stokes of Cleveland noted that "the margin can be attributed to the large black vote in [my] Congressional district."

Massive leads for Carter in the heavily Chicano areas of South Texas gave him his overall 2% edge in that state.

Nationwide, only 48% of white voters gave their support to Carter. *In fact, even in Carter's home base in the South, the*

majority of white voters backed Ford. Carter won 54% of the overall vote in the South, and every Southern state except Virginia, because he won the Black vote.

This point should be noted. Despite the



WALLACE

claims by various commentators that Carter has reconstructed the Democratic party coalition forged by Franklin D. Roosevelt during the 1930s, the 1976 election gave convincing proof that the Roosevelt coalition is dead.

That coalition rested on the votes of white workers and Blacks in the North, and on the white-supremacist Dixiecrat machine in the South. The masses of Blacks were not allowed to vote in the South during the 1930s and 1940s.

When the old white-supremacist machine began to be broken down in the 1960s by the force of the civil-rights movement, the Democratic party in the South split. The Dixiecrat wing that had been dominant in the days of the Roosevelt coalition was represented by George Wallace. In 1968, when Wallace ran on the American Independent party ticket against both Nixon and Democratic party nominee Hubert Humphrey, he won 13.5% of the total vote.

Wallace's 10 million votes were concentrated in the South, where he carried the states of Alabama, Arkansas, Georgia, Louisiana, and Mississippi. In North Carolina, South Carolina, and Tennessee, he lost to Nixon, but won a bigger vote there than Humphrey.

In 1972, the remnant of Wallace's movement, without Wallace, polled slightly more than one million votes. This year it received only 168,000 votes.

Thus, in the electoral arena, the 1976 campaign sealed the defeat of the diehard segregationists. The racist, reactionary vote had no place to go but to Ford or Carter. Wallace himself was one of those who sang "We Shall Overcome" on the stage at the Democratic party convention.

The collapse of the Wallace movement and its reabsorption into the two-party system reflect the changing economic reality—particularly the urbanization and industrialization of the South, and the shift among Blacks from being agricultural laborers and sharecroppers to industrial workers. It is also a result of the gains won by the Black liberation movement over the last two decades.

The reactionary objective of pushing Blacks back to their status prior to the mass civil-rights movement is no longer realistic. Such an objective could be attained only through the victory of a mass fascist movement.

The need of the American ruling class for a class-collaborationist relationship with reformist Black leaders was reflected in the course of the presidential campaign by incidents such as Carter's rapid retreat on his "ethnic purity" slur and the resignation of Agriculture Secretary Earl Butz after a racist joke of his was publicized.

Carter himself got his start in the 1976 presidential primaries as the candidate assigned by the Democratic party machine to block Wallace. Even Wallace has been trying to prove that he has had a change of heart on the race issue. He recently ordered the flag of the Confederate slaveryocracy flown underneath, instead of above, the American flag on the Alabama statehouse. He also gave approval to the pardon of a Black defendant in the infamous Scottsboro frame-up.

Of course, the shift in stance on this issue is only relative. In general, both Carter and Ford tried to pretend in their campaigns that Blacks do not exist. They avoided discussion of the problem of racism in American society. Carter is now talking about putting Blacks in his cabinet; but aside from such possible gestures he will continue the basic economic and social policies that breed racism and give encouragement to ultrarightist forces.

In this context, it is interesting to note that the 1976 election saw a virtual standstill in the number of Black elected officials. This is different from 1974, when the largest number of Blacks since the post-Civil War Reconstruction were elected to state legislatures in the South.

The 1976 campaign was also very different from the 1968 and 1972 campaigns, when Nixon's "Southern strategy" was based on winning the South by appealing to the racist vote. The ruling class now has to worry much more about keeping Blacks inside the two-party system because of the economic downturn and the general crisis of confidence in the

Democratic and Republican parties. Also, a "law-and-order" campaign would not have gone over very well after Watergate.

Silence on Key Issues

Watergate and the whole web of government crimes connected with it was another underlying issue in the election. The Democrats and Republicans handled it by putting up two candidates not involved in Watergate who stressed their own honesty and avoided discussing the issues. Most people saw no difference between Ford and Carter on Watergate.

Eugene McCarthy did run as a reformer against both capitalist parties, which he correctly charged with responsibility for government attacks on democratic rights. But McCarthy had no solutions for the economic problems worrying the electorate, and tended to downplay them in his campaign. Overall, because of his commitment to capitalist politics, McCarthy's campaign did nothing to help open a way forward for the masses.

The Republicans hoped that McCarthy would take votes from Carter, and favored putting him on the ballot in some states. McCarthy managed to pull about 650,000 votes, or 1% of the total, and he did prevent Carter from winning in four states.

The rights of women was another issue avoided by the candidates of the two-party system. Neither Ford nor Carter had much to say about the question, aside from their repeated statements opposing the right of women to abortion. Where voters did get a chance to express their views on the question of women's rights, they came out massively in favor.

State referendums on the Equal Rights Amendment to the U.S. constitution were on the ballot in Colorado and Massachusetts, and voters in both states backed the ERA by a three-to-two margin. Particularly significant was the fact that in Massachusetts the ERA was worded to include a prohibition against discrimination on account of race as well as sex. Boston has been the scene of one of the fiercest battles in the country over the busing of Black schoolchildren into white neighborhoods.

As with Blacks, both the Democratic and Republican parties put forward few women candidates. The number of women holding elective office remained basically unchanged, although in the 1974 election there was an increase of about 27%.

'Ford to City: Drop Dead'

Aside from the role of Black voters and the trade unions in Carter's victory, the most significant factor was probably the crisis in the cities. CBS estimated that 60% of the voters in cities with populations of more than 500,000 cast their ballots for Carter.

The problems facing the city poor, of course, dovetail with racial discrimination and the overall state of the economy.

Ford's attitude was summarized in a headline in the *New York Daily News* last year: "Ford to city: drop dead."

New York City's financial crisis has



AFL-CIO CHIEF MEANY

resulted in tens of thousands of layoffs, the closing of hospitals, libraries, and schools, and the slashing of social services, including garbage collection and fire protection. But the situation facing New York is not unique.

As *Business Week* warned in a July 12 editorial, "... New York City's troubles are harbingers of a broader problem. Every major city in the U.S. is going to have serious financial distress in the next three to five years."

The day after Carter's election, New York Mayor Abraham Beame, a fellow Democrat, pulled out a copy of the "Ford to city" headline, which had been issued as a campaign leaflet by the Carter organization in New York. Beame ripped the leaflet apart as television cameras filmed the scene. "I'll tell you one thing," he said. "It's not going to happen under Carter."

Which brings us to the question of the prospects under a Carter administration.

An editorial in the November 15 issue of *Business Week* came right to the point. "One of the first things that Carter must learn as President," it said, "is that he cannot deliver on his many domestic promises so long as international economies are out of control."

It would be surprising indeed if Carter did not make any gestures to the constituency that elected him. He knows that if he wants a second term in office he will again have to win the votes of Blacks, trade unionists, Chicanos and Puerto Ricans, and the population of the big cities.

But the extent of the concessions that a Carter administration is willing to make will be determined by the overall problems of the world capitalist economy. The fact is that the economic recovery in Europe, even more than in the United States, has bogged down. The imperialist regimes are squabbling over which will capture the

largest share of a shrinking world market, and in this situation new attempts to hold down wages and living conditions are inevitable. The only alternative would be to make the capitalists rather than the workers pay, and Carter is not about to do that unless the capitalist class as a whole decides that such a course is necessary because of massive resistance from the working class and its allies.

Wall Street's expectations were summed up by Leonard Silk in an article in the October 28 *New York Times*. Although Carter has been talking about stimulating the economy to produce more jobs, Silk noted, "In the realm of monetary policy, Arthur F. Burns will still be chairman of the Federal Reserve Board, and there are unlikely to be enough changes in the membership of the board or of the Federal Open Market Committee, the key policy-making body, to make much difference."

Carter is also talking about reinstating the type of wage controls that led to a sharp drop in real wages under the Nixon administration. "Mr. Carter and his advisers have made clear that they would, in the words of Walter W. Heller, 'maintain and unchain' the Council on Wage and Price Stability, which has been deprecated during the Ford administration."

Silk concludes: "Many businessmen and stock-market investors are apparently prepared to be upset over the possibility of a Carter victory. However, as one corporate executive said, 'Business prefers Republican Presidents but growls all the way to the bank under Democrats.'"

'Drop Dead' in Politer Tone?

What about Mayor Beame's confidence that what has been happening to New York City is "not going to happen under Carter"?

"The Carter campaign in New York City sees the two candidates as day and night," the editors of the *Wall Street Journal* commented October 25. "Yet beyond a difference in rhetorical tones, and wishful thinking in City Hall, we can't see why. Chances are that when New York returns to Washington in January with its plea for more help, it will get about the same reception, regardless of who is in office."

Carter may agree to stretch out the time period over which the cuts in the New York City budget must be made, but he is in complete agreement with Ford that the cuts must be put into effect. There is every reason to believe that Carter, too, will tell the millions who depend on city services to drop dead. However, as the *Wall Street Journal* editors noted, he will probably do it with a different rhetorical tone.

But the masses of people who voted for Carter did not vote for rhetorical tone. They voted for a difference in their lives; they tried to vote their way out of the depression, out of the economic crisis that has never ended for the unemployed, for

those suffering from the cutbacks, and for those fearing new layoffs.

Nor does Carter have a lot of time before people begin demanding results. The general attitude was summed up by *New York Times* reporter James M. Naughton November 4. "Faced with a choice between an accidental President whose boldest deed was to pardon former President Richard M. Nixon and a one-term former Governor of Georgia whose opponents accused him of inconstancy and guile, the voters, in effect, seemed to withhold judgment, as if to say their trust was still to be earned, in deeds rather than declarations."

The extent of confidence in Carter—or the lack of it—was reflected in the NBC poll taken on election day. Only 40% of those queried upon leaving the voting booths said they would trust him to do the right thing most of the time, and only 30% chose the words "honest man" as an accurate description of Carter. There is no feeling that Carter is a savior. He is simply seen as offering a better chance than Ford to get the country out of the economic crisis.

How good are Carter's chances of delivering? In that regard, his situation should be compared to that of Lyndon Johnson, who campaigned in 1964 on the slogan of the "Great Society." When Johnson took office expanding industries were creating jobs, inflation was not a pressing problem, and real wages were rising. Today, American corporations are still laying workers off, real wages remain lower than they were in 1965, and the threat of a renewed economic downturn and sharp inflation is a constant preoccupation.

Moreover, Carter has fewer political excuses than his predecessors. He has a Democratic party majority of 62-to-38 in the Senate and 290-to-145 in the House of Representatives. Thirty-seven of the fifty state governors in the United States are also Democrats.

* * *

The 1976 presidential election showed two basic facts about American politics. First, the masses of workers and the oppressed nationalities remain tied to the capitalist two-party system. There is no mass break yet from the Democratic party. But at the same time the American people are growing increasingly restive within the confines of the two-party system. They are becoming increasingly impatient and dissatisfied with the choices being offered them.

From this point of view, it is important to note that although there appears to have been no appreciable increase in the socialist vote this year—partly because much of the protest vote went to McCarthy—the idea of an alternative to the Democratic and Republican parties has begun to gain a wider hearing than

ever before. The fact that Michael Harrington, the best-known Social Democratic leader in the United States, and a Carter supporter, felt it necessary to debate Socialist Workers party presidential candidate Peter Camejo on this topic on the eve of the election was an indication of the growing sentiment for a better alternative to the perennial two capitalist parties.

Pressure against the two-party system was also indicated by the discussion of this question in major dailies like the *New York Times* and the *Washington Post*, and in periodicals like the *New Republic*. The ruling class, of course, is not about to abandon a system that has worked so well for them for more than a century, but among broad layers of the population, the

'I Found Him Looking Dead'

Brother of George Fernandes Tortured in India

In a letter to Indian President Fakhruddin Ali Ahmed, the mother of imprisoned trade unionist and Socialist party leader George Fernandes has charged the police with torturing another one of her sons, Lawrence. Excerpts from the letter of Alice Fernandes appeared in the September issue of *The Vanguard*, the monthly journal of the Ceylon Mercantile Union in Sri Lanka.

At the time of Lawrence's arrest in Karnataka state May 1, Gandhi's police were still hunting for George, who was active in the underground opposition to the dictatorship. (A third son, Michael, had already been detained without trial December 22, 1975, under the Maintenance of Internal Security Act [MISA]).

The police interrogated Lawrence about the whereabouts of George. His mother wrote: "Besides beating him with clubs (until five of them were broken to pieces), they used a banyon tree root to clout him with and booted him and slapped him.

"They also used vulgar language in abusing him and our family, and threatened him that if he did not reveal the whereabouts of George Fernandes he would be thrown on the railway tracks and killed under a moving train, leaving no evidence of their hand in his death."

Lawrence was kept in solitary confinement in various police stations for twenty days, during three of which he was given no food. At times he lost consciousness and was taken to various hospitals by the police, who told the doctors he was a police officer.

On May 9 he was taken 300 kilometers to Davangere, where he was brought before a magistrate the next day as if he had just been arrested in Davangere. He was again tortured in Davangere, and then taken back to Bangalore on May 11, where the

idea of something superior is gaining in attractiveness.

Finally, it must be stressed once again that the oppressed minorities and the American labor movement expect that because of the way they voted they are entitled to responsiveness from the incoming administration. Looking ahead to reelection in 1980, Carter may try to consolidate his position by granting some concessions. But his margin for maneuver is severely restricted. Most importantly, he cannot solve the basic problems that the masses expect him to solve.

In light of all these factors, it is safe to predict that the next four years are not going to be easy ones for Carter or for the class he represents. □

police continued to interrogate him. "He was refused lawyer's help," she wrote, "and not allowed to contact home or anybody else either by letter or by phone. He was not allowed newspapers and kept in solitary confinement."

On May 20, he was brought before another magistrate and was then transferred to Bangalore Central Prison. The prison authorities did not allow his mother to see him until the next day.

Describing his condition, she said:

I found him looking dead. He was unable to move . . . without two persons helping him about, and then, too, with great pain and limping. His left side is without use as if crippled, and both his left leg and hand are still swollen. He is in a mentally and physically wrecked condition and is unable to talk freely without faltering. He is terribly nervous and mortally afraid of police, of anyone in khaki uniform, of the approaching sound of anyone walking with shoes on, or of any other person, all of whom he fears to be interrogators and tormentors. He looks completely haggard and he has lost at least 20 kg during these 20 days.

On May 22, he was served with a detention order dated May 21 and signed by the commissioner of police detaining him under the provisions of MISA.

"Is it moral or right," Alice Fernandes asked Ahmed, "that my family should be so harassed and tormented for the political views held by my son George Fernandes?"

George Fernandes himself has since been arrested, and was brought before a court in New Delhi October 4. He is the best-known political prisoner in India to be brought to trial since Gandhi's June 1975 declaration of a state of emergency. Together with twenty-one other defendants, he has been charged with having taken part in a "deep-rooted criminal conspiracy" to overthrow the Gandhi regime. □

A Campaign Trotskyists Everywhere Can Be Proud Of

By Michael Baumann



Glenn Campbell/Militant

Willie Mae Reid campaigning on street corner in Cleveland, Ohio.

"After seeing your candidate on the 'Tomorrow' program, I am convinced that your ideas are the only sane ones I've ever heard concerning the area of 'politics.' . . . I am nineteen years old and willing to work but am unable to find a job anywhere. After listening to your candidate, now I know *why!*"—Chicago, Illinois.

"Will you please send me information on the Socialist Workers party? Both major parties make me sick to my stomach."—Pensacola, Florida.

"I have just watched your candidate for the presidency, Peter Camejo, on the 'Tomorrow' show. I can honestly say that it was the first time a 'politician' (if I should call him that) discussed the issues that really matter to the American people."—New Brunswick, New Jersey.

* * *

These are excerpts from a few of the 3,705 letters received by the Socialist Workers party following a single appearance by SWP presidential candidate Peter Camejo on a national network television program—at 1:30 a.m. October 14.

Of these, 999 are now subscribers to the

Militant. They donated a total of \$3,589 to the socialist campaign.

This example indicates the interest aroused among those who heard Camejo and Willie Mae Reid, the vice-presidential candidate of the SWP.

Despite enormous difficulties in finances and in access to television, the radio, and the press, supporters of the SWP succeeded in making its program and candidates known to millions of Americans.

Through intensive campaigning in more than twenty-five states, Peter Camejo and Willie Mae Reid put forward the socialist answer to the most pressing problems facing the American working people.

To provide labor with an independent political voice, they called for a class break with the twin parties of capitalism and the construction of a mass workers party based on the trade unions. To end unemployment and erosion of real wages due to inflation, they called for a sliding scale of hours and wages, dividing available work among all who seek employment, with no cut in pay.

As an immediate step, they called for the institution of a massive federal jobs program, to be funded by ending military spending.

They demanded equal rights and opportunities for women, Blacks, Chicanos,

Puerto Ricans, Native Americans, and all the oppressed.

In solidarity with the struggle of women, the two socialists campaigned vigorously for the right to abortion and for passage of the Equal Rights Amendment to the constitution, which would remove all legal backing for discrimination based on sex.

To counter the attacks on workers' living standards, they demanded an end to cutbacks in social services and campaigned for the right of all to decent housing, education, and medical care.

Beginning in December 1974, long before most of their bourgeois opponents, the Socialist Workers party announced its slate and began to prepare a nationwide effort to cross the first hurdle—winning access to the ballot.

Although Democratic and Republican candidates are listed almost automatically, each of the fifty states has its own arbitrary requirements that must be met before opposition parties can be certified as "serious" enough to warrant official ballot status. To meet these antidemocratic strictures requires a major organizational effort that is often beyond the reach of dissenting political groups, leaving them disenfranchised in practice.

In California, to take one example, supporters of the SWP ticket were compelled to gather over a period of a few months the signatures of 300,000 registered voters to place their statewide and national candidates on the ballot.

The success of the SWP in overcoming these obstacles is one gauge of the party's rising influence. In 1968, the SWP presidential candidates were able to win a place on the ballots of nineteen states. In 1972, the figure rose to twenty-four. This year the SWP was on the ballot in twenty-eight states, representing 72 percent of the voting-age population. In all, supporters of the SWP campaign secured the signatures of 600,000 Americans who believed the SWP has a right to be on the ballot and have its views heard.

