



Joanna Rossi

Part of public meeting of 2,000 at University of Barcelona November 24 to hear American socialist

Linda Jenness (center, at microphone) on topic "Feminism and Socialism." See article, page 1784.

Women's Movement on Rise in Spain

Mandel Banned From Entering Québec

Mexico's Growing Instability

Polish Dissidents Detained in Warsaw

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Biermann Case a Hot Potato for Stalinists

Rising Sentiment Against Death Penalty

Strikes and Protests in Sri Lanka

Interview With Leaders of Israeli CP

Creciente Inestabilidad en México

Rising Sentiment Against Death Penalty

By Michael Baumann

Unwilling to take direct responsibility for the first judicial execution in the United States since 1967, the Supreme Court has indefinitely postponed the execution of Gary Mark Gilmore, who was scheduled to be shot by a firing squad in Utah December 6.

It did not, however, announce a decision on the appeal for Robert Excell White, who is scheduled to be electrocuted in Texas December 10.

Gilmore would have been the first American prisoner to be executed following the high court's July 2 ruling that capital punishment does not violate the U.S. constitution's ban on "cruel and unusual" punishment.

Acting on an appeal filed December 2 by Gilmore's mother, the court ruled the following day to take more time to consider whether Gilmore's refusal to appeal his conviction had been made "competently," "intelligently," and "understandingly."

The appeal was entered through the Legal Defense Fund of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, underscoring the concern of Blacks in the outcome of the case. Other organizations that have taken steps to intervene in the case include the American Civil Liberties Union and the Socialist Workers party, both of which spoke against the death penalty at a hearing before the Utah Board of Pardons.

In America, capital punishment has been applied with particular vigor against national minorities and poor whites. Of the some 600 persons currently on death row, 57 percent are Black, Puerto Rican, Chicano, or American Indian.

Although the Supreme Court ostensibly ruled on narrow legal grounds, it is clear that the capitalist rulers were unprepared for the storm of protest that followed the announcement of Gilmore's scheduled execution.

The original court ruling misread public

sentiment against the death penalty, as even the editors of the *New York Times* acknowledged December 3 when they condemned preparations for the execution as an "appalling," "pathetic spectacle."

Press coverage has tended to be dominated by certain lurid aspects of the case. These include Gilmore's attempt to carry out a suicide pact with his fiancée November 16, and the state's frantic efforts to

State Department Extends Mandel Ban to Québec

By Gerry Foley

On November 23, the U.S. State Department prevented Ernest Mandel from going to Québec to give a series of lectures.

Mandel, a Belgian citizen, is an internationally known economist and a leader of the Fourth International. He was en route to Montréal from a previous lecture tour in Colombia. His plane stopped in Miami. Because of the way the air routes are organized, it is difficult, if not impossible, to reach Canada from Latin America without stopping in the United States.

When he arrived in the American airport, Mandel found that the right of transit he previously enjoyed had been withdrawn. He was unable to continue his trip. Mandel had been denied a visa to the United States because of his socialist views. But even this McCarthyite logic could not justify refusing him the right of transit.

This latest action by Washington not only violated the democratic rights of Americans to have access to all views. It in fact violated the sovereignty of both Colombia and Canada, since a denial of the right of transit through U.S. airports effectively limits the right of persons to travel to those countries.

Although jealous of its sovereignty in other matters, the Ottawa government is not likely to protest this action by Washington, unless it is forced to by public pressure. In a statement issued November 24, a number of Québec groups noted:

"We have serious grounds to suspect that this move by the American authorities may not have come without the urging of the Ottawa government, at the behest of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, who have a long tradition of collaboration with the American repressive forces. We wonder if the RCMP did not look askance at

save his life so that he could be executed at the appointed time; the entry of big money into the case, with television and movie producers fighting to gain the rights to film the story of his life and, if possible, the actual execution; and Gilmore's continued taunting of state and federal authorities for, as he put it, wanting the "death penalty but not the execution."

These issues are beside the point. At stake in the case is the fact that the legal murder of Gary Mark Gilmore would have been a major setback to the struggle to end one of the most vicious features of class justice in the United States.

The postponement of Gilmore's execution benefits all who are at present incarcerated on death row and makes it easier to step up efforts to abolish the death penalty once and for all. □

having Dr. Mandel in Québec in the political context created by the victory of the Parti Québécois in the November 15 elections, which has inspired great hopes for economic and political liberation among the Québec people."