The odds against which the SWP worked are illustrated by the fact that Ford and Carter spent a total of \$70 million to publicize their campaigns (including more than \$51 million in public funds, which were denied to the SWP and all other anti-capitalist parties). The SWP, on the other hand, ran its entire twenty-two month campaign on a budget of roughly \$140,000.

How was it possible to mount an effective campaign with relatively small funds?

Most important was the new openness to socialist ideas, as American workers looked for a way out of their economic impasse. This was reflected in the reception given to the SWP platform, the "Bill of Rights for Working People." In the course of the campaign, SWP supporters distributed more than one million copies, in English and Spanish, of this programmatic statement, along with some one million other items of campaign literature.

That contrasts with the 350,000 copies of the socialist platform that were distributed in the 1972 presidential election and 108,000 in the 1968 contest.

A second factor was the front-page headlines reporting the SWP and Young Socialist Alliance lawsuit against FBI and CIA harassment.

To take one example, when the SWP and YSA demanded the names and files of nineteen FBI informers in the Trotskyist movement September 4, they were in the headlines in virtually every city in the country. Front-page articles on just this one development appeared in newspapers from Portland, Oregon, to Washington, D.C.

Through its role in helping to expose the crimes of the American political police, the SWP has won wide recognition as a leading participant in the struggle to preserve democratic rights. This recognition was reinforced by the publicity given to the SWP's lawsuit based on the undemocratic nature of the three presidential debates. The SWP demanded that Camejo and other candidates be given equal time to present their views.

A great part of the activities and statements of the SWP candidates were ignored by the capitalist-ruled communications media. This made distribution of the weekly newspaper of the campaign, the *Militant*, particularly important. Over the course of the presidential campaign, more than 1.6 million copies were mailed to subscribers or sold on the streets.

In this way, supporters or potential supporters learned of Camejo's tour of Spain, where he addressed audiences of thousands demanding freedom for political prisoners; Willie Mae Reid's tour of Australia and New Zealand, where she was greeted by activists in the Black and Maori freedom struggles; Camejo's prison visit to Andrés Figueroa Cordero, a Puerto Rican nationalist who is one of the longest-held political prisoners in the Americas; and Reid's visit to Gary Tyler, a young Black man on death row in Louisiana for a crime he did not commit.

The *Militant* also publicized the activities and campaigns of the more than seventy candidates the SWP fielded in local and statewide elections across the country. Along with the national campaign, these were an integral part of the SWP's daily work, as the candidates became the party's most effective voice in putting forward its perspectives for struggle.



David Salner/Militant

SAN DIEGO, November 1975: In news conference at Immigration detention center, SWP presidential candidate Peter Camejo denounces deportation of "illegal" foreign workers.

Considerable gains were scored, particularly in the area of winning the endorsement of prominent individuals, leaders of social struggles, and unions.

Among those who issued public statements in support of the Camejo-Reid campaign were anti-Vietnam War activists Philip and Daniel Berrigan; civil-rights fighter Robert F. Williams; Nobel Prize winner Salvador Luria; film-maker Emile de Antonio; Ralph Schoenman, former director of the Bertrand Russell Peace Foundation; Chicano leaders José Angel Gutierrez and Mario Compeán; and Beverly Stewart, co-president of a Pittsburgh chapter of the National Organization for Women (NOW).

Among the groups that called for a vote for the SWP presidential ticket were the New Mexico Raza Unida party, which also organized meetings for Camejo, and Spark, the American group associated with the French Trotskyist grouping Lutte Ouvrière.

In some areas, local candidates won union backing. SWP candidate Steve Beumer, running for the Detroit school board, received the unanimous endorsement of Local 26 of the Amalgamated Transit Union. This local represents 1,400 Detroit bus operators, 90 percent of whom are Black.

In San Francisco, three SWP candidates for the city Board of Supervisors were endorsed by a chapter of Social Services Union Local 535. In the same election, SWP candidate for mayor Roland Shepard was invited to speak before the San Francisco Building Trades Council, two locals of the Carpenters union, a Retail Clerks local, and his own local of the Painters union.

In New York, SWP senatorial candidate Marcia Gallo won an unusual endorsement in the form of a statement from eleven women staff members of the liberal weekly

Village Voice. The statement, printed in the paper's letters column November 1, took issue with a leading columnist's endorsement of the Republican candidate, said they could not vote for the Democrat either, and announced their intention to vote for Gallo because of her firm support for women's rights.

On the American left, the recognition won by the Trotskyists in past struggles placed them in a favorable position to turn these new openings to account. The cumulative impact of the SWP's participation in the major social struggles of the 1960s and 1970s enabled the party to win new forces to its ranks, new allies, and a growing respect.

This was reflected in the strengthening of the party, which established sixty-two new branches in the course of the campaign. In turn, each of the new branches became a center of campaign activity, enabling the party to reach additional sections of the population.

The party has grown in other ways as well, as one veteran member pointed out in an interview with the *Militant*, conducted at the party's convention in August.

Long-time activist Oscar Coover pointed to the experience SWP members have gained each year in new situations—unions, community organizations, and women's groups. "At past conventions," he said, "the limit of the experience of many speakers was the antiwar movement. This year—as new opportunities are opening—the experiences are already much more varied.

"As revolutionists, our members are rounded in the best sense. They have a keen understanding of history, and they have a wealth of experience in struggles."

In the 1976 elections, it was these attributes that helped make the SWP campaign one that the world Trotskyist movement as a whole can be proud of. □

Vereeken Regrets Healyite Taint in English Edition of His Book

[The following statement appeared in the August issue of *le pouvoir aux travailleurs* (Power to the Workers), a copy of which was just received in New York. *Le pouvoir aux travailleurs* is the monthly mimeographed journal of the Belgian section of the Revolutionary Marxist Tendency (RMT). The statement bears the signature of that body and thus can be taken to represent the views of its leader, Georges Vereeken, whose book was subjected to gross misuse in its English translation.

[Internationally, the leading figure of the RMT is Michel Pablo, who disagrees with the support offered by Vereeken to the slanderous campaign currently being waged by the Healyite "International Committee" against Trotsky's associates, Joseph Hansen and George Novack.

[The translation from the French is by *Intercontinental Press*.]

* * *

A year after it was originally published in France by Pensée Universelle (Paris), our comrade Vereeken's book has just appeared in an English translation put out by New Park Publications in London and illustrated with photocopies of a score of documents.

It goes without saying that the Belgian section of the Revolutionary Marxist Tendency is pleased that the way has thus been opened up for this book to reach the immense English-reading public.

We know that New Park Publications represents an English Trotskyist tendency, numerically the strongest one, we might add. It is known under the name of the "Healy tendency," and we have differences with it, as the publishers themselves say explicitly in the foreword to this English edition, signed "International Committee of the Fourth International." This is another aspect of the publication of this book that is pleasing to us. Differences have not prevented collaboration between heirs of the "Communist Left Opposition," the tendency that always opposed the Stalinist deviation from international communism, the tendency that was rather lightmindedly dubbed "Trotskyist," as if it itself were a deviation from communism. This fact is all the more pleasing to us since such collaboration points away from a long and pernicious tradition of splits, sterile factional struggles, and fragmentation.

Nonetheless, we still have to express two regrets about this edition in English. The

first is that the preface to the original book, signed by J. Impens, was eliminated in the English edition. Why was this done? The second concerns the caption accompanying the picture of Joseph Hansen (of the Socialist Workers party of the United States), saying "indicted as an accomplice of the GPU."

We know that Hansen has in fact been so accused, but we do not think it was appropriate to mention this in the book, which does not deal at all with this militant. Like the International Committee, we are for forming a commission of inquiry, which should deliver a verdict on this case. But, precisely for this reason, it seems out of place to already include Hansen's name, his picture, and this accusation in a book forever alongside the sinister Zborowsky, whose guilt is well and firmly established. It is true, on the other hand, that Hansen has unfortunately rejected even considering the idea of a commission of inquiry and that he has refused in advance to collaborate with such a commission, although it would give him a dream of an opportunity to clear



Bulletin

VEREKEN

himself. Nonetheless, we thought it necessary to call attention to this unfortunate fly in the ointment.

The Belgian Section of the Revolutionary Marxist Tendency

The Hard Way

Vereeken Begins Learning About Healyism

By Joseph Hansen

Georges Vereeken, the author of *The GPU in the Trotskyist Movement*, has felt it necessary to indicate publicly his discomfort over two embellishments in the English edition of his book:

1. The insertion of a photograph of me, next to a photograph of GPU agent Zborowski, bearing a caption that reads in full as follows:

"Above: Joseph Hansen of the American Socialist Workers Party, indicted as an accomplice of the GPU

"Right: Marc Zborowski ('Etienne') after his arrest in the US"

2. The removal of a preface, signed by Jef Impens, that was included in the original French edition.

Vereeken's disavowal of responsibility for these alterations in the English edition of his book is less than forthright. He does not even speak as the injured author of a book that has been made subject to gross

misinterpretation, but lets his complaint be voiced by "The Belgian Section of the Revolutionary Marxist Tendency."

Nonetheless, some meaningful conclusions can be drawn from the little that is said.

For instance, with regard to the elimination of the preface written by Jef Impens, the statement asks, "Why was this done?"

The implications are (a) that it was done without Vereeken's consent, (b) that Vereeken has been unable to ascertain through personal inquiry why it was done, (c) that he has no recourse but to make the matter public in hope that others, not involved in his transactions with the "Healy tendency," can cast light on the reason for this unilateral and arbitrary action.

Similar conclusions follow from the protest over the inclusion of my photograph and the lying caption accompany-

ing it. As the statement declares, Vereeken's book does not even mention the charges leveled by the Healyites against me.

There is a third significant difference from the French original that is referred to only in passing. This is the inclusion of a foreword signed by the "International Committee of the Fourth International." How an introduction cooked up by this nameless and faceless body of frame-up artists came to be published in the English edition of Vereeken's book would seem to demand explanation.

Perhaps Vereeken can provide the necessary details. Did he agree with New Park Publications that a foreword of this kind was to be included? Who were the individuals he dealt with? Was he given an opportunity to read the text before it was published? Does he acknowledge responsibility for what the foreword says? Or was it included without his knowledge or consent? Why is Vereeken silent on this important point?

The significance of these questions can be judged in the light of the following sentences in the foreword written by the infamous Healyite committee:

"Sneevliet, murdered by the Nazis during the war, became the target of an especially vicious slander campaign after accusing Zborowski to his face to being a GPU agent.

"A sinister echo of these same slanders is renewed today by anti-Trotskyist elements gathered together under the Brussels-based umbrella organisation known as the 'Unified Secretariat' of Ernest Mandel and the Socialist Workers Party (USA) of Joseph Hansen and George Novack.

"As soon as the International Committee of the Fourth International began to raise questions of elementary revolutionary security, it was derided with the same insults and smears. The purpose is clear: to maintain the conspiracy of silence against the revelation of the full circumstances of Trotsky's murder and other GPU crimes. Vereeken records how at the Belgian revisionist conference in 1964 Ernest Mandel repeatedly tried to stop him reading out a document on the Zborowski affair.

"Vereeken's book confirms the findings of *Security and the Fourth International* compiled by the International Committee of the Fourth International."

Security and the Fourth International is a poisonous brew that seeks to smear me, George Novack, and other leading figures in the Trotskyist movement as "accomplices of the GPU." The lies and falsifications worked up in the Healyite kitchen have been thoroughly exposed and refuted.* They are part of a frame-up put

*See in particular: "On Healy's 'Investigation'—What the Facts Show" by Joseph Hansen; in the November 24, 1975, issue of *Intercontinental*

together in the tradition of the perpetrators of the infamous Moscow Trials.

The final sentence quoted above from the foreword to the English edition indicates the real interest of the Healyites in Vereeken's book. They concluded that the book could be converted, with a few deft touches, into "confirmation" of the frame-up charges directed against well-known leaders of the world Trotskyist movement. On that basis it is easy to understand why these specialists in the technique of the big lie fixed up Vereeken's book the way they did.

1. My photograph was placed in the book together with a caption composed in the manner of the late Senator McCarthy so as to make it appear that Vereeken "associated" me with GPU agent Zborowski.

2. A new foreword was written to make it appear that Vereeken, whose manuscript had been completed in 1972, had "confirmed" the newly hatched frame-up "findings" of the "International Committee." That the time sequence violated the most elementary rules of logic was of little concern to the Healyite forgers of "evidence." (Conceivably these forgers could "confirm" Vereeken's previous "findings" directed against Trotsky; but Vereeken's conclusions about Trotsky could not confirm their later "findings" directed against me, Novack, etc.)

3. The preface by Jef Impens was eliminated because it contained nothing whatsoever about me or George Novack, still less approval of the mud thrown at us by the "International Committee."

Instead, Impens described Vereeken's life from the viewpoint of an ardent admirer and stated the main purpose of his book, which was to try to demonstrate that Trotsky, unduly influenced by GPU agents in his staff, had made harsh—and incorrect—judgments of Vereeken's political positions on various points.

Here are two key paragraphs from the preface by Impens, indicating the theme of Vereeken's book:

"As a leader of the Revolutionary Socialist party, he was in touch with the International Secretariat led by the exiled

Press, page 1636. "Healy's Frame-up Against Joseph Hansen" by George Novack; in the December 8, 1975, issue of *Intercontinental Press*, page 1710. "A Statement on Healy's Frame-up of Hansen and Novack" by Betty Hamilton and Pierre Lambert; in the March 15, 1976, issue of *Intercontinental Press*, page 397. "Healy's Smear Against Trotsky's Last Collaborators" by Sam Gordon; in the May 24, 1976, issue of *Intercontinental Press*, page 854. "Healy Caught in the Logic of the Big Lie" by Joseph Hansen; in the August 9, 1976, issue of *Intercontinental Press*, page 1188. "The Verdict: 'A Shameless Frame-up' (A Statement on the Slanders Circulated by the Healy Group Against Hansen, Novack, and the Socialist Workers Party)" in the September 6, 1976, issue of *Intercontinental Press*, page 1254.

Trotsky. Nonetheless, like his Dutch counterpart Sneevliet and many others (Nin, Landau . . .), he ended up quarreling with the 'Old Man' over a certain number of points, in which—in all objectivity—history has shown him to have been right, if only by the fact that Trotsky himself later revised his own positions along similar lines, which came to light much later.

"A reconciliation never occurred, however, because another factor entered in: the infiltration of the secret Stalinist police in the so-called 'Trotskyist' movement. Trotsky was not sufficiently distrustful on this point. The circumstances of his death prove it. This was decidedly one of his weakest sides. He had blind confidence in the imposters who had in mind only one aim—to break up the Left Communist Opposition completely by setting everyone against everyone else, using any means. Thus it was that they succeeded in making Trotsky believe that the Sneevliets, the Vereekens, and *tutti quanti* were nothing but sectarians, unstable types, etc."

These paragraphs, which are completely faithful to Vereeken's views, stood in the way of using the book to bolster the frame-up charges against me and Novack. That was why the Healyites decided to suppress them by eliminating the entire preface. In its place they inserted a new preface signed to shore up the frame-up.

Vereeken has joined the Healyites in calling for a commission of inquiry to investigate me, Novack, the Socialist Workers party, and various other victims of their frame-up. Let Vereeken begin his investigatory work at home.

Vereeken's first responsibility is to ascertain why the alterations he deplors in the English edition of his book were made, and who ordered them. His second responsibility is to investigate the way the Healyites have used his doctored-up book to advance a Stalinist-type frame-up.

I can assure Vereeken that whatever steps he takes in this direction will prove to be educational. It is to be hoped that he will keep the public informed of his progress. □

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What the Purge in China Reveals

By Les Evans

"Red flags are flying over the mountains and rivers, everywhere in the motherland, and the faces of our eight hundred million people glow with joy. Hundreds of millions of people in all parts of our country have held mammoth demonstrations in the past few days. . . . They warmly celebrated Comrade Hua Kuo-feng's assuming the posts of chairman of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China and chairman of the C.P.C. Central Committee Military Commission, hailed the great victory in smashing the plot of the anti-party clique of Wang Hung-wen, Chang Chun-chiao, Chiang Ching and Yao Wen-yuan to usurp party and state power, and denounced with great indignation the vile crimes of the 'Gang of Four.'"—Peking *People's Daily* editorial, October 24, 1976.

The aura of monolithic stability cultivated by the Peking regime in recent years has been badly shaken by the purge of four of Mao Tsetung's closest associates only weeks after the chairman's death. The world—and the Chinese people, if they were allowed to say anything about it—is frankly incredulous of the claims that some of the country's leading Maoists had for years and even decades participated in a secret conspiracy against Mao.

The still more preposterous allegation that Chiang Ch'ing, Mao's wife of almost forty years, was a "fascist" who sought the restoration of capitalism serves only to discredit the new regime and to cast doubt on all of its public utterances that cannot be independently verified.

So far, at least, not a shred of evidence has been offered, none of the accused have been permitted to speak in their own behalf, and no one inside China's borders has been allowed to ask any embarrassing questions. The slogan of the moment, headlined in every Peking newspaper October 22, is, "Rally most closely round the party Central Committee headed by Chairman Hua Kuo-feng and obey its orders in all actions."

Even if the government were to be taken at its word, the picture it paints of itself bears little resemblance to workers democracy.

A decade ago, the head of state, the chief of the army general staff, the party general secretary, and the mayor of the capital city were stripped of their posts by the party chairman and accused of being spies for foreign capitalist governments. The chairman appointed a new heir, Lin Piao, who was hailed by demonstrations of

cheering millions, only to die in a plane crash while fleeing to a hostile nation and to be posthumously accused of plotting the assassination of the leader.

After this, the disgraced "capitalist" party secretary, Teng Hsiao-p'ing, was returned to office, given top positions of military and state authority, then suddenly condemned again as a "bourgeois plotter." Finally, on the death of the leader, his wife and closest associates are discovered to have been conspiring all along to destroy the government they served.

This tale of venal intrigue, secret conspiracies, and treacherous betrayals would seem extraordinary even in a feudal court. How can it be explained in a society that has overthrown capitalism?

In fact, the stereotyped denunciations the Maoist hierarchy uses to eliminate defeated groupings from its midst are not intended to convince or to be believed. Their purpose is to draw a curtain around the bureaucracy's inner circle where decisions are made and to exclude the party ranks and the mass of workers, peasants, and students from any role except that of rubber stamp for the victors.

A Page From Stalin's Book

There is nothing original or new in the methods used by Hua Kuo-feng to get rid of Chiang Ch'ing and the rest of the "Gang of Four." In general outline the procedure was perfected by Stalin in the mass purges of the 1930s. The Soviet bureaucracy then, as does its Chinese counterpart today, sought not only to destroy its political opponents, and potential rivals of the supreme arbiter within the bureaucracy. It strove in the process to demoralize the workers. By choosing accusations that placed the purge victims outside the pale of political debate, and by compelling massive public endorsement of charges that everyone knew to be lies, the regime conveyed a simple message: If even the mightiest could be felled by a word from the leader, and if no one dared raise a finger no matter how outrageous the charges, what chance would an ordinary worker have who criticized the regime?

Mao effectively used these methods to maintain his grip on the Chinese party and state apparatus. He emphasized one aspect of the process that Stalin utilized in the 1930s: the calling of rallies and demonstrations and innumerable local meetings, all securely under party control,

to validate his policies and give them the stamp of popular approval.

Many observers of People's China in the last decade or so have looked at the size of the crowds, the frequency of the "discussion" meetings, the apparent unanimity they produced, and concluded that Mao's policies were in some fundamental way more democratic and revolutionary than the Kremlin's. This impression was deepened by the fact that unlike Stalin, Mao had headed his party during a great revolution. And there was also the Sino-Soviet rupture that surfaced in 1960 establishing China's independence from the Kremlin, often taken as synonymous with a break from Stalinism.

This latest purge is instructive in this regard. To trace its unfolding is to reveal much more about the structure of China's bureaucratic caste than its authors intended.

Role of Censorship

Plainly, there are many pressing issues the bureaucracy has no intention of allowing the working masses to debate openly.

In foreign policy, defenders of the Chinese revolution can only be deeply repelled and alarmed at the Peking bureaucracy's counterrevolutionary alliance with international imperialism aimed at both the Soviet workers state and socialist revolutions in the capitalist world.

At home, the workers have no right to participate in setting the priorities in the economic plan. There are no institutions of workers democracy, no genuine workers control of production at the factory level. There is a censored press, a ban on political organization independent of the ruling party, and a prohibition on the formation of tendencies or debate within the Communist party itself.

Policy issues were probably involved in some form in the deep rift in the top party leadership that led to the ouster of Chiang Ch'ing. "Restoration of capitalism" is a pseudoissue manufactured to keep debates, when they do erupt in the elite inner councils, from leaking out and involving broader circles.

On the far narrower level of personalities, there is every reason to believe that the "four dogs," as the wall posters describe them, were disliked by many people in China. In that sense, the group backing Hua Kuo-feng had a genuinely popular issue in removing them from office.

It was not only within the bureaucracy that the Chiang Ch'ing group made enemies, by removing thousands of old-time officials during the Cultural Revolution. They also were the best-known public champions of a series of "reforms" Mao promoted in the Cultural Revolution that were on the whole more retrogressive than the practices the regime had used before.

These measures included massive cut-backs in education and culture, a wage freeze, and the substitution of political obsequiousness for merit as the prime criterion for promotion not only in the party—where that has long been the case—but in school and on the job.

Chiang Ch'ing and her group, acting as Mao's emissaries to the party, were the organizers of the purges of the last decade. They framed up and humiliated not only other bureaucrats but thousands of workers, students, and intellectuals who dared to criticize the regime or who failed to agree fast enough and loudly enough when a new denunciation campaign was announced from on high.

The massive size and apparent holiday spirit that pervaded the demonstrations celebrating their fall are testimony to the estimation the Chinese masses had made of the "Gang of Four." Moreover, even with the prestige of their close association with Mao Tsetung, this group proved unable to rally even as much support as did Liu Shao-ch'i in 1966—if any at all. This suggests a certain attitude toward Mao himself among wide layers of the Chinese populace.

But Hua Kuo-feng did not choose to attack the Chiang Ch'ing group for their real crimes. That would have struck too close to home.

The four are said to have been arrested on October 6 or 7—the regime has yet to confirm this or to reveal what has become of them.

A few days later, rumors were set in circulation, accusing the four variously of daring to put forward their own candidate in the secret Politburo election to choose Mao's successor as party chairman, of fabricating documents by Mao, and of plotting a coup against Hua Kuo-feng. The press remained silent.

On October 15, a wall poster campaign began in major cities, along with party-organized demonstrations in Shanghai, repeating some of the rumors and calling for a purge of the four.

Wall posters play a special role in the propaganda arsenal of the bureaucracy. They are part of the mystique of mass participation. They allow workers or students to let off steam about petty local issues in a press limited to one handwritten copy. They are a vehicle for budding functionaries to demonstrate to their superiors their facility in explaining the current party campaigns. They are an ideal means for anonymous denunciations of "troublemakers" in a factory, commune,



Time

Poster in Canton rally against the "gang of four." Photo was widely reprinted in capitalist press in the West, as example of how "Marxists" resolve political differences.

or school. And in a major purge, they permit the regime to float accusations and slanders that it is not yet prepared to officially endorse or explain.

No one can be sure in reading a wall poster if a particular allegation is definitely the official line or an exaggerated improvisation by some local party stalwart. Best of all, by beginning with a wall poster campaign the regime can present its subsequent action as taken by popular demand. Of course, wall posters that oppose the current line are quickly torn down and their authors arrested if they can be found.

The Verdict—Then the Charges

Chinese Stalinist justice operates in a completely different way from the norms of the early Soviet Union in Lenin's time, or even the procedures specified in the Chinese constitution. First comes the punishment, then the verdict, and only then are the charges revealed. The evidence is usually left out altogether.

In this case, four of the top party leaders were thrown in jail or placed under house arrest and stripped of their party and government posts. Then the masses were called into the streets to declare them guilty—before the government, the party, or the press had accused them of any specific crime.

Demonstrations of tens of millions of people throughout the country had been going on for a week under slogans such as "Crush the heads of the four dogs" before

a single official accusation was offered by the Chinese press. Finally on October 21, the country's leading newspaper, the Peking *People's Daily* ran a front-page article under the headline "An Out-and-Out Old Capitulationist." This accused one of the four, Vice-premier Chang Ch'un-ch'iao, of being a "maggot" because of a book review he had written in 1936. Nothing he had done more recently was mentioned. And even here, Chang was referred to only by his pen name of forty years ago, known only to the initiates.

On October 22, two weeks after their arrest, the four were first mentioned by name in the Chinese press. Two slogans were launched. These read: "Warmly celebrate Comrade Hua Kuo-feng being chairman of the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party and chairman of the C.P.C. Central Committee Military Commission!" and "Warmly celebrate the great victory in smashing the scheme of the 'Gang of Four' to usurp party and state power!" Up until now, this charge remains the most detailed indictment and the sole evidence for the "guilty" verdict elicited from 50 million demonstrators.

Thereafter hundreds of articles in the press from every corner of China dutifully reported that so and so many people from this and that walk of life had "warmly celebrated" these two events. The texts of hundreds of speeches and interviews were published, each affirming without the slightest elaboration or detail that the four had sought "to usurp party and state

power" and stood condemned for their "towering crimes."

It is one thing to ask people to come into the streets to denounce hated officials for their actual and well-known abuses of power. It is quite another to ask millions of people to condemn someone for a crime of which they know nothing, that by its very nature could only be committed in secret, and for which no details whatsoever are specified, much less proven. Here the verdict is demanded not only before the trial but even before the charges are made known. That's a frame-up in any book.

Chiang Ch'ing is now at the receiving end of the system she helped Mao to construct. When the Chinese working class and its allies overthrow their bureaucratic masters and win the fight for socialist democracy, they will have no reason to tell lies about their former oppressors or frame them up for things they did not do. The bureaucrats will undoubtedly get a fairer deal than they got from each other.

A Step Beyond the Moscow Trials

In the Moscow trials of the 1930s, Stalin invented elaborate day-by-day accounts of the alleged conspiracies of his victims. These were torn to shreds and ridiculed before the world by Leon Trotsky, the chief defendant in absentia. Trotsky amassed the documentary proof of the falsehood of the fabrications and dealt the Soviet bureaucracy a black eye it has never lived down.

Stalin's Chinese disciples learned a lesson from that experience. Unfortunately it was a Stalinist lesson: if you make the charge vague enough, it is harder to disprove it. After the first unsubstantiated accusation of trying to "usurp power," the Chinese press filled in the dossier with wilder and wilder allegations that led further and further away from whatever it was that actually happened in early October.

An October 24-25 Hsinhua news agency dispatch claimed:

Wang, Chang, Chiang and Yao are typical representatives of the bourgeoisie in the party. Their coming to power would mean the coming to power of the bourgeoisie, of revisionists and fascists and would mean the restoration of capitalism in China.

"Worker-theoreticians" from the Shanghai No. 1 Steel Mill—workers selected for special courses in Mao Tse-tung Thought—offered this analysis to the Hsinhua reporter:

The anti-party clique of Wang, Chang, Chiang and Yao waved the banner of Marxism to wantonly oppose Marxism, and they stopped at no crime for all their fine words. They show their true colours before the mirror of invincible Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tse-tung Thought, and have finally become something filthy and contemptible like dog's dung.

Workers at the Taching model oil field,

in an October 25 Hsinhua dispatch, accused the four of sabotaging the very campaigns of which they were the leaders over the past decade:

They wantonly interfered with and sabotaged



HUA KUO-FENG

the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution, the movement to criticize Lin Piao and Confucius, and the great struggle to criticize Teng Hsiao-ping and repulse the right deviationist attempt to reverse correct verdicts which [was] initiated and led by Chairman Mao. They are the "maggots" worming their way into the revolutionary ranks . . . and counterrevolutionaries who wear red hats to hide their black hearts.

And finally, in case anything had been overlooked, "This counter-revolutionary clique perpetrated every conceivable crime and is unpardonably wicked."

The Miracle of Shanghai

The Chinese press also presented endorsements of the guilty verdict and of Hua's accession to the party chairmanship from various contingents participating in the demonstrations. A group of dancers in the costumes of minority nationalities in an October 22 demonstration in Peking were quoted as saying:

Our happiness comes from the bottom of our hearts and we will sing at the top of our voices because the party Central Committee headed by Chairman Hua Kuo-feng is of one heart with the people of all nationalities throughout the country, and has eliminated the "Four Pests."

A group of primary school children in the same demonstration are said to have shouted with raised fists, "Down with the bad 'Gang of Four'! We Little Red Guards would never allow the 'Gang of Four' to make us suffer like our grandparents."

Readers may be skeptical that declarations like these are actually spoken in unison by large groups of people. Such accounts are used to further the impression

that the reigning hierarchy enjoys the unanimous approval of the masses. The most fanciful of these renditions appeared in an October 25 dispatch from Shanghai which quoted no less than the whole "10 million people of Shanghai," who are reported to have "said with emotion":

We the people of Shanghai have boundless trust in our esteemed and beloved Chairman Hua Kuo-feng and the party Central Committee headed by him and support them resolutely. With Chairman Hua Kuo-feng as Chairman Mao's worthy successor and at the helm of our revolutionary cause, we are at ease and satisfied!

Course of the New Regime

The world, including the people of China, is now waiting for the newly appointed chairman to reveal, if only indirectly, what the real political issues were in the split in the Maoist high command. That the government in Peking has not done so is a further indication of its Stalinist character.

The predominant speculation in the Western press is that Hua and his backers will move away from the campaigns of the post-Cultural Revolution period. This would mean placing more stress on economic construction and less on ideological conformity.

There is some evidence for this view in a major editorial that appeared in the October 25 issues of the Peking *People's Daily*, *Red Flag*, the party's theoretical journal, and the *Liberation Army Daily*. It called for accomplishing "the comprehensive modernization of agriculture, industry, national defence and science and technology and [building] China into a powerful socialist country before the end of the century. . . ."

This was a slogan first advanced by Premier Chou En-lai at the Fourth National People's Congress in January 1975. The "Four Modernizations" came under attack, presumably by Chiang Ch'ing and her supporters if not by Mao himself, at the time of the ouster of Teng Hsiao-p'ing, following Chou's death at the beginning of this year.

It may well be that the privileged bureaucratic caste is reevaluating its economic and political options. The ideological stick may now be supplemented by the carrot of material incentives. Widespread worker discontent with the frozen standard of living, the debasing self-criticism campaigns, the perpetual witch-hunts, and the sterility of Chinese cultural and literary life may compel the new government to make some concessions, as was done in the early 1960s.

A return to the pre-Cultural Revolution policies would at least put an end to the Maoist "theory" that paying workers higher wages is tantamount to the restoration of capitalism.

At this point, however, evidence for even such a limited policy shift as this remains scanty. Except for reviving the "Four

Modernizations" slogan, the new regime is following in the footsteps of the Great Helmsman. The beginnings of a cult around Hua Kuo-feng is a sign of that. In addition to the declaration of the "people of Shanghai," it is reported that printers are working overtime to produce portraits of Hua, and these have already appeared in demonstrations side by side with those of Mao.

In foreign policy, the government shows every indication of pursuing the class-collaborationist détente set in motion by Mao and Chou En-lai. Peking continues to appeal to European imperialism to arm itself against the Soviet Union, and is currying favor with the dictatorships of Latin America by denouncing Cuba as a Soviet military base (see "New Tsars' Offensive Posture Bears Seed of Defeat," October 21 Hsinhua commentary).

The Prospects for an Antibureaucratic Revolution

The bureaucracy enjoys special privileges, higher pay, and monolithic power. This identifies it as a definite social grouping in Chinese society with interests of its own that it must protect against the claims of the toiling masses. Because it does not own the nationalized property on which China's economy is based, it claims that the economy is collectively administered by the whole people, or at any rate, by the working class. But to maintain this fiction it must prevent any actual debate over alternatives from taking place, either among the masses or within the party.

The Communist party, in China as in all of the bureaucratized workers states, is actually not a party at all in any ordinary sense of the word. It is an administrative apparatus of the bureaucracy. Its members do not decide its line or elect its leadership. To maintain this state of affairs, debate must be suppressed, even in the highest levels of the party apparatus. This is possible only when the bureaucracy can unite for its own survival around an all-powerful arbiter with absolute power to decide all questions. The obscure Hua Kuo-feng is now being groomed for such a role.

The principle new feature in China today and the most encouraging for revolutionists is the increasing intervention by the masses outside the narrow channels constructed for them by the bureaucracy. This can be seen in the strike wave in Hangchow in the summer of 1975 and the massive spontaneous protest demonstration in Peking's Tien An Men Square in April 1976. It can be seen in a certain breakdown in social discipline noted by many recent visitors to China.

Thousands of young workers and students from among the millions forcibly deported to rural areas for "thought reform" or to carry out the regime's economic schemes have illegally filtered back into China's cities. Hunted by the

police and not permitted to work, many of these youths are protected by parents and friends. Some of them, in Chengchow in central China, carried out a spectacular



CHIANG CH'ING

bank robbery in July, reportedly becoming local heroes and putting up wall posters defending their action and challenging the police to find them.

There are frequent reports by visitors to Chinese cities of arguments between citizens and police, and of unauthorized wall posters touching on forbidden subjects that are quickly removed.

Many Western correspondents and visitors report that for the first time since the CCP victory in 1949, ordinary citizens approach them on the streets in China to discuss the latest turn of events and to offer their opinions or volunteer information.

These are all signs of a weakening of the bureaucracy's hold on the Chinese masses. The apparent unanimity in the recent demonstrations against Chiang Ch'ing is deceptive. The regime was unable to mount comparable demonstrations in April to denounce the Tien An Men protesters. The fall of Mao's henchmen was an occasion for celebration, however repellent the forms provided for this act by the bureaucracy. It will not be so easy for the government to organize similar shows of force against dissenters from among the masses.

Openings for Chinese Trotskyists

The cracks in the bureaucratic wall

provide new opportunities for fighters for socialist democracy, in and outside China, to communicate, share their experiences, and to organize for the future. Not least of these is the Chinese Trotskyist organization, compelled by the regime's repression to function from Hong Kong. They were able to form a united front with other Hong Kong revolutionists and hold a demonstration in May of 1,000 in support of the Tien An Men protesters and demanding the release of political prisoners in China.

Hundreds of demonstrators were arrested by the government at Tien An Men. Their fate is unknown. Many thousands more over the last decade have been jailed or sentenced to rural labor for dissenting from the government. Mao's heirs continue to this day to hold in prison without trial Chinese Trotskyists jailed by Mao more than two decades ago.

In an editorial in the April 15 issue of the Hong Kong *October Review*, the Chinese Trotskyists hailed the first steps by the Chinese working class toward a confrontation with this repressive system. They wrote:

The Peking regime headed by Mao Tsetung totally ignored the just demands raised by the masses. . . . But the masses will not be intimidated. In point of fact, the internal struggle in the CCP has fundamentally shaken the rule of the Peking regime. We can expect that in the future the masses will utilize various forms of struggle in a creative and bold way to continue their fight. The CCP can temporarily contain the masses, but as long as the contradictions within the country remain and the internal struggle within the party continues, the masses will be impelled to attempt to intervene. The intervention of the masses into national affairs is the only way to solve the current political crisis.

Hua Kuo-feng has called the masses into the streets to denounce a part of the ruling elite. He may have difficulty stuffing this genie back into its bottle. □

Maspero Bookstore Firebombed in Paris

A hand grenade and a Molotov cocktail were thrown into the Maspero publishers bookstore in Paris at around 2:30 a.m. on October 27. The show window of the store was destroyed, as well as the stock of books inside. A similar bombing occurred in June.

Maspero, one of the most well known and courageous of the French left-wing publishers, has been a target for rightists since the Algerian War. This house has published a wide range of books of interest to revolutionists, including many by Trotsky and leaders of the Fourth International. It formerly operated the Joie de Lire bookstore, one of the largest outlets for radical books and publications in the world.

Behind the Growing Upsurge in South Africa

[Tsietsi Mashinini is the president of the Soweto Students Representative Council and a central leader of the mass student protests that began in Soweto in mid-June. An interview with him was obtained October 9 in London, from which the following are major excerpts. The footnotes are by *Intercontinental Press*.]

* * *

Question. Could you tell us what life is like in Soweto?

Answer. I don't know in what way I can portray the picture. But Soweto is the biggest Black township in South Africa. It has about 80,000 houses, which are inhabited by more than one million people.