The statement was signed by the following groups: The Central Council of the Confédération des Syndicats Nationaux (CSN—Confederation of National Trade Unions), the Maisonneuve Student Organization, the Executive Committee of the Rosemont College General Student Association, the Revolutionary Marxist Group, the Ligue Socialiste Ouvrière (Socialist Workers League, Québec branch of the Canadian section of the Fourth International), the Groupe Marxiste Révolutionnaire (Revolutionary Marxist Group, sympathizing organization of the Fourth International), the Groupe Socialiste des Travailleurs (Socialist Workers Group), and the Young Socialists.

These groups announced that they would demand that the Ottawa government explain its part in barring Mandel and that it make an official protest against Washington's violation of the rights of Canadian citizens.

Washington does not have the legal right to ban ideas from entering the country in the form of books, newspapers, or films. Yet it asserts the right to ban lecturers by fiat.

The State Department's extension of its ban against Mandel to even denying him transit through an American airport reveals with absolute clarity what the intent and function of such measures are. They penalize individuals for their political views. They result in a widening circle of political intimidation.

Schedule

This is a reminder that our last issue of the year will be dated December 27. It will contain our index for 1976. There will be no issue for January 3 or January 10. We will resume our regular weekly schedule with the January 17 issue.

The case of Ernest Mandel has become a glaring example of the way democratic rights in their entirety can be attacked by arbitrary restrictions on the right to travel. It shows how urgent it is for all those concerned about democracy to speak out now to stop the American and Canadian political police from conspiring to make the world into a prison divided into national cellblocks. □

The Case of Philip Agee and Mark Hosenball

Philip Agee and Mark Hosenball are two American journalists who have lived and worked in Britain for years. They have been ordered out of the country by the Labour government, apparently under pressure from the Central Intelligence Agency. Both Agee and Hosenball have written extensively about the murderous activities of America's international political police.

In an appearance before Parliament November 18, Home Secretary Merlyn Rees called the two reporters risks to British security, but refused to give any specific charges against them.

Under the 1971 Immigration Act the government can order any person born outside the British isles deported by simply declaring them a security risk. The victims are given fourteen days to comply with the order. They can appeal to a three-member panel appointed by the same home secretary issuing the deportation order, but the government reserves the right to keep secret its "evidence" on alleged security violations.

Agee has been an especially prominent critic of the CIA. The U.S. Justice Department announced November 18 that it was giving "serious consideration" to the possibility of bringing criminal charges against Agee for his publication of information about the agency's activities in Mexico and Central America.

The Labour government has, of course, denied that the deportation orders were issued under American pressure. But Martin Kettle, an officer of the National Council for Civil Liberties, pointed out that "in the absence of some sort of statement, some sort of clarification, we have to assume that the American Government has put some sort of pressure on."

Agee, who was also charged with having contacts with unidentified foreign agents, has denied "each and every allegation" against him, and has requested sufficient time to prepare his case against deportation. An Agee-Hosenball Defence Committee has been formed, and the two journalists have won substantial support from trade unionists, members of Parliament, and civil libertarians. Their case deserves the backing of all who seek to preserve and extend freedom of speech. □

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Mexico's Mounting Instability

By Cristina Rivas

MEXICO CITY—"Having devalued the Mexican peso for sound economic reasons just three months ago, the Mexican government now finds the peso trapped in a vicious circle of political uncertainty, wild rumors and rampant speculation." That is how Marlise Simons described the situation facing Mexico's currency in the November 24 issue of the *Washington Post*.

Since August 31 when it was "floated" for the first time in twenty-two years, the Mexican peso has sold for even less than US\$.04, falling from US\$.08. None of the benefits bourgeois analysts expected from this devaluation have materialized, just the contrary. It appears that the peso may fall even lower.

As always under capitalism, the workers will have to bear the burden of the system's crisis. The bosses will try to impose still greater exploitation and to reduce the standard of living even more. In fact, President José López Portillo has already said that his regime will be an "austerity" government. Appeals to take a "patriotic and responsible" attitude have already been made. In concrete terms this means that the workers should peacefully accept the fact that they have to pay so that the capitalists can continue raking in tremendous profits.