I come from a family of twelve kids. And my parents make it fourteen. We stayed in a four-room house, and the rooms are about eight by ten. Very few houses have electricity. Of those with electricity, most of them belong to the bourgeoisie in Soweto. It is ghetto life all the way. Very few gas stoves around. There are lots of basic needs people cannot afford, because of very low wages. In fact, when a survey was done in 1974 it was found that 60 percent of the people in Soweto had wages just to keep them alive, and not to have any other needs a human being has.

You don't own any property except your furniture. The house is not yours—it belongs to the Bantu Administration Board. You are in the urban areas for the purpose of either schooling or working. If you are not doing either of the two, you are sent to the Homelands.

Soweto has very few recreational facilities. It has two cinemas, about six municipal halls, and scattered playgrounds here and there. It has almost 300 schools, from grade level Sub A through matriculation. There is no university in Soweto. If you want to go to university, you go to one of the tribal universities.

Q. You mentioned bourgeois layers in Soweto. Can you explain that further?

A. They are a very small percentage. In fact, they have a special township, a place for the rich, called Dube. That is where you find most of the big houses and mansions. Most of the people who stay there are doctors, lawyers, and people who have got the best jobs in town. The rest of the people are labourers and drivers. They constitute 85 percent.

Q. Could you describe the conditions in the schools and the education system for Blacks in South Africa?

A. Besides having to buy everything you need at school, you pay high school fees. There are a number of bursaries that are granted on merit, but usually they are granted to students from rich families.

The classes have almost eighty pupils in them. There are two or three on a desk even at high-school level. At primary-school level you sit down on benches in rows with no desks at all. Our schools don't have heaters. The school simply has a classroom, a blackboard, and the Department of Bantu Education provides the chalk and writing material for the blackboard. Everything else in the classroom is provided by the pupils.

After April, the Bantu Education Constitution laid down that if you have not paid the fees you should be sent out from the school. If you don't wear the proper school uniform every day, you are liable to expulsion. Teachers cane you for whatever offence, and each school has its own regulations.

The school I came from, you enter at 7 a.m. and school goes out at 5:30 p.m., with two breaks in between: one at ten o'clock for twenty minutes and a lunch break between one and two o'clock. You get punished for not having shoelaces, belts, ties, and buttons. And if you are a girl and you are wearing a tunic, you get punished if your buttons do not correspond to your tunic.

In South Africa, the teaching is very impersonal and indifferent. It's only in rare cases where you find the teacher with an interest in his students or pupils. Most of the time the teacher just comes in, gives you work, and goes out.

Q. Are all the teachers Black?

A. Yes, all Black. In my school there was a white teacher. He came this year and was not well received by the students. I understand there are almost eighty white teachers in high schools all over South Africa. This is supposed to project an image overseas that Blacks and whites are living quite happily, that we even have white teachers in Black schools. I don't know how many times that teacher nearly got beaten up at school by students because of the bitterness the Black people have.

*Q. Can you describe how the recent student protests developed around the Afrikaans language?*¹

1. Afrikaans is the Dutch-based language of the Boer section of the white population.

A. We don't have much political education in South Africa and most of the material you read out here is banned in South Africa or it is for the whites only. So you come to realise that you know very little about the outside world except when Kissinger is going to Zurich. That they announce. The local papers concentrate on local news. Newspaper reading has never been the interest of students for a very long period, because the newspapers were white.

A South African high-school student—because it was there that the eruption started, at high-school level around the South African Students Organisation—cannot tell you that Transkei is another aspect of oppression because of this and this and this. But in some way or another, the student understands and identifies all elements of oppression like this Afrikaans thing—that is, our education, which is simply to domesticate you to be a better tool for the white man when you go and join the working community.

Q. Until now all teaching was done in English?

A. Yes, all the time.

Q. And now the proposal was to make all the teaching in Afrikaans, or just some of it?

A. Every student is doing seven subjects, at least until high-school level: the two official languages, English and Afrikaans, your mother tongue, and four other subjects. This Afrikaans policy compelled you to do two of the subjects in Afrikaans and two in English.

With the type of education we have and where you do not have much material to do research on, students find difficulty in understanding the concepts involved in physics, biology, and geography. And now if you have to do all these things in a language you are not conversant in, and the teacher has never been taught to teach in Afrikaans—Afrikaans has got very few circles in society because everywhere the medium of English is used, except in official pamphlets where Afrikaans and English are used—and all the time for almost eleven years you have been taught through the medium of English, it is difficult to switch over.

A number of junior secondary schools went on strike and then some went back. But there was one in particular, Phuti, which went on strike for six weeks, and they would not go back until Afrikaans was scrapped as a medium of instruction.

When any school was involved in an

incident of some sort, the press built it up as another protest against the Afrikaans language. There was an incident at Naledi high school where security branch officers went to pick up a student for detention. When they got there, the students decided to beat up the security branch officers and burn their car. The press picked that up as another protest against Afrikaans as a medium of instruction and then it was the talk of the township.

We were getting sick and tired because instead of oppression being gradually removed from us, the system was in fact implementing some of the thoughts of oppressing us. I realised that people were fed up with this sort of thing, but nobody had the guts to start anything. I decided that if we were to demonstrate it would have an effect because there has never been a demonstration before in Soweto. There were demonstrations some time before we were born or when we were little kids, like the Sharpeville demonstration—of which we know very little because any material, written material, about Sharpeville was banned.

We heard that the students of the University of Witwatersrand had demonstrated. So I thought that if we could demonstrate it would be something out of the way. I was the president of the South African Student Movement [SASM] at my high school, Morris Isaacson. I called the students together, and on the Wednesday a week before June 16, we talked about it. I delivered a speech on the South African situation and got the students in a mood to do anything.

On Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday I gave them the briefing for the demonstration. On Saturday we put a placard at the school gates, saying: "Notice—no Security Branch allowed. Enter at risk of your skin." Now the press put that up again as another protest against the Afrikaans issue. On Sunday there was a SASM meeting of all the students in Soweto. I went to the meeting and got a few chaps from the other schools to help me, and we decided to mobilise all the high schools and junior secondary schools.

We did that on Monday and Tuesday, and then on Wednesday we went on the streets demonstrating. We were very peaceful all the time and there were just placards denouncing Afrikaans as another method of oppression.

The idea was to converge on this junior secondary school, and there myself and a number of other students had drawn up a memorandum to the effect that we Soweto students totally rejected Afrikaans as a medium of instruction and we were not going back until this was scrapped. We were converged already, and I was still trying to tell the students to settle down so that we could address them properly, when the cops started shooting.

Q. How many students were involved on June 16?

A. The press put it at 10,000. I am not very good at estimating how many people were there, but I have seen what 10,000 people are. And if I was to compare that



Red Weekly
TSIETSI MASHININI

demonstration with others, we had the biggest crowd on June 16. I think nearly all the students in central, north, east, and west Soweto were involved. Only the south was not involved.

Q. How were the workers' strikes organised after the student protests?

A. After June 16 we realised that there were too many killings, so we tried to get a method whereby we could hit the system and reduce the casualties. As we did not have guns, our only weapon was to cripple the economy of the country, which lies in Black hands. So the idea was to stop workers going to work.

So we sent word to the parents, the workers. We requested that from such and such a date to such and such a date nobody should go to work. And that is how the workers came into it. They pledged solidarity with the students and stayed at home. We distributed pamphlets, and students were circulating them, that is how they were organised. All the time they wanted to be involved in the struggle, but there was no concrete organisation which

could announce: "Don't go to work." It could only be done through the students.

Q. Are Black workers being organised on a wide scale?

A. Yes. I have seen some of their underground work.

Q. The clash between some of the hostel workers² and other residents in Soweto, what caused that?

A. Now, in the course of the struggle, since the Black Consciousness Movement was established and even since Mandela's time,³ the hostel dwellers were always overlooked as a sector of the community. Not much consciousness raising was done. So the system went to these people and told them to kill the Black leaders. They gave them pictures of Black leaders; my picture was included. They gave them a number of houses to burn belonging to Black leaders. So we knew about this, but we were not in a position to do anything about it.

It was confirmed that the system had mobilised all the hostels and fortunately enough some of the hostels did not participate. Only one hostel did participate in the murder of Black people. Immediately afterwards, the Black community reorganised itself to pick up the people who did not want to pledge themselves in solidarity with the Black students.

But the hostel dwellers became aware of the fact that the system was just using them and so they pledged solidarity with the students. Now they are hitting very hard against the system. The only thing which will happen is that it won't be reported what the hostel dwellers are doing against the system. It will only be reported what they are doing against the students.

Q. What was the Students Representative Council?

A. The SRC was formed after June 16, when we were planning the second demonstration for the release of detainees. I requested each school to send two representatives and these representatives formed the SRC. We could not have SASM representatives. We did not want this thing to appear as if it had been organised by SASM, otherwise SASM would be declared a restricted organisation. But even so, all the members of SASM were detained and I am the only one left of the

2. Migrant workers in the urban areas are generally housed in barracks-like hostels so as to isolate them from the rest of the Black population.

3. Nelson Mandela, a central leader of the African National Congress in the late 1950s and early 1960s. He is now serving a life sentence on Robben Island.

national and regional executive councils.

Q. Have all the leaders of SASO and the Black People's Convention been detained?

A. Yes, all of them. The SASO general student council was from July 5 to July 9. The national president who was elected after the riots was detained in connection with the riots. Before the demonstrations Mongezi Stofile was an ordinary student, but after he was elected national president he was detained in connection with the riots.

Q. Do you have any connections with the ANC or PAC?⁴

A. I will tell you something. The ANC and PAC played their part in the South Africa struggle in the 1950s and 1960s. Right now there are ex-members of the ANC in the whole of South Africa. But they are not politically active, that is, have the concept of perpetuating the activity of the ANC or PAC political ideology. As far as the students in South Africa are concerned, the ANC and PAC are extinct internally. Externally we are aware they exist. Internally they are doing no work. There may be some underground work they are doing which we are not aware of, but as far as the struggle is concerned they are not doing anything.

Q. Do you think there is a different political outlook between the old movements, the ANC and PAC, and the Black Consciousness Movement?

A. Yes there is. There were a number of clashes between ANC and BCM leaders, because the ANC leaders did not want to recognise the BCM as a liberation movement.

Q. Why didn't they want to recognise BCM?

A. They do not want to understand why BCM was formed when ANC was the liberation movement. But ANC was banned inside the country, so a new liberation front had to come.

Q. Can you say something more about the BCM, its origins and links with similar movements elsewhere?

A. The BCM was formed in 1968. There were student councils in Natal, Orange Free State, all over South Africa. And they came together and formed SASO—that's the mother body of SASM. SASO and SASM belong to the students, SASO at the university level and SASM at high-school to lower primary-school level.

4. African National Congress and Pan-Africanist Congress.

Then there's the Black People's Convention [BPC] with the Black community, the Black Allied Workers Union with the workers, and also the Black Federation and the Union of Black Women's Federations, which concern themselves with different sectors of the community.

The ideology is the same: to make the Black man more conscious of the evil of the white man, elements of oppression, and so on. The ideology concerned is to peacefully bring about a change in the South African social aspect and to bring about the total liberation of the Black man.

The BCM, which is a very strong movement, gained momentum from 1972 until the death of Tiro, the person who established SASM in 1972 and who was assassinated by a letter bomb in Botswana in 1974. He was permanent organiser of SASM and the first national president of SASM at the high-school level. He is one of the Black leaders who died for the Black cause.

Q. We have heard that the BCM is influenced by ideas from the American Black national movement?

A. I am not sure. I myself have read very little material about the Black power movement in America. The students in South Africa do not identify Black power the way it is identified in America. I don't even know how it is identified in America.

I believe that Black power is the realisation of the people of oppression. Immediately they realise they are oppressed they recoup themselves to fight against the system. As long as there is oppression, there will be Black power. As long as there is a Black person oppressed in South Africa, there will be Black movements which will result in the concept of Black power—the eruption of the Black masses. Black power is every Black person in South Africa, Namibia, and Zimbabwe.

Q. To what extent have you involved sections of the Asian and Coloured population?⁵

A. The ideology of the BCM defines Blackness as an attitude of the mind, and not of the colour of the skin. So it makes provision for the Coloured and Indian population to be involved in the BCM. The Black man is any member of the South African community. The difference between the Coloureds, Indians, and Blacks is that the Blacks are not referred to as Blacks, but as Africans. If you want to differentiate between the three groups, one

5. South Africa's Black population is composed of 17.8 million Africans, 2.3 million Coloureds, and 710,000 Indians. The Indians were originally brought to South Africa as indentured workers, and the Coloureds are descendants of the early white settlers, Indians, Malay slaves, and Khoikhoi, San, and other African peoples.

is African, one Indian, and one Coloured. They are all referred to as Blacks.

Q. What have you read in South Africa? Are books and pamphlets smuggled in which give people an idea as to what happens in the rest of Africa?

A. There are a number of books which are smuggled into the country. A lot of people possess banned material. You just do not lend it to people to read because that is where the offence is, by giving it to people, by circulating it in fact. So if you have banned material you keep it to yourself. If the system picks you up and you are in possession of banned material, that is another offence.

The first banned book I read was *The Immorality Act*, which is a story written by a judge about a white man who was in love with a Black woman. The next was this book by Nelson Mandela, *No Easy Walk to Freedom*. There are quite a number of copies in South Africa. Mostly what is not banned are SASO and SASM newsletters, but they are banned after a month or two. Since June 16, everything that was Black was banned, even before it was released.

Q. What about Marxist books? Books by Marx and Lenin?

A. Not even in the libraries. I only learnt what it was when I was in Botswana in exile, that the concept of Marxism is based on "each according to his abilities, each according to his needs." Then I realised this was exactly what we were fighting for in South Africa.

If you ask the people what type of government they would like to have, a person cannot articulate in those terms. But a person will tell you that those people in Dube are rich and other people in white cities eat cows and this is obscene. That person is getting 40 rands and the other person 140 rands per month. If these things could be equal, people would live better. In such parables people tell you exactly what they want; and when you come to analyse it all, they want Marxism. They have been oppressed and suppressed for so long they only want to live in an equal society.

Q. How did developments in Mozambique and Angola affect the Blacks in South Africa?

A. It brought political awareness of the potential Black people carried in their hands. SASO tried to have a rally some time just before the independence of Mozambique and that rally was banned. Now, I was a political infant, and the question arose in my mind. "Why was this rally banned?"

You tend to like everything the white regime hates. They don't like anything to do with Frelimo; then you are for Frelimo.⁶

When they were fighting Cubans and Angolans in Angola, then we were for those people they don't like. The fact that they don't like communism makes you think what communism is, and "no, I think I want this." They are not aware that they are creating this type of thing.

The system more or less made me what I am now because of their constant oppression. My character was built by the environment that I lived in. That is why I claim that I am not the only Tsietsi Mashinini—there are lots of other students who will become active because of what the system is doing to them.

Q. Because of the level of repression since June 16, do you think that the South African regime will be able to crush this movement?

A. I think they will ban the BCM and claim that they are behind all this. But a new liberation front will come up. They are going to drive the people underground, because the people are going to be afraid to act the way the BCM has done. A lot of underground work is going to be done without the knowledge of the system. They will only see various acts of underground work, but they won't know who is responsible.

The system itself has created so many enemies. There were people who sympathized with the BCM, but did not want to have anything to do with politics for fear of detention. The system was raiding almost fifty homes a night after June 16, looking for that person or this person. So many people were killed or detained. So many people have grudges against the system that they are prepared to do anything against the system anytime. So many mothers have lost their children. So many fathers have lost their children. So many husbands have lost their wives. That is because of the system.

In fact, I would say that the system has done more to heighten consciousness than SASO, SASM, and BPC have managed in their history.

Q. Do you see the struggle continuing for ten years . . .

A. Ten years? Five!

Q. You don't see the present as a short outburst?

A. I see the downfall of the system in five years.

Q. Do you think that it is possible for the regime to do what it did after Sharpeville and crush the movement?

A. They cannot. If they want to stop

Black power they have to put every Black person in detention. Because as long as there are Black people outside, the struggle will go on.

Q. Do you think it will be possible to organise a powerful, political organisation underground in South Africa that could lead a struggle for power by the Blacks?

A. I think there is already a strong, underground liberation movement, the BPC.

Q. Not people from the ANC or PAC?

A. I understand that the ANC has its own underground liberation movement. But there cannot be one underground liberation movement. Because say fifty people are active in this liberation movement, these people cannot come out in public to say, "We are doing this." So they are acting on their own.

Their results will cause people to say, "Such and such has happened. Let's try to do it in such a way." So there are going to be a lot of underground movements. And I see them as the people who, in fact, are going to start the revolution in South Africa. That is if the people in exile don't start anything before them.

Q. What do you think of the Kissinger talks with Vorster?

A. We are aware of the role of Kissinger with his peace talks. The peace talks mean that Kissinger is representing the Western world in South Africa. The Western world has economic interests in South Africa. The Black masses are revolting against the racist regime. Kissinger has got to establish peace in South Africa such that their interests are not tampered with.

The Black student is just beginning to realise that his fight is not just against the racist regime, but that the racist regime has got its power resources in the whole of the Western world. And that is why they are rejecting people like Kissinger and so on.

Q. What attitude do you think the neighboring states should take towards the South African struggles?

A. If they could make military aid available to the South African struggle it would contribute a lot, because that is the only language the people want to understand now. Armed struggle against the racist regime, that's the only thing they see as possible to bring us total freedom. If you could look into the history of the struggle, you could see that all other means have been exhausted. The only thing left is armed struggle against the racist regime.

When we protest in demonstrations, we

are mad because we don't have guns. When we try to negotiate, it is always that the government is still considering for an indefinite period. And if anybody comes into leadership, they are detained for an indefinite period. The racist regime has created so many draconian laws to protect itself against the Blacks that if you obeyed the South African laws there would be no political movement in South Africa.

Q. What about the credibility of Buthelezi and other chiefs?

A. They have much support from the hostel dwellers and people from their vicinities. But the Black students and Black parents in urban areas, where most of the Black population is, totally reject Homeland leaders because they are aware of the issue of Homelands and what it means.

Q. What do you think of the Bantustans?

A. Bantustans are supposed to be independent, but they cannot be independent when they are dependent on the racist regime. If the Bantustans have their own parliament, prime minister, and legislative assembly, the final word will always come from Pretoria. Whatever they want to do on a Homeland scale, the final word will always come from Pretoria.

The Black people do not recognise any leader who is working within the system to try and bring about a change. All the leaders of the government platform can only speak that far and no further. Immediately they go over their limit, they are just sacked from their position as Homeland leaders and some other puppet is brought in.

Pretoria is creating all the puppets—a dozen a day—because they are aware of the political role these people could play to try and suppress the protests of the people. Now we do not recognise them, especially the students, who constitute a very powerful liberation front. As long as the students do not recognise Homeland leaders, urban Bantu councillors, and so on, everybody within the government framework, then independence shall be recognised as writing only, not by the people.

Q. What message would you have to people in Britain, France, or the USA to help the struggle?

A. For one, by not recognising the coming independence of Transkei, which is just a political swindle as far as I am concerned, between Blacks and whites in South Africa.

The people must understand that the racist regime is dependent entirely on Britain and other countries for arms and so on. And if they don't support the racist regime, it is entirely their duty to ensure that Britain cuts all relations with South Africa. □

6. Frente de Libertação de Moçambique (Mozambique Liberation Front).

OUT NOW!

Chapter 22

The First Counter-Inaugural and the Demise of the National Mobilization Committee

By Fred Halstead

[First of two parts]

One demand of the September 28, 1968, demonstration in Chicago was amnesty for a group of forty-three Black GIs at Fort Hood, Texas, who were facing court-martial for demonstrating against being sent to Chicago for riot duty during the Democratic Party convention. More than half of these GIs were veterans of Vietnam.

The background to the incident included the fact that units from Fort Hood had been sent to Chicago during the uprisings immediately following the assassination of Martin Luther King, Jr., in April. Shortly before the Democratic Party convention, troops at Fort Hood were again alerted for possible use in Chicago. Obviously the authorities feared that the demonstrations might precipitate another rebellion in the Black ghetto.

On the night of August 23-24, more than a hundred Black soldiers from the First Armored Cavalry Division gathered outdoors in a protest against being ordered to Chicago. The commanding general spoke to them at midnight, but many of them stayed where they were. In the morning MPs showed up and arrested forty-three. For whatever reason, the Fort Hood units were not sent to Chicago.

The case of the Fort Hood forty-three received widespread publicity and support, especially in the Black community and the antiwar movement. The NAACP also provided legal aid. Eventu-

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ally, twenty-six were convicted and given relatively light sentences, the longest being ten months hard labor. This was in contrast to the six- and ten-year sentences given the year before to William Harvey and George Daniels, Black marines at Camp Pendleton, California. During the Detroit uprising in the summer of 1967, Harvey and Daniels had called a meeting to discuss whether Black men should fight in Vietnam. When they and twelve other marines requested a hearing before their commander, the two were charged with insubordination, isolated, court-martialed, convicted, and sentenced. The case received little notice. But by August of 1968 the antiwar sentiment was widespread enough, and the contacts between GIs and various parts of the antiwar movement were sufficient, to make it very difficult for the military authorities to keep such incidents quiet.

When the Fort Hood forty-three were arrested, there already existed an antiwar-oriented coffeehouse, the Oleo Strut, in Killeen, the town just off base, and a GI newspaper, *Fatigue Press*, published by GIs with the aid of civilians at the coffeehouse. The Black GIs who took part in the protest were not involved in this activity, but within hours of their arrest, the GIs who were had made contact with various antiwar organizations, helping to arrange lawyers, publicity, and so on.

The first of these GI coffeehouses near bases was set up late in 1967 by Fred Gardner and Donna Mickleson in Columbia, South Carolina, near Fort Jackson. Gardner, a former editor of the Harvard *Crimson*, had conceived the idea while on a tour of active duty as a reservist. The object was to provide something besides saloons or the semiofficial USOs, where GIs could hang out when off duty, meet students and other antiwar activists, and have available a certain amount of movement literature.

The Columbia coffeehouse was called the UFO. Gardner and others set up the Oleo Strut in 1968, and within the next year the coffeehouses spread, with various groups establishing them near bases across the country. These establishments were usually quite low-key, with little antiwar organizing taking place on the premises. In part this was because the coffeehouses were often subject to severe harassment by local officials, obviously acting in collusion with military authorities. There was also a certain tendency after a while for some of these coffeehouses to develop a kind of in-group atmosphere, to become hangouts for radicalized GIs who set themselves apart and had little confidence that their peers in the army were capable of organizing against the war. But the coffeehouses did provide some means for GIs at isolated bases to make contact with the antiwar movement, particularly in emergencies. The UFO and the Oleo Strut were among the more successful of these efforts.

An even more important development was the growth of antiwar GI newspapers. The first of these were published by civilians and aimed at GIs. The most influential in the early period was *Vietnam GI*, published in Chicago by Vietnam veteran Jeff Sharlet, who managed to accumulate a mailing list of thousands of GIs in Vietnam itself. Another was *Veterans Stars and Stripes for Peace*, also published in Chicago by the Veterans for Peace. Another was the *Bond*, originally put out in Berkeley and distributed by Berkeley radicals at bases in the area. After Bill Callison, the publisher, was arrested for draft resistance he gave the name and mailing list to Pvt. Andrew Stapp at Fort Sill, Oklahoma.

Stapp, with the aid of the Youth Against War and Fascism, was the founder of the American Servicemen's Union (ASU). He was given an undesirable discharge from the army in early 1968 for organizing, and he put out the *Bond* from New York as the organ of the ASU. The ASU was largely a one-man publicity operation, but the *Bond* was widely distributed. It developed a significant circulation and was published more consistently, and for a longer period, than any other antiwar GI paper.

By August 1968, papers published by GIs themselves on particular bases had begun to appear. *Fatigue Press* and *FTA* at Fort Knox, Kentucky, were among the first to make a go of it.

The spread of these papers was the more remarkable since the GIs who put them out were invariably subject to more or less severe harassment by the military brass or civilian authorities in collusion with them. It wasn't illegal for GIs to publish a newspaper, but it made enemies of people in a position to retaliate. Arbitrary transfers to break up the editorial boards of these papers were common and were among the milder countermeasures taken. Pvt. Bruce Peterson, the first editor of *Fatigue Press*, for

example, was arrested in August 1968 and the lint in his pockets was sent to a laboratory which allegedly detected traces of marijuana. Marijuana was so widespread at Fort Hood at this time that the base was commonly referred to as "Fort Head." Yet Peterson was convicted of possession of an illegal drug and sentenced to eight years at hard labor. He served two years before being released on appeal.

GI organizing was no idle pastime. It didn't mix well with the "revolution for the hell of it" atmosphere of much of the countercultural milieu.

I was not present in Chicago for the Democratic Party convention demonstrations because I was on a trip overseas as the socialist candidate for U.S. president. The main reason for this trip was to talk to American GIs in South Vietnam. But I also stopped in Japan, and since Vietnam is halfway around the world from the United States, I returned by way of Europe and spoke to GIs in Germany.

In Japan I attended conferences of several Japanese antiwar groups, and was a little taken aback to find that a common approach among Japanese peace activists toward American GIs was to encourage them to desert. Helping GIs who had already deserted or who felt a moral imperative to do so was one thing, but encouraging antiwar GIs to desert was quite another. The practical effect would be a tendency to behead the movement inside the military services. An antiwar GI inside could spread the word to dozens and possibly hundreds of other GIs, but as a deserter he could do little or nothing beyond the initial publicity that some deserters managed to get. What is more, the penalties for desertion were very harsh.

A GI who deserted overseas in all probability would not be able to return to his country in the foreseeable future. His family would lose his allotment, and if they were dependent upon him, they would be destitute. For these reasons and others, most ordinary GIs tended to look on people who advocated desertion as people to be avoided. Desertion massive enough to actually interfere with the war was simply not in the cards.

I argued along this line time and again with people in the movement in the United States. With some people this was a point of difference on which there just seemed to be no meeting of the minds. Looking back, it seems clear that the deadlock was not so much a matter of logic as of two different philosophical approaches. They looked upon it as some kind of victory every time a GI deserted because he opposed the war. I looked on it as an opportunity lost. Even in Vietnam an antiwar GI could do far more for the antiwar cause—and even to prevent killing if he handled himself right—than he could in exile or as a fugitive. As far as I was concerned the antiwar movement was in the business of making the antiwar sentiment and activism as pervasive as possible. It was not in the business of accumulating sacrifices or transforming individual souls.

* * *

One of the groups in Japan centrally concerned with organizing against the Vietnam war was Beiheiren (Japan Peace in Vietnam Committee). Jeff Sharlet and I were among several Americans who attended the August 1968 Beiheiren conference. Sharlet's general political approach was closer to that of the graduate SDS milieu than to mine, but on the question of desertion our views at the time were similar. He took the floor to caution the group about encouraging desertion, explaining that what the American movement needed was as many antiwar GIs as possible inside the military. (Tragically, Sharlet discovered shortly afterward that he had cancer. He died in 1969.)

In conversation with Japanese activists, and later with European ones, I tried to explain that from a practical point of view it would be better if they would encourage American GIs to read antiwar literature, to become experts on why the U.S. intervention was wrong, and impart that knowledge to their fellow GIs. The GIs themselves would have to decide how far they

could go in organizing petitions, letters home, demonstrations, and so on. Whatever they could do in that regard would have great effect back home.

* * *

My trip to South Vietnam, where I was accompanied by SWP leader Barry Sheppard, was smooth enough. We had no illusions that in a few days we could reach enough GIs to make any appreciable difference, but I wanted to see for myself and demonstrate to the antiwar activists back home that with a sensible approach the movement could get a good reception from GIs even in the war zone. As a candidate I figured the American authorities might not keep me out because that would give me more publicity than just letting the visit take place. So it turned out.

Years later a court order forced the FBI to reveal documents that showed they had attempted to interfere with this trip. In the words of an FBI letter at the time, a "blind memorandum" was sent "to the intelligence branches of the Armed Forces by Liaison which would hamper the efforts of the leader of the Socialist Workers Party in trying to contact members of the Armed Forces abroad."¹ The memorandum contained a provocative smear of the SWP and the following obvious incitement to violence: "It should be an interesting experience for Mr. Halstead, when he encounters the men who have served both their own country and others in the interests of freedom."

In spite of the FBI's efforts I encountered no hostility on the part of the GIs I talked to in Vietnam. Some still favored the war, more were opposed, and the majority seemed just confused on the question. But the GIs were polite and willing to discuss.

This was important because the official reasons for the American intervention simply couldn't stand up against the facts, and under discussion could not be made to coincide with the interests of the GIs themselves, either personally or as working class Americans. The spreading of an awareness that the folks at home did not expect them to sacrifice for this war, and did not want them getting killed in it, was also important.

There is a strong psychological tendency for soldiers facing combat to rationalize that there is some good reason for their participation. Nobody wants to die for nothing. This is reinforced by a self-generating morale factor in combat squads and platoons. On that level, each man depends on the others and they fight to save their buddies if for no other reason. This becomes the highest morality, and it is not to be violated. Those who would reach combat soldiers must understand this. But when all the other rationales for fighting are no longer tenable this combat solidarity can turn into its opposite, and the violator of the highest morality is he who gets the unit into combat.

This mood started in small ways. Later I interviewed Spec/4 Robert Mall, who was with the 173rd Airborne Brigade in Vietnam in 1968. I asked him where he was during the Tet offensive. He replied:

"At Bien Hoa on long-range patrol. In February, our intelligence sources said there was going to be an offensive in the area and we were sent out about five miles to watch a trail, which intelligence said was heavily used. Fortunately this wasn't true. We found no traffic on the trail at all. In fact, the grass was about three feet high on it. So we just pulled off the side of the trail and waited for anything to come by. Nothing did. We were there watching that grass when we heard the mortars hitting Bien Hoa. That was the start of the Tet offensive.

"Q. Did you rush back into Bien Hoa?"

"A. No, we stayed out for a few days. I had no desire whatsoever to go back into Bien Hoa and get mortared when I could sit there and watch the grass on the trail.

"Q. Is this a common attitude?"

"A. Definitely. The attitude of the American soldier in Vietnam

1. Nelson Blackstock, *Cointelpro: The FBI's Secret War on Political Freedom*, (New York: Vintage Books, 1975), p.65.

is if you can stay the hell out of the way if the VC that's exactly what you want to do."²

No one predicted it then, but this process would eventually turn the American ground forces in Vietnam into a net liability to the war effort. But it was only beginning in 1968.

While in Vietnam I did not present myself to the public relations officers of the command. Nor did I meet with any Vietnamese, because that would have attracted the attention of the Saigon regime, and might have meant immediate deportation. I just talked to ordinary American GIs on the streets of Saigon, in the USO, in the bars, and at the huge American base at Long Binh. I distributed copies of one of my election campaign brochures entitled "A Letter to GIs on the '68 Elections." It stated in part:

"No one has a better right to oppose the war than a combat GI. And while I understand that GIs are in a tight spot, I also know that there is no law that says GIs have to be brainwashed, or that they do not have the right to think for themselves, or to read different points of view on the war, or to discuss the war. I also believe they ought to have the right to demonstrate against the war. . . .

"The Johnson administration and the warmakers in general expend a great deal of effort trying to stir up hostility between GIs and the antiwar movement at home. But the fact is that millions of ordinary Americans have demonstrated against the war, and probably very close to a majority are opposed to it.

"These Americans don't want to see our men being hurt and killed in an unjustified war. It's these Americans who are opposed to the war who are really on the side of the GIs. They want to support the GIs by bringing them home."³

The only close call Barry and I had when we were in Vietnam was in a bar near the Saigon docks. A bunch of soldiers were drinking while a convoy of trucks they were guarding was being loaded. They had automatic rifles which they propped against the bar, and in the corners of the booths. (This unnerving practice was common in Saigon at the time.) A big sailor came in and sat down next to Barry. I was talking to a Black GI when we overheard the sailor say something to Barry using the word "niggers." The Black GI knocked the sailor off his stool with one punch and the place erupted in a fight. Fortunately the guns did not come into play, and some of the other GIs finally pushed the fight outside. Barry and I took off.

Looking back on the incident in light of the exposures about the FBI's SWP disruption program, the sailor might have been sent into the bar to get us into trouble. But on the other hand it could have been just a piece of America abroad.

* * *

On September 14, 1968, a meeting of the National Mobe administrative committee was held at which Rennie Davis and Tom Hayden, supported by Dellinger, presented a program of action for the fall. It was quite different from that already adopted by the Student Mobilization Committee conference. The SMC had called for an international week of protest from October 21 to 26, with emphasis on supporting the right of GIs to speak out against the war. The SMC approach was to proceed with massive, orderly demonstrations and not repeat the experience of the Chicago Democratic Party demonstrations.

The Hayden-Davis proposal declared "the need to create two, three, many Chicagos." The "strategic purpose" of the proposal was described as "to display a growing militant defiance of the authority of the government." It included a call for a strike on election day: "On November 5, we must show the world that our 'democratic process' is a contemptible mockery and that a political strike against the Presidential election has wide American support."⁴

2. *Militant*, June 13, 1969.

3. "A Letter to GIs on the '68 Elections," by Fred Halstead, Socialist Workers Campaign Committee, 1968.

4. "Politics After Chicago," proposal to September 14, 1968, National

In an obvious attempt to counterpose something to the SMC's GI emphasis, the Davis-Hayden proposal also contained a "national GI week" including visits to military bases November 1-5. Its purpose, said the proposal, was "to dramatize American support for the right of soldiers to return to civilian life." This was a euphemism for encouraging desertion by individual GIs.

Suggestions that the dates of the "GI week" be made to coincide with the SMC fall activity were brushed aside. There was no general consensus at the September 14 meeting on this program, but it was later announced as decided by the officers.

This fall program had been arrived at in good part as the result of consultations with SDS and people around its milieu. It was an attempt to accommodate to plans SDS was already forming on the idea of repeating the Chicago experience on a national scale around the elections.

A proposal to that effect was later passed at the SDS national council meeting October 11-13. It called for a two-day student strike November 4-5 with the slogan: "No class today, no ruling class tomorrow." The first day was to be devoted to rallying forces on campus for excursions into the streets on election day. A special issue of *New Left Notes* was distributed containing a wall poster that declared: "The elections don't mean shit. Vote where the power is. Our power is in the street."⁵

* * *

The activities called by the SMC for October 21-26, 1968, were hardly massive. A national election period was always a difficult time to organize major antiwar actions. The disarray following Chicago, and the lack of a unified call within the antiwar movement, contributed to the difficulty. In most areas the turnout was in the hundreds, with crowds of a thousand or two in several cities. In a number of places the marches were led by GIs. In some areas the activities consisted of GI-civilian conferences or teach-ins rather than marches, and the overall approach was to defend the right of GIs to speak out against the war. While not very large, the activities did succeed in making the point—to the public, the GIs, and the movement—that antiwar sentiment among GIs was widespread. There was therefore some sense of accomplishment in SMC circles. What is more, on an international scale the actions were very large in some places. In London, 100,000 marched, and in Japan, 800,000 participated in demonstrations and strikes against the war in Vietnam and the use of Okinawa as a U.S. war base. This helped keep up the spirits of SMC activists.

The most effective fall 1968 antiwar action in the United States was an October 12 "GIs and Vets March for Peace" in San Francisco, where 500 active-duty GIs and some 15,000 civilians demonstrated. The main civilian support for this effort came from the SMC, the Vets for Peace, and some of the organizers of the April 27 demonstration. The activity originated with a group of GIs from Hamilton Air Force base and Fort Ord who had attended the April demonstration. Together with Ken Shilman, an ex-paratrooper who worked with the SMC, and Ron Alexander, a Vietnam vet, they organized a successful teach-in at Berkeley in the summer and laid plans for the fall demonstration.

These preparations gave birth to another GI paper, *Task Force*, edited by active-duty GIs and veterans. The first issues were widely distributed at bases in the area to advertise the march. Some of the GIs involved worked on the military airlift and were able to get bundles into Vietnam. (*Task Force* continued irregular publication through 1969. In general, the publication of GI papers dependent on active-duty GIs was tenuous because of transfers and harassment of the editors. In the course of the war several hundred such papers appeared, but many were short-lived. During the height of the GI movement—from mid-1969 to mid-1972—the number of papers averaged around ninety.)⁶

Mobilization Committee steering committee by Rennie Davis and Tom Hayden. (Copy in author's files.)

5. *New Left Notes*, October 25, 1968.

6. See David Cortright, *Soldiers in Revolt*, (Garden City, New York:



N.J. Brown

SAN FRANCISCO, October 12, 1968: March of 15,000 led by Airman 1/c Mike Locks (at left) and navy Lieut. Sue Schnall

At one point during preparations for the October 12 demonstration the commander of the Military Airlift Command sent a message to the Pentagon asking permission to discharge one of the march organizers, air force 2nd Lieut. Hugh F. Smith. The message also declared: "Strongly believe this demonstration should be quashed if possible because of possible severe impact on military discipline throughout the services." But, the message noted, "There is no AFR [Air Force Regulation] specifically proscribing this type of activity."⁷

This message was copied by GIs somewhere along the transmission and sent to *Ally*, a GI newspaper published in Berkeley. It was recopied and distributed by antiwar students at the military bases in the Bay Area.

In the end the military authorities called inspections and special duty for October 12 at the nearby bases to prevent GIs from attending the demonstration. This did keep a lot of them away, but it also made more GIs aware of the activity.

The demonstration was entirely peaceful, and great care was taken to keep it that way so GIs could attend without being arrested. Two of the leaders of the march, Airman 1/c Mike Locks and navy Lieut. (j.g.) Sue Schnall, did suffer disciplinary action for their participation. They had decided to wear their uniforms in spite of the regulation on that point. Schnall, a nurse, also faced court-martial for dropping leaflets from a rented airplane on several naval installations and the aircraft carrier *USS Ranger*, then berthed at Alameda.

(Schnall was convicted at a general court-martial, but the

Anchor/Doubleday, 1975), pp. 282-84, for a graph showing the average number of GI papers by service branch and year.

7. Reprint of the original text, unclassified message received August 28, 1968, at Headquarters USAF Communications Center, headed "Personal for General McConnell from General Estes. Subj. 2nd Lieutenant Hugh F. Smith, FV3179560." (Copy in author's files.)

sentence was relatively light—in effect, six months duty without pay, followed by dismissal from the service. A much more serious victimization indirectly associated with the march was the case of the so-called Presidio Mutiny. Two days after the October 12 demonstration, twenty-seven inmates of the stockade at the Presidio, an army base at the tip of the San Francisco peninsula, held a brief nonviolent sit-down strike. They were protesting conditions in the stockade and the shotgun killing by a guard of a mentally ill inmate a few days earlier. This protest was in part inspired by the show of solidarity at the October 12 demonstration. The army authorities seized on the incident in an attempt to terrorize GI dissent, and charged the men with mutiny, meting out sentences of more than fifteen years in the first convictions in the case. The army would later have to retreat, however, as the case became a cause célèbre.)

The significance of the October 12 march went beyond the fact that 500 GIs had managed to participate in a demonstration for immediate withdrawal from Vietnam. That was remarkable enough and would not prove easy to repeat in the face of punitive transfers, restrictions, and harassment of GI organizers. But a whole new atmosphere was established in the Bay Area, which was a major embarkation point for Vietnam. Henceforth friendly contact between the antiwar youth in the area and GIs who passed through was taken for granted.

A similar atmosphere developed in the Seattle area, another major point of embarkation for Vietnam. Wendy Reissner, who was with a team of leafleters advertising an October 26 GI-civilian antiwar conference, described one scene at Fort Lewis:

"MPs refused to allow the teams to distribute leaflets, but Friday night before the conference, we tried a new tactic. We decided simply to talk to the GIs without leafleting. Carloads of antiwar activists arrived on base and headed for the USO dance.

"Our carload chose the snack bar as a base of operations. We filed in, ordered coffee, and spread out to cover as many tables of GIs as possible. Most of us started with, 'I'm here to talk about the war in Vietnam.' The GIs were friendly and quite eager to talk.

After 20 minutes, almost every table was the scene of discussion and debate, and the time and place of the conference was being scribbled down on scraps of paper.

"Four MPs marched up to the table where I was talking with three GIs and demanded my military ID card. On finding that I was not in the armed forces, they asked me to leave. All discussion stopped, and eyes were riveted as I walked across the room to leave.

"After about 30 seconds, the soldiers I was talking to and others followed me out. As the others in our group were kicked out of the snack bar, more GIs came outside with them. They were indignant. Many offered to invite us in as their personal guests.

As the crowd gathered, the MPs tried to disperse it. But each antiwar person went in a different direction with several soldiers and kept on talking about the antiwar movement for about an hour, while the MPs were frantically trying to keep up with all of us."⁸

Reissner and others were finally barred permanently from Fort Lewis, but there were always more students, and always other places to meet GIs. Two hundred GIs, incidentally, attended the October 26 conference in Seattle.

8. *Militant*, November 8, 1968.

[To be continued]

Memo to the Networks

Let's Have More Violence on TV!

By Allen Myers

[The following article appeared in the October 28 issue of *Direct Action*, a revolutionary-socialist weekly published in Sydney, Australia.]

* * *

The Queensland Government has recently called on the Federal Government to take action to reduce violence in television programs because of the effect such programs may have on children.

While I am generally opposed to censorship, it must be admitted that something needs to be done about the violence on television. Children who watch television regularly are getting a totally distorted idea of what the world is like.

What does your average violent television program consist of? The standard plot is: Gangsters commit a crime; the coppers track them down; the coppers shoot the gangsters full of holes. Children raised on this sort of thing are going out into the world with the idea that becoming gangsters will subject them to violence and that for those who follow an honest occupation the chief danger is being caught in the crossfire.

Such erroneous ideas leave young people totally unequipped for dealing with the real world. It would be difficult to estimate the number of people who, because of the false picture presented by television, have avoided such lucrative and secure occupations as narcotics smuggling and the accompanying social benefits of warm personal relations with police officials. Or to take another example, countless young people have been discouraged from taking up rewarding careers in theft because television has falsely convinced them that this automatically involves shooting it out with bank guards.

If television is to play an educational role, we need violent programs which show Australian society as it really is. It's not at all difficult to think up a whole series of

such programs and the lessons they would teach. For example:

Doctor Moneybank. This could be a series, with the lead role of Doctor Moneybank played by some handsome young actor. Each week's episode would focus on the doctor's treatment of a particular patient. One patient might be subjected to unnecessary surgery so that Doctor Moneybank can collect the large insurance payments. In another episode, Doctor Moneybank could throw a dying patient out of his surgery because the patient lacked sufficient insurance coverage. Each program, with festering wounds, tumors, etc. presented in realistic color, would be designed to teach children the important lesson that if they want to survive in Australian society, they had better not get sick.

Festival of Life. This series would portray the adventures of a group of reactionary religious bigots who defend "decency" in Australian life by burning books, harassing anyone they regard as a bad example, and advocating the jailing or execution of anyone who disagrees with them. A typical program might show the Festival of Life defending the family by forcing a single woman to bear an unwanted child. In the following program the group might try to have social security payments for the child's support cut off on the grounds that the woman is suspected of having had sexual relations with someone. Other episodes could centre on efforts to encourage homosexual-bashing, campaigns to increase the use of capital punishment, and so on. Children watching the series would absorb the important lesson that if you want to inflict violence instead of having it inflicted on you, you'd better have God on your side.

Assembly Line. This would not be a fictional story, but rather a competition patterned on the popular games usually seen on the morning television. Assembly Line would take place in a real factory and

would be a contest between the owners and the workers to reduce or defend safety standards. Whenever the owners succeeded in reducing standards to the point where a worker suffers an amputation or is otherwise mangled or killed, the owners would win the prize of larger profits. If the workers won the contest by defending or improving safety standards, they would be allowed to keep their limbs. A program like this could do a great deal to direct young people out of hazardous factory jobs and into relatively safe occupations such as smuggling, embezzling, etc.

Protecting the Peace. This series would be the broadest in scope, and would be designed to teach young viewers how our society maintains itself. An alternative name for the program would be "Law and Order." One episode could be devoted to showing, from the ground, the effects of bombs and napalm dropped on Asian peasants to persuade them of the benefits of our way of life. Another might give a behind-the-scenes view of police protecting society against terrorism by sending provocateurs into labor organisations or planning a baton charge on an anti-war demonstration. Another episode could picture a corporation using some of the profits made by polluting the environment to support the election of politicians opposed to anti-pollution legislation; the necessary gore to spice up the program could be provided by detailed close-ups of the destructive effect the pollution has on the living tissues of some selected individual.

The above examples should make it clear that any television network which wants to put a little effort into it will have no trouble filling the airwaves with plenty of good, violent educational programs. It's about time that television stopped filling children's heads with phony, made-up violence and started showing them the real thing. □

AROUND THE WORLD



Signs of Ferment in East Germany

When they met October 17 to organize the new legislature after the latest parliamentary "elections," members of the East German Volkskammer broke with their usual practice. Instead of electing a nonentity from one of the Communist party's fictitious bourgeois allies to preside over the chamber, they elected Horst Sindermann, previously prime minister and apparently a rising star in the bureaucracy.

In its November 1 issue, the West German magazine *Der Spiegel* interpreted the shift as an attempt by the East German bureaucracy to turn the parliament into more of a public sounding board.

In the last session of the East German CP Central Committee, *Der Spiegel* pointed out, Party Secretary Erich Honecker stressed that the "role of the elected representatives in social life is constantly increasing." The Stalinist chief also pledged that none of the "worthwhile" criticisms raised during the election campaign would be ignored and said he recognized the need for "all questions of

our policy to be openly and freely discussed."

Der Spiegel said that the East German regime was evidently worried by growing unrest. "For the first time since the mass uprising of June 17, 1953, dissidents burned the national flag in the provinces during the elections."

Sindermann reportedly has an image similar to that of Gierek when the latter was appointed to replace Gomulka. That is, he is presented as more flexible and sensitive to the mood of the masses than the other top bureaucrats.

Trotskyist Student Leader Beaten by Puerto Rican Police

Alexis Irizarry, a leading member of the Puerto Rican Trotskyist Organization Liga Internacionalista de los Trabajadores (LIT—Internationalist Workers League), was severely beaten by the police October 27 as he was on his way home from the LIT headquarters in Hato Rey.

The two attackers, who had removed their badges, approached him, called him a "disgusting student," and screamed that they were going to kill him.

"When I asked them to explain their action," Irizarry reported, "they proceeded to beat me, striking me in the face until I vomited blood. One of them wanted to make me run, after he had cocked his pistol, most likely so he could shoot me and claim that I was escaping."

The LIT is actively involved in a struggle that has been under way at the University of Puerto Rico since September. At issue are support for the rights of university workers and a fight to end the presence of police on the campus.

Milan Hübl Begins Hunger Strike

Milan Hübl, Czechoslovak historian and rector of the Communist party academy in 1968, has begun a hunger strike in Ostrava prison, the November 2 issue of the French Trotskyist daily *Rouge* reports.

Hübl was imprisoned in 1972 on charges of "subversion." Now, his children have been refused access to secondary education.

The victimization of entire families was a practice used during the mass purges of the early 1950s in Czechoslovakia. Apparently the "normalizers" of the Husak regime are trying to use it against some of the hundreds of thousands of Communists

purged from the party and fired from their jobs after the movement for socialist democracy was crushed by the Soviet occupation.

Japan Tops U.S. Investment in Asia

Japan's share of foreign investment in Asia increased from 13.6% in 1969 to 33.6% in 1975, while the American share in Asian investment dropped from 28.5% to 25.2% in the same period, according to a report by the Bank of Japan in early October.

Profits on the Japanese investment in Asia skyrocketed from \$747 million in 1967 to \$9,971 million in 1975. About half the total came from Indonesia, followed by Singapore, Taiwan, and South Korea.

Indian Police Gun Down Muslims Protesting Forced Sterilization

Indian police fired without provocation into a crowd of thousands of Muslim demonstrators in Muzaffarnagar, sixty miles north of New Delhi, in mid-October, according to Muslim leaders who visited the area. They reported that between 50 and 150 protestors were killed during the assault and that more than 150 were wounded.

The protest was a response by the Muslims to the Gandhi regime's policy of forced sterilization. Government officials had told poor people with ration cards and others who need government licenses that they would lose their credentials if they did not "volunteer" for sterilization.

On October 18, fourteen men with more than two children each were rounded up for forced sterilization. An angry crowd gathered and forced the police to release the fourteen. But after hundreds of police reinforcements were brought in, they fired into the crowd.

After opposition members in Parliament made statements denouncing the massacre, Gandhi was forced to admit October 27, "Some deaths have taken place, due to firing."

Muslim leaders maintain that Gandhi's policy of forced sterilization goes against the tenets of Islam. The protest in Muzaffarnagar was the second major Muslim demonstration known to have taken place this year. On April 19, riot police attacked some 5,000 protesting Muslims in Delhi, killing at least ten persons.



STALINIST PARTY BOSS HONECKER

Selections From the Left

klasse-kampen

"Class Struggle," published monthly in Copenhagen by the Revolutionary Socialist League, Danish section of the Fourth International.

In an interview in the November issue, a leader of the KFML (Communist League, Marxist Leninist, a Maoist group that follows the Peking line closely) was asked to comment on the purge of the "four dogs" in China.

"The KFML doesn't think anything about it. We can say nothing but what comes officially from China. It is clear that a two-line struggle is going on. Beyond that, we knew nothing."

"That's what Niels Moller from the KFML told us about the purges in China.

"But it is, in fact, an example that the class struggle continues under socialism," Niels Moller continued. "But since we don't know what the various political lines stand for, we cannot say what the situation involves."

"As recently as last year, the KFML supported the purge of Teng Hsiao-p'ing, which was headed up by the four who have now been purged. Have you changed your minds?"

"No. We supported the removal of Teng Hsiao-p'ing because we knew what it meant. And the campaign against Teng is continuing, even after the latest events. We don't think that either we or the Chinese Communist party has changed the position previously held."

"Does the KFML support the new party leader Hua Kuo-feng, who has purged the four that you supported?"

"Yes, we hail his appointment."

"What would you say if Teng Hsiao-p'ing, who has been purged twice for 'following the capitalist road,' comes back into the party leadership?"

"What can we say? It's too early to discuss speculation. Besides, we are presenting our viewpoint in the next issue of our paper *Kommunist*, which comes out next week."

la verdad

"Truth," published six times a year in Río Piedras, Puerto Rico. Presents the views of the Internationalist Workers League.

"The death of Mao has had a big impact throughout the world and especially on the Chinese masses, who were not very satisfied with the rule of their chairman," Tony Merle writes in the October-November issue.

"This was shown after the death of Chou En-lai in January and in the mass demonstration that took place in Tien An Men Square in April of this year."

Merle points out that following Mao's death "the main preoccupation in imperialist circles was not what policy his successors would follow, but what policy they might abandon," that is, the policy of peaceful coexistence with imperialism as embodied in the détente.

Peaceful coexistence, "the class-collaborationist policy perfected by Stalin," is the result of Stalin's theory of "socialism in one country," Merle writes. "Its main characteristic is that it places narrow nationalistic interests over the interests of the world revolution, including the Chinese revolution."

That is why it was not surprising that Peking refused to accept messages of condolence from the ruling Communist parties in the Soviet orbit while it welcomed messages from the shah of Iran, Kissinger, and other representatives of imperialism.

Merle sums up Mao's foreign policy as one of "betraying revolutions in the tradition of his praised guide and teacher, Stalin." In this regard, he cites Mao's record in Bangladesh, Vietnam, Sri Lanka, Indonesia, Chile, and Angola.

Commenting on the current factional struggle, Merle points to the need to organize a revolutionary party to carry out a political revolution in China that will "overthrow the bureaucratic dictatorship and establish a system of socialist workers democracy."

revolución socialista

"Socialist Revolution," organ of the Socialist Bloc. Published weekly in Bogotá, Colombia.

The editorial in the October 22 issue scores the López Michelsen regime's occupation of National University.

The campus was occupied before dawn on October 14 and 2,500 students were forcibly ejected from the dormitories. The aim was "to silence the students who have been mobilizing and organizing to oppose the restructuring of the university and the government's regressive educational policy, and to express support for the struggles of the masses."

In this fight, the students have been joined by professors and university workers, who have also come under attack in the government's "reform" plan.

"The response of the students is showing the failure of the plan to impose little by little a reactionary regime on the Colombian university," the editors note. "A similar

attempt . . . was seen with the scaled increases in transport fares and gasoline. It was defeated by mass protest."

To answer the regime's generalized attack on the Colombian people, the editors call for "a coordinated response from all sectors in the struggle," so as to link up the current conflicts into a single front against the reactionary policies.

What is needed in the student movement, the editors state, is a National University meeting "to organize the response of all students in Colombia, and to move forward in building the National Federation of Students."

LOKAKUU

"October," weekly newspaper of the Marxist-Leninist Movements. Published in Helsinki, Finland.

Under the headline "The Class Struggle Continues Under Socialism," the lead article in the October 15 issue comments on the purge of the "four dogs" in China. After expounding Mao's theory of class struggle in the party, the article concludes: "The sensational stories spread by the Western press about the events in China have so far been completely unconfirmed. In principle, it is not at all surprising that a struggle of lines is continuing within the party leadership."

An editorial says that the papers of the two factions of the pro-Moscow Finnish Communist party, *Kansan Uutiset* (the majority liberalizing faction) and *Tiedonantaja* (the minority of slavish followers of the Kremlin) have shown "timidity" in reporting the purge stories in the Western press. The Maoist editors explain that this is a result of the pro-Moscow Stalinists' inability to see the struggle in China in class terms:

"The revisionists do not have and cannot have any thoroughgoing and consistent explanation of what has happened in China, whatever it may prove to be after all is said and done. Their claims about China are so contradictory and absurd that they cannot stand the least critical examination.

"The leader of the 'class-struggle tendency' [the minority] regards China as a socialist country and denies that the class struggle continues under socialism. Nonetheless, it talks about a 'power struggle between moderates and radicals' and, to use *Tiedonantaja's* favorite terms, 'between nationalists and internationalists.' But if we adhere even slightly to Marxism, then what else is a 'power struggle' but a class struggle!"

"Furthermore, they portray China as the grimmest fascist dictatorship in the world; they regard China's leadership as the

worst renegades and opportunists. And despite this, they consider China a socialist country. The question that the revisionists always seek to avoid is, what class is in power in China?"

The editors do not explain which of the two opposing factions in the Chinese CP leadership represents the bourgeoisie. However, they assure their readers that the "dictatorship of the proletariat is solidier in China than ever before in the history of socialism" because the Chinese people are "armed by Mao Tsetung thought."

ПРАВДА

"Truth," organ of the Communist party of the Soviet Union. Published daily in Moscow.

This publication offers its readers a highly condensed and selective coverage of international events. Most of its six pages are taken up with government statements. In the October 31 issue, for example, the bulk of the front page is devoted to printing the full text of a new law entitled "On the Preservation and Utilization of Historical and Cultural Monuments."

Because of the small amount of space devoted to real news, the review of international events that appears in the Sunday issue is an important part of *Pravda's* world coverage. This column is watched by the capitalist press for indications of Soviet policy in such areas as the Middle East. The writers of this feature do seem to reflect the viewpoint of the top circles. For example, the column in the October 31 issue begins as follows:

"In our impetuous age, almost every period of the calendar is filled with great events. But even against this background of contemporary life, there are periods that assume special importance, not only for the peoples of individual countries and regions but for all humanity. The last week of October was undoubtedly one of these.

"On October 24-26 the plenum of the Central Committee [CC] of the Communist party of the Soviet Union [CPSU] met in Moscow. It discussed the State Plan for Developing the National Economy of the USSR in 1977, the state budget of the USSR for 1977, and the utilization of the state budget of the USSR for 1975.

"At this plenum, a long speech was given by the general secretary of the CPSU, Comrade Leonid Brezhnev. The plenum fully and completely approved the work of the Politburo of the CC of the CPSU in carrying out the socioeconomic program and foreign policy course developed at the Twenty-Fifth Party Congress, as well as the proposals and conclusions presented in the speech by Comrade L.I. Brezhnev.

"On October 27-29, the Supreme Soviet of the USSR met. It studied and approved the Tenth Five-Year Plan and the econom-

ic plan and budget for 1977.

"The attention of humanity is now riveted to these events. This is shown by the international response to the speech by general secretary of the CC of the CPSU, Comrade L.I. Brezhnev.

"Understandable is the inspiration felt, along with the Soviet workers, by the countries of the socialist commonwealth, united as they are by common goals and fraternal friendship. The press in these countries, attributing great importance to the plenum of the CC of the CPSU in the struggle for the implementation of the historic resolutions of the Twenty-Fifth Congress of our party, noted that the speech by Comrade L.I. Brezhnev represented the incarnation of Leninist policy in action."

This apparently is the way the Soviet tops want to be written about. No journalist has yet been fired or purged for laying it on too thick.

rouge

"Red," Revolutionary Communist daily, published in Paris.

In the October 26 issue, Daniel Bensaïd, a leader of the French section of the Fourth International, comments on a statement by two Maoist spontanéist groups, OC-GOP (Communist Organization-Workers and Peasants Left) and Révolution, supporting the recently purged Chinese Communist party leader, who are now called the "gang of the four," or the "four dogs" by the CCP leadership.

Bensaïd writes: "Since 1949, the masses have never been crushed in China. The empirical form of building socialism adopted in 1956 broke with the Stalinist model giving absolute priority to heavy industry. It aimed at averting or delaying a break between the peasantry and the urban proletariat. The ruling bureaucracy could not escape the pressure of the masses, and the person of Mao continued to embody the legitimacy of the revolutionary power won in 1949.

"Nonetheless, it cannot be denied that the historic generation of the party has disappeared little by little through successive purges or natural death. It cannot be denied, above all, that after 1967 (when the Cultural Revolution was reined in) a process has been under way of social normalization and of rebuilding the party and the state, which has culminated today with the victory of Hua Kuo-feng. We see in this a Thermidorian process, although we do not equate the rise of Hua with the opening of the Stalinist era in the USSR. The context internationally is not the same. There is no ebb in the world revolution that causes a deepening isolation. To the contrary, there is a rise. And, above all, the Chinese masses retain a power and combativity incomparably

greater than did the Soviet proletariat, which was bled white at the end of the 1920s. This, moreover, is why Hua's victory is taking on the paradoxical form of a plebiscite in the streets. At the same time as it foreshadows a pause in the development of the revolution and a return of the specialists, it may mean a certain cultural and economic liberalization. It combines bureaucratic consolidation with a thaw such as occurred in the USSR after the Twentieth Party Congress.

"This is why we would agree with the comrades of Révolution and the OC-GOP that things have not been decided in China, if they would say explicitly what kind of logic the present victory of Hua Kuo-feng and his team fits into.

"In their communiqué, these comrades are not sparing in their praise of the 'left' that has now been eliminated. Its documents were supposed to have 'represented the most complete balance sheet of the class struggle under socialism.'

"It is undeniable that through its documents the defeated faction represented a 'left' wing in the apparatus. It embodied the continuity of Maoist voluntarism, the voluntarism of the Long March, of the Great Leap Forward, of the Cultural Revolution. It gave ideological expression to the equalitarian aspirations the Chinese revolution drew from the poverty in which it developed and from the strength of its peasant roots. But beyond its declarations of principle, the Shanghai faction could not embody an alternative revolutionary policy.

"In 1967, it participated directly in the reining in of the Cultural Revolution, in the Triple Alliance, and in the rehabilitation of the cadres. It did this when the autonomous mobilization of the working masses seemed to threaten the apparatus and challenge the army."

Bensaïd asks the Mao-spontanéists, who said in their communiqué that Hua's victory meant a diminishment of the masses' control over the affairs of the party, to explain precisely in what organized form the masses had exercised such control before, and what the "left" had done before its fall to promote this.

As for the Mao-spontanéists' call for watching whether effective measures are taken to see that "China does not become a superpower and try to subordinate the revolutionary struggle of the peoples to the necessary compromises among states," Bensaïd asks whether they have forgotten about Mao's welcoming Nixon at a moment when the American president's visit harmed the Vietnamese revolution. He asks them if they have forgotten the foreign policy of the Mao leadership in the cases of Iran, the Sudan, Pakistan, Chile, and Ceylon, or the Mao leadership's calls on the capitalist powers to strengthen themselves militarily against the Soviet Union.

Dirigente PC Francés Defiende Disidentes Soviéticos

Por Gerry Foley

[El siguiente artículo apareció en el número del 8 de noviembre de nuestra revista, con el título "French CP Leader Scores Kremlin's Treatment of Dissidents." La traducción es de *Intercontinental Press*.]

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El Kremlin reprendió severamente al Partido Comunista francés por su participación en una reunión pública realizada en París el 21 de octubre en defensa de seis víctimas de la represión política, entre las que había dos soviéticos y un checoslovaco.

La reunión tuvo un impacto considerable en Francia y miles de personas se amontonaron en La Mutualité de París, que estaba llena hasta rebosar, para escuchar al representante del PC francés hablar junto a un disidente soviético exiliado y un antiguo miembro de la depuesta dirección de Dubcek del Partido Comunista checoslovaco.

En una declaración con fecha del 23 de octubre, la agencia de prensa soviética, TASS, denunciaba la reunión como "un intento provocador por mezclar a verdaderos luchadores por la libertad y el progreso social que están encarcelados en las prisiones fascistas con personas antisoviéticas llenas de despecho contra el sistema socialista."

La declaración concluía: "La opinión pública soviética no comprende cómo representantes del Partido Comunista francés han podido participar en un proyecto tan sucio." La "opinión pública soviética" a que se refiere puede ser solamente la reacción de la cúpula del Kremlin. La misma declaración de TASS no fue publicada en la prensa soviética, y ni hablar de algún reportaje de la reunión o de lo que dijo el representante del PC francés.

La declaración del Kremlin denunciaba a los organizadores de la reunión como "conocidos por sus puntos de vista antisoviéticos y anticomunistas." En realidad, la reunión estaba patrocinada por el Comité Internacional de Matemáticos, que tuvo un papel dirigente en la construcción de una campaña internacional para ganar la libertad de Leonid Plyushch, un luchador antiburocrático ucraniano al que habían encerrado en un "hospital psiquiátrico" en la Unión Soviética.

El hecho de que el comité de matemáticos haya logrado que el PC francés realizara una protesta pública contra la persecución a que se sometía a Plyushch

fue un factor importante para obligar al Kremlin a liberarlo en enero. En la reunión del 21 de octubre, Pierre Juquin, hablando en nombre del PC francés, saludó de forma muy amistosa a Plyushch, que también habló en la reunión.

La reunión se centró en la defensa de Vladimir Bukovsky, que ha pasado ya trece años en un campo de prisioneros soviético por denunciar el encarcelamiento de disidentes políticos en "hospitales psiquiátricos"; Semyon Gluzman, un psiquiatra al que se encarceló por denunciar el "diagnóstico" en base al cual se encerró en un "hospital" al dirigente disidente Pyotr Grigorenko; J. Müller, dirigente del movimiento estudiantil de Praga, que en la actualidad está cumpliendo el cuarto año de una sentencia de seis; José Luis Massera, un notable matemático y miembro del PC uruguayo, encarcelado por el régimen militar; Miguel Enríquez, dirigente del Movimiento de Izquierda Revolucionaria (MIR) chileno, que desapareció en Argentina, donde se encontraba exiliado; y López Arias, un dirigente de los mineros bolivianos que está preso.

Jiri Pelikan, miembro del Comité Central del Partido Comunista checoslovaco en tiempo de Dubcek, que ahora está exiliado, habló sobre el caso de Müller. Dijo que se mantiene a este dirigente estudiantil en condiciones intolerables. Las autoridades de la prisión se han negado incluso a dejarle leer las obras de Lenin, con el argumento de que "en tus manos, hasta Lenin es subversivo."

Se leyó desde la tribuna una carta de Gluzman en la que el psiquiatra encarcelado decía: "Siempre tengo hambre. Estoy sometido al frío constante en los suelos de cemento de las celdas de confinamiento solitario. Me obligan a marchar en fila compacta. En cualquier momento que se les ocurre, me obligan a desnudarme por completo y a realizar innumerables ejercicios. Soy un esclavo. El primer sádico que se acerca me puede obligar a hacer cualquier trabajo humillante."

Plyushch, por quien se organizó una reunión similar hace un año, recibió fuertes aplausos cuando habló, según informaba el diario trotskista francés *Rouge* en su número del 24 de octubre. Plyushch denunció el régimen represivo en la URSS y pidió apoyo para el caso del tártaro de Crimea Mustafá Djemilev, encarcelado por reclamar el derecho de su pueblo para regresar a su patria histórica, de la que fueron expulsados por Stalin.

Un representante de Amnistía Interna-

cional habló en defensa de las tres víctimas latinoamericanas de la represión.

Se leyó desde la tribuna una llamada en defensa de los obreros polacos presos por su participación en las huelgas y manifestaciones contra el aumento en los precios de los alimentos a finales de junio. La llamada estaba firmada por Jacek Kuron y Adam Michnik, destacados opositores del régimen estalinista en Polonia. A mediados de los años sesenta, Kuron fue encarcelado durante tres años, por ser coautor de una crítica marxista al sistema burocrático en su país.

El representante del PC francés, Juquin, parecía fundamentalmente interesado en ganar protección para su partido frente a los ataques de los socialdemócratas, que explotan el problema de la dictadura burocrática en la URSS, según comentaba G. Filoche en *Rouge* el 24 de octubre.

"Juquin no presentó la menor autocritica [por el apoyo que en el pasado dio su partido a la represión estalinista]. Aprovechó todas las ocasiones posibles a partir de 1920 para ensalzar el pasado político del PC. Y no perdió una sola ocasión para atacar de forma directa o indirecta a la socialdemocracia francesa o internacional. 'No puede haber advenedizos en la defensa de las libertades,' concluyó, criticando a los socialdemócratas por no haber tomado antes ni más a menudo la defensa de las víctimas comunistas de la represión."

Conforme se aproxima la posibilidad de una victoria electoral del bloque del PC, el PS, y los liberales burgueses, los estalinistas franceses están más y más ansiosos por conseguir credenciales "democráticas." En particular, lo necesitan para vencer la competencia del PS, que ha conseguido amplio apoyo por parte de sectores de la población que se mueven hacia la izquierda, pero que se sienten asqueados por la identificación del PC francés con la dictadura estalinista en Europa Oriental.

La burocracia del Kremlin reconoce las necesidades políticas de la dirección del PC francés y está dispuesta a aceptar gestos de "independencia," si se ven sus resultados en las urnas. Esto lo mostró la alabanza de Brezhnev hacia el PC italiano en la conferencia de partidos comunistas europeos que se celebró en Berlín Oriental a finales de junio. Sin embargo, la respuesta del Kremlin a la participación del PC francés en la reunión del 21 de octubre en París, indica que puede encontrar muy difícil pagar el precio de la mejora de la imagen de los partidos comunistas de Europa Occidental.

El PC francés rechazó públicamente

las protestas del Kremlin. En el número del 23 de octubre de su diario, *l'Humanité*, decía: "La participación del PC francés en la reunión de La Mutualité testifica su determinación de actuar en defensa de las libertades. Desde su punto de vista, la

libertad y el socialismo son inseparables. "Criticar los aspectos de la realidad soviética que requieren la crítica no es antisovietismo. Señalamos esto de forma clara en nuestro Vigésimo Segundo Congreso."

Además, el PC francés anunció que iba a imprimir seis millones de copias del discurso de Juquin en la reunión del 21 de octubre para dar publicidad a "la lucha de los comunistas por las libertades democráticas." □

Los Trotskistas Plantean Estrategia Electoral en Puerto Rico

Por Qué la LIT Llamó a Votar por el PSP

[El siguiente artículo apareció en el número de octubre-noviembre de *La Verdad*, periódico socialista revolucionario que refleja los puntos de vista de la Liga Internacionalista de los Trabajadores [LIT] de Puerto Rico. En ese mismo número, la LIT llama al Partido Socialista Puertorriqueño a que llame a los puertorriqueños residentes en Nueva York a apoyar la campaña de Catarino Garza, candidato por el Socialist Workers Party [Partido Socialista de los Trabajadores—SWP] al Congreso.]

* * *

Exhortamos al pueblo trabajador a votar íntegro por el Partido Socialista Puertorriqueño [PSP]. Entendemos que el PSP constituye la única alternativa electoral.

A la vez presentamos un programa de lucha obrero-socialista, ya que estimamos que el programa del PSP es limitado e incompleto.

Por estas dos razones es que la Liga Internacionalista de los Trabajadores *apoya críticamente al PSP en estas elecciones.*

El Partido Popular Democrático [PPD] y el Partido Nuevo Progresista [PNP] pretenden que su propósito es el bienestar de todos los puertorriqueños y la defensa de sus derechos.

Sin embargo, los programas de ambos partidos se fundamentan en la supuesta libertad de empresa; la cual no es más que la supuesta libertad de explotar al trabajador.

Así el PPD y el PNP justifican la exención contributiva a empresas como Commonwealth Oil Refining Corporation [CORCO] y Phillips Petroleum and Gas [PPG], a la vez que le facilitan agua y luz casi gratis. Mientras tanto, congelan los sueldos de los trabajadores, aumentan las contribuciones y resultan impotentes para detener el alza de los precios.

A la vez que se autoproclaman como los defensores de la democracia, el PPD y el PNP compiten para ver quien es más represivo. Ambos partidos se alían para enviar la Guardia Nacional y la policía contra trabajadores y estudiantes. Ambos garantizan la entrada de rompehuelgas a

la fábrica. En vez de resolver la injusticia social, aumentan el presupuesto de la policía, endurecen el código penal y atentan contra los derechos a la huelga, a la sindicalización y a la libre expresión.

Son líderes y candidatos de estos partidos, incluso millonarios y patrones, explotadores de miles de trabajadores, tales como Luis A. Ferré del PNP—uno de los dueños de la Ponce Cement—y Alfonso Valdés del PPD—uno de los dueños de la Cervecería India.

Sería iluso pretender que estos "colmillús," los Hernández Colón, los Mayoral, los Romero Barceló, los Arrarás, los Rexach, los Ferré y los Valdés defiendan nuestros intereses, los del pueblo trabajador.

Estos señores capitalistas tienen otras condiciones de vida. Viven del trabajo de otro. No quieren compartir nada con el trabajador, tan sólo explotarlo y engañarlo. Estos señores capitalistas muy bien saben que el PNP y el PPD son sus partidos, los que defienden sus intereses.

Los trabajadores no podemos seguir votando por los partidos de los patrones. Tenemos que romper con ellos. Tenemos que crear nuestras propias organizaciones.

Otro partido que participará en las elecciones es el Partido Independentista Puertorriqueño [PIP]. Aunque este partido se autoproclama socialista y en favor de la liberación nacional, no establece claramente qué clase debe gobernar a Puerto Rico.

Tienen como consigna "ya es hora de que lo nuestro sea nuestro," pero no especifican si de los patrones, aunque nacidos en Puerto Rico, o si de los trabajadores. El PIP no llama a formar un gobierno de los trabajadores.

El PIP llama al trabajo y a la dignidad, pero no plantea la socialización de la economía. Al contrario, defiende la libertad de empresa. Si amenaza con nacionalizar las compañías extranjeras, el PIP las contenta asegurándoles que les pagará compensación. ¡Tras que las multinacionales han robado millones de dólares al pueblo trabajador puertorriqueño el PIP pretende compensarlas!

El PIP además pretende ser el representante del socialismo democrático. Pero su campaña electoral en vez de centralizarse en la educación de pueblo, se centraliza en

la glorificación de un líder, el cual se asegura es el salvador de Puerto Rico.

El PIP pretende ser el partido de la clase media y de los trabajadores. Pero uno de sus candidatos lo es nada menos que Pete Martínez, expresidente de la Asociación de Industriales. Por otra parte, Ruben Berríos se esmera por hablar en foros de industriales, ejecutivos y grandes comerciantes.

No puede haber trabajo y dignidad mientras haya capitalismo y explotación. El capitalismo significa desempleo. El capitalismo significa que el fruto del trabajo se lo roba el patrón. El capitalismo significa explotación y no dignidad.

El PIP, al pretender congraciarse con los patrones, no puede pretender ser un partido de los trabajadores. El pueblo trabajador no puede darle apoyo a un partido así.

Por otra parte, el PSP presenta la necesidad de organizar un partido de los trabajadores independiente de los partidos de los patrones. El PSP plantea la necesidad de que se socialicen los medios de producción. El PSP explica que la crisis de nuestra sociedad no es el fruto de una mala administración sino el producto del dominio de una clase de explotadores: los patrones. El PSP plantea la necesidad de la independencia y del socialismo.

Por eso entendemos que el PSP es un partido que forma parte del movimiento obrero. El PSP es una alternativa electoral para los trabajadores, un partido que plantea el rompimiento con los partidos patronales.

Además, el PSP ha dado su apoyo a la lucha de los trabajadores en huelgas, marchas y piquetes, a la vez que ha luchado por el derecho a la sindicalización y a la huelga. El PSP también ha luchado consecuentemente por la liberación nacional de Puerto Rico.

Sin embargo, nuestro apoyo electoral al PSP es *crítico*. Tenemos diferencias de principio con su programa.

El PSP ha presentado una plataforma de gobierno, de cómo sería lo que ellos llaman la República Democrática de los Trabajadores. Pero el PSP no ha presentado una serie de demandas que movilizarían al pueblo trabajador ahora en la lucha por el socialismo.

El PSP no ha explicado cómo luchar ahora contra el desempleo, contra el alto costo de la vida, por la democracia sindical, por los derechos de la mujer y por nuestros derechos democráticos en el proceso de derrocar al capitalismo. No podemos esperar al gobierno de los trabajadores para enfrentarnos a esos problemas. Tenemos que tener un programa para luchar ahora contra la colonia y el capitalismo.

El PSP, por otra parte, ha presentado un programa a corto plazo. Este programa es el que ha de ser defendido por Carlos Gallizá y por Pedro Grant de salir electos. Como parte de este programa plantean la

formación de un Banco Nacional que consolide todas las operaciones financieras del gobierno del Estado Libre Asociado [ELA] y la formación de un tribunal laboral con la participación de los trabajadores, además de otras medidas de ese tipo.

El programa del PSP tiene un programa a corto plazo, con medidas inmediatas, muchas de ellas reformistas. También presenta un programa de gobierno. Pero carece de un programa de lucha para que los trabajadores en nuestra lucha contra el capitalismo, la colonia y la opresión nos organicemos independientemente. Ese es el programa que el pueblo trabajador necesita para concientizarse y movilizarse para

la revolución socialista.

No podemos contribuir a formar la ilusión que un Banco Nacional del ELA va a beneficiar a los trabajadores. ¿Acaso lo hacen las Navieras y la Telefónica supuestamente nacionales? No podemos creer que un tribunal laboral con participación de los trabajadores, pero dominado por los capitalistas, vaya a resolver algo. ¡Queremos bancos socializados e independencia sindical! Este tipo de medidas, planteadas por el PSP, crean ilusiones en el gobierno burgués, son reformistas.

Por ser el único partido obrero en la papeleta, planteamos que el pueblo trabajador vote por el PSP. *Pero no podemos apoyar el programa del PSP.* □

Problemas Económicos del Gobierno Costarricense

Ataques al Nivel de Vida de los Trabajadores

[El siguiente artículo apareció en el primer número, correspondiente a septiembre de este año, de *Qué Hacer?*, periódico mensual socialista revolucionario que se publica en San José, Costa Rica.]

* * *

En su discurso del 31 de agosto, Oduber [presidente de Costa Rica] anunció la derogación del decreto ejecutivo sobre el alza en el impuesto a la exportación del café. Como justificación, Oduber dijo que anulaba este decreto en consideración hacia los pequeños productores de café.

El transcurso de la historia costarricense nos muestra que la oligarquía cafetalera ha tenido un gran dominio e influencia en el poder político y económico del país. Este sector parecía haber perdido algo de su peso. El decreto le afectaba directamente, y como un solo hombre, los grandes cafetaleros reaccionaron en bloque. Por esto mismo no podemos tragarnos el cuento de que la derogación del decreto haya sido para beneficiar a los pequeños productores. Fue el resultado de la presión de los grandes cafetaleros. Si el gobierno hubiera querido proteger a los pequeños productores de café habría tomado las medidas adecuadas para que el impuesto recayera sólo sobre los grandes productores y beneficiadores.

El gobierno necesitaba aumentar sus ingresos fiscales. Sólo así habría podido seguir con la política reformista de hacer concesiones a los cada vez más combativos trabajadores del sector público.* Contaba

aumentar sus ingresos con el alza del impuesto sobre el café, cuyos precios han aumentado tremendamente en el mercado mundial. La derogación del decreto impide dicho aumento de los ingresos fiscales en un momento en que la pérdida de la cosecha de cacao y la disminución en la producción de banano los reduce en otros sectores.

Ante esta situación, es claro que el gobierno se encuentra con dificultades económicas que pretende solucionar no cediendo a ninguna demanda de los trabajadores públicos, como el mismo Oduber manifestó en su discurso. Para llevar a cabo esta política, el gobierno necesita enfrentar a un sector de los trabajadores contra otra. A los campesinos se les hace creer que son las demandas "excesivas" de los "privilegiados" empleados públicos urbanos las que hacen subir los impuestos. A los trabajadores públicos se les hace creer que no se pueden satisfacer sus demandas salariales sin perjudicar a los pequeños caficultores. El propósito de esta farsa es tratar de convencer a ambos sectores de que sus intereses son opuestos.

La relativa bonanza económica que ha tenido la empresa privada costarricense en los últimos meses le permite estar en condición de hacer algunas concesiones salariales. Si se dieran estos aumentos salariales en el sector privado, ello ejercería una enorme presión sobre los empleados del sector público como incentivo para elevar el nivel de sus luchas frente a un gobierno en dificultades financieras. Por eso el gobierno se ve forzado a tratar de impedir aumentos salariales en ningún sector de la economía del país. Estas son las razones económicas de por qué el gobierno ha iniciado una represión sindical que será cada vez más sistemática.

Claro que el gobierno podría muy bien aumentar sus ingresos sin perjudicar a las clases trabajadoras: por ejemplo, subiendo los impuestos a las empresas extranjeras imperialistas, a los grandes capitalistas y especuladores, etc. Pero si lo hiciera, estaría afectando los intereses que sirve, representa y defiende.

Los trabajadores deben comprender que los problemas de un sector popular no se solucionan a costa de otro sector popular. Se solucionan luchando unidos contra el gobierno y los patrones. La unidad en defensa de las luchas de cualquier sector popular es hoy más necesaria que nunca. Los trabajadores públicos son el primer blanco de los ataques. Es necesario, pues, alertar a todos los sectores populares a solidarizarse con sus demandas. □

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*En Costa Rica, los trabajadores públicos constituyen una parte importante del proletariado, en tanto que la banca, los seguros y otros importantes sectores de la economía (por ejemplo, la industria eléctrica) están nacionalizados—IP.

La Revolución Húngara de 1956

[La siguiente es una traducción del artículo "The Hungarian Revolution," que apareció en el número de noviembre de *International Socialist Review*, revista mensual socialista revolucionaria publicada en Nueva York. La traducción es de *Intercontinental Press*.]

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Este mes marca el vigésimo aniversario del aplastamiento de la revolución húngara de 1956 por la burocracia soviética. Cuando se escriba la historia de nuestra era, los obreros y los estudiantes e intelectuales radicales de Budapest merecerán un lugar de honor especial. Cuando la causa de la solidaridad humana, la libertad y el socialismo parecían encontrarse en su punto más bajo, ellos salieron al frente y demostraron cómo pelear.

En 1956, muchas personas pensaban que la situación del mundo confirmaba la visión pesimista del 1984 de George Orwell. El capitalismo norteamericano, el dirigente del llamado mundo libre, estaba sumido en el pantano del macartismo.

Este bastión de la reacción y del conformismo asfixiante se sostenía con las riquezas extraídas a cientos de millones de esclavos coloniales que habían sido adquiridos como parte del botín de la Segunda Guerra Mundial.

Después de la guerra, la revolución socialista había acabado con las relaciones de propiedad capitalista en Europa Oriental y China; pero con ella surgió una nueva tiranía monstruosa, una pesadilla burocrática que se asió firmemente al cuello de los trabajadores.

Se le pidió a la humanidad que escogiera entre la falsa libertad del capitalismo y el progreso económico "socialista" que solamente se podía obtener al precio de renunciar a la libertad. Los obreros y estudiantes húngaros demostraron que era posible rechazar esa disyuntiva.

El descontento comenzó entre los intelectuales de Budapest agrupados en el Círculo Petöfi, quienes en la primavera de 1956 comenzaron a exigir una mayor libertad política y artística. En junio, estalló una huelga general en Poznan, Polonia. La huelga iba dirigida contra el régimen burocrático dominado por el mariscal de campo soviético Rokossovsky, que había sido impuesto a Polonia por Stalin.

El 21 de octubre, este sátrapa del Kremlin fue echado de la dirección del PC de Polonia y sustituido por Wladyslaw Gomulka, un estalinista disidente a quienes las masas consideraban un reforma-

dor. Esta victoria fue una gran inspiración para el pueblo húngaro.

El 22 de octubre, los estudiantes de Budapest hicieron manifestaciones en las calles para apoyar al movimiento de reforma polaco, exigiendo que se retiraran las fuerzas de ocupación soviéticas que habían estado estacionadas en Hungría, desde el fin de la Segunda Guerra Mundial. Pidieron que se nombrara primer ministro a Imre Nagy, un personaje similar a Gomulka.

Al día siguiente, muchos obreros se unieron a las manifestaciones en Budapest. La policía disparó contra la multitud, pero esto, en lugar de desmoralizarla, provocó un estallido de furia que derribó al gobierno. Se movilizó al ejército húngaro, pero éste se pasó rápidamente al lado de los obreros rebeldes.

El 24 de octubre, el gobierno de Jrushchev en la URSS lanzó un ataque militar. Pero la tenaz resistencia del movimiento obrero impidió que el Kremlin tomara la capital. Obreros armados se enfrentaron a las tropas soviéticas en las afueras de Budapest y, por medio de apasionados llamados a sus hermanos de clase soviéticos, ganaron a muchos soldados rusos. Se eligieron consejos obreros en las fábricas, y éstos se convirtieron en las organizaciones más poderosas de Hungría, que dirigían la revuelta. El 25 de octubre, el Consejo Obrero de Budapest llamó a realizar una huelga general. Esta fue completamente efectiva.

Imre Nagy, a quien la revuelta había lanzado al puesto de primer ministro, demostró su incapacidad para dirigir al movimiento de masas. Contemporizó con el Kremlin y se negó a movilizar a los obreros armados para organizar una resistencia seria.

La prensa burguesa fuera de Hungría afirmó insistentemente que el objetivo de la revolución era establecer la democracia derribando la economía planificada. En esto, se hacía eco de las calumnias estalinistas de que los obreros húngaros eran "contrarrevolucionarios." Eso era mentira.

He aquí parte de una resolución del Consejo Obrero del Undécimo Distrito de Budapest, que es una muestra típica de la posición adoptada por otros Consejos Obreros: "Queremos enfatizar que la clase obrera revolucionaria considera que las fábricas y la tierra son propiedad del pueblo trabajador . . . exigimos que se establezca una fecha para realizar elecciones libres en las cuales sólo puedan participar los partidos que reconozcan, y hayan reconocido siempre, el orden socia-

lista, basado en el principio de que los medios de producción pertenecen a la sociedad."

Finalmente, el 4 de noviembre, Moscú lanzó dieciséis divisiones soviéticas y 2,000 tanques contra los obreros húngaros. Después de continuar la huelga general por varios meses, los consejos obreros fueron finalmente aplastados. Nagy, y otros dirigentes "culpables" de simpatizar con las masas húngaras, fueron arrestados y ejecutados.

Igual que la Comuna de París del siglo pasado, los obreros de Budapest obtuvieron una victoria en la derrota. La Comuna de París había demostrado al mundo que la clase obrera podía tomar el poder y organizar un nuevo sistema social. La revolución húngara demostró que el socialismo seguía siendo un movimiento vivo en la clase obrera. Demostró que los enemigos proletarios del estalinismo no querían regresar al capitalismo, sino sólo limpiar su sociedad de la tiranía burocrática que la corrompía.

Lo que es más, las victorias iniciales de los obreros húngaros demostraron que una clase obrera movilizadada podía combatir y derrotar a la burocracia. Este fue un golpe muy fuerte contra el monolito estalinista, que decía hablar en nombre del futuro socialista de la humanidad.

* * *

En los veinte años que han pasado desde el octubre húngaro, hemos visto la persistente desintegración del antaño formidable poder del estalinismo mundial. En Checoslovaquia en 1968, y en Polonia en 1970 y una vez más este año, miles de obreros, estudiantes e intelectuales lucharon por sus derechos contra los endurecidos grupos privilegiados que dominan sus países.

El estalinismo, lejos de ser un sistema mundial de terror burocrático unificado, se ha resquebrajado según líneas estrechamente nacionalistas. Los regímenes policíacos de estos países se han vuelto cada vez menos capaces de silenciar las voces disidentes.

Lo que es más, el crecimiento de la industria, con el consecuente aumento del tamaño y de la cohesión de la clase obrera de los países que han superado el capitalismo, prepara las fuerzas para el derrocamiento del estalinismo. Esto se puede ver más gráficamente en la actualidad en China. Tras veintisiete años de dominación incuestionada sobre la vida política de China, el alto mando maoísta se enfrenta a fuerzas que se están agrupando a su izquierda y que exigen una voz en la determinación del curso de su país.

Ese es el significado de las huelgas de Hangchow en el verano de 1975, que paralizaron esa ciudad industrial y solamente pudieron ser reprimidas con la intervención de 10,000 soldados del Ejército Popular de Liberación. El régimen fue sacudido una vez más, incluso antes de la

muerte de Mao, por la manifestación espontánea de 100,000 personas en la Plaza Tien An Men de Pekín el 5 de abril. Quienes protestaron en esa ocasión, resistieron exitosamente a las fuerzas represivas del estado durante todo un día, mientras ponían carteles en honor de Chou En-lai, a quien consideraban un reformador. Informes clandestinos sobre el gran impacto de este acontecimiento dentro de China han comenzado a salir del país (ver "Narración del Incidente de Tien An Men," en *Intercontinental Press* del 4 y 11 de octubre).

Con la muerte de Mao, el régimen ha entrado en un periodo de crisis. Utilizando los métodos represivos del estalinismo, Hua Kuo-feng ha logrado eliminar a los principales lugartenientes de Mao, incluso a su viuda, Chiang Ch'ing. Los dirigentes arrestados eran algunos de los representantes mejor conocidos, y por tanto más impopulares, de la política represiva del gobierno. Pero desde luego que los nuevos

amos de Pekín deben estar cuando menos un poco preocupados por el estado de ánimo jubiloso de las multitudes a quienes llamaron a las calles para ratificar la purga que habían realizado. Entre ellas hay fuerzas que será difícil controlar en los meses y años por venir.

Mao Tsetung apoyó el aplastamiento de los obreros húngaros en 1956. En realidad, le gustaba darse el crédito de haber sido él quien persuadió al Kremlin para que interviniera. Los burócratas, que son crudamente nacionalistas cuando están en juego los intereses de la clase obrera mundial, se vuelven instintivamente "internacionalistas" cuando sienten que está amenazado su poder. Saben que la revolución antiburocrática no se podrá limitar a un solo país.

Teng Hsiao-p'ing, que es un burócrata endurecido, fue destituido del gobierno dos días después de la manifestación de Tien An Men, acusado de ser el "Imre Nagy" de China. El temor de Mao a que se diera en

China un ascenso obrero como el de Hungría, demostró la falsedad de las afirmaciones demagógicas del régimen de que está basado en la "democracia proletaria" y en la "participación de las masas."

Como en el caso de Hungría, la prensa capitalista aceptó las pretensiones de Mao de que él representaba el socialismo militante, describiendo a las masas que se oponían a sus prácticas tiránicas como "moderadas" o incluso "derechistas." Hacen esto para reforzar la identificación del socialismo revolucionario con el totalitarismo estalinista, y las movilizaciones de masas por la democracia socialista amenazan con exponer esta mentira.

En las próximas luchas en China, los combatientes por la democracia socialista encontrarán inspiración en los acontecimientos de aquel octubre en Budapest de hace veinte años, y verán en los consejos obreros de Hungría a sus compañeros de clase en la lucha por una sociedad socialista libre de la dominación y de privilegios especiales. □

Llamado del Secretariado Unificado de la Cuarta Internacional

¡Solidaridad con la Lucha contra la Dictadura Tailandesa!

[El siguiente llamado fue emitido el 17 de octubre por el Secretariado Unificado de la Cuarta Internacional. La traducción del inglés es de *Intercontinental Press*.]

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El 6 de octubre de 1976, el ejército tailandés estableció una nueva dictadura militar abierta. Durante todo un año, el estado mayor tailandés y los servicios secretos norteamericanos fueron incrementando los actos de provocación o de terror y lanzando una campaña de propaganda histórica, creando para este propósito movimientos paramilitares de extrema derecha. Tenían que acabar con la actividad de las masas de estudiantes, obreros y campesinos que siguieron a los avances de la revolución indochina y a la caída de la dictadura anterior, propiciada por la presión del levantamiento popular de octubre de 1973.

La masacre de estudiantes del 7 de octubre en la Universidad Thammasat y la severidad de las medidas tomadas desde entonces, no deben dejar duda sobre las intenciones de la dictadura y sus patrones imperialistas. Docenas de estudiantes han sido linchados, asesinados, en ocasiones colgados o quemados vivos. Ahora los detenidos se cuentan por miles. La prensa está amordazada y todos los derechos democráticos que habían ganado las masas en tres años han sido ahogados en

sangre. Parte de la población vietnamita que vive en Tailandia ha sido encerrada en campos de concentración y se encuentra en grave peligro. El objetivo del golpe es claro: acabar con el movimiento de las masas urbanas y rurales; parar por un buen tiempo el ascenso de las luchas obreras y campesinas; preparar una ofensiva general contra las guerrillas del Partido Comunista; hacer de Tailandia una base de acción más efectiva para el imperialismo y un bastión contra la revolución indochina.

No se necesita demostrar la importancia de la evolución de la situación de Tailandia. Tras la derrota del imperialismo norteamericano en Indochina y la apertura de un periodo de creciente agitación social en el resto del sudeste asiático, es muy grande lo que está en juego en la lucha que actualmente tiene lugar en este país. Es necesario desarrollar una solidaridad activa con quienes están continuando la lucha contra la dictadura bajo condiciones extremadamente difíciles. Esa solidaridad puede salvar la vida de muchos de los detenidos y frenar la mano criminal de la nueva dictadura. Se debe dar la mayor publicidad a esos acontecimientos y a la responsabilidad de las potencias imperialistas—especialmente Estados Unidos y Japón—en este golpe.

La Cuarta Internacional llama a aumentar la solidaridad internacional, a que cesen inmediatamente las torturas y los

actos de terror, a la liberación inmediata de todos los presos políticos y a apoyar la lucha contra la dictadura. □

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