The Mexican workers have begun to see what the government has in store for them. Prior to the second devaluation of the peso October 27, a wage increase of 23 percent had been given to some workers. On top of the fact that the majority of workers will not receive even that, the Confederación de Trabajadores de México [CTM—Mexican Workers Confederation], which is directly linked to the government, had previously said that the standard of living of the workers had fallen more than 60 percent.

And even that 23 percent increase has already been wiped out by the rise in prices set off by the subsequent devaluation.

Before taking the step of "floating" the peso, the government had launched an offensive against the most militant sectors of the workers movement. The draconian economic measures it wanted to impose on the working class required crushing any sector of the vanguard that could organize a response.

The all-out attack that was launched against the democratic electrical workers¹—who were fighting against the

bureaucrats to regain control over their union—was aimed at breaking that organizing pole of the workers movement so as to be able to proceed to devalue the peso. In addition to bearing the economic weight of a crisis they had nothing to do with, the workers are in danger of losing even their most basic democratic and trade-union rights. To show their "patriotic attitude," they will be expected to give in completely to the bourgeois government.

The response of the workers has been kept in check by the trade-union leaders. Not only the traditional *charros*,² but also the reformist leaders of the fighting trade unions like the democratic electrical workers and the university workers, have hung their heads and refused to organize a response by the working class.

Hit hard in this situation, some sectors of the workers have begun to lend an ear to the revolutionary-socialist alternative, to the call for an independent political mobilization of the workers to defend their rights and to force through measures that will prevent the brunt of the crisis from being unloaded on them.

The situation in Mexico has been changing little by little over the last several years while the crisis was brewing. Before the devaluation, inflation was officially recorded at about 20 percent. Unemployment had been rising at a steep rate. "Underemployment," which is nothing but a concealed form of unemployment, affects "almost 50 per cent of the country's work force of 15 million," according to Marlise Simons. The foreign debt reached \$23 billion and the balance of payments was increasingly unfavorable. In addition, there has been a considerable flight of capital to the United States and Europe.

The peso was "floated" only three months before Echeverría was to turn over the presidency to his designated successor, López Portillo. In the period of changeover between presidents, there is always uncertainty and anxiety in Mexico, but this year they reached new levels.

Rumors that there would be a coup

Unico de Trabajadores Electricistas de la República Mexicana [SUTERM—United Electrical Workers Union of the Mexican Republic] are known. The Democratic Tendency has been fighting for several years for trade-union democracy.

2. The name for the trade-union bureaucrats who are closely linked to the government and the PRI [Partido Revolucionario Institucional—Institutional Revolutionary party].

November 20 (the anniversary of the 1910 revolution) and that Echeverría would use force of arms to prevent López Portillo from assuming the presidency began to fly across the country. These rumors caused a real panic.

One consequence was an enormous flight of capital, mainly to the United States.

James P. Sterba reported in the November 26 issue of the *New York Times*:

The flight of family wealth, business assets and personal nest eggs reached "floodgate levels" as high as \$400 million a week after the value of the Mexican peso plummeted on Aug. 31, the bankers said. Some of them estimated that \$3 billion to \$4 billion moved from Mexico into the United States and Europe in the last three months. . . .

Fears of further peso devaluations, a military coup or attempts by outgoing president Echeverría to retain power spurred a frantic exodus of cash in September. Even middle-class Mexicans who spoke no English tried to open savings accounts in the United States by long-distance phone calls.

"We started getting calls from all sorts of little guys wanting to open accounts with two, five or ten thousand dollars," said Daniel A. Gramates, senior vice president and Latin American manager for the Texas Commerce Bank in Houston.

"When the rumors get to the unsophisticated investor to the point where he wants to pull out his \$5,000 nest egg, then you know things are serious," another Houston banker said. "You also know that the wealthy guy has already squeezed out everything he can."

The flight of capital reached a level the government could no longer ignore. It was said that \$150 million left the country November 19 alone—one day before the supposed coup and the day that Echeverría announced the expropriation of some of the richest lands. On November 22 the Mexican government had to suspend the sale of dollars, even at the international airport in Mexico City. A few days later the amount of American currency that a traveler could take out of the country was limited to \$300.

The Mexican "miracle" collapsed noisily, showing once more that in this epoch of world capitalist crisis the workers in the semicolonial countries pay the highest price for the survival of imperialism. Mexico added its name to the list of capitalist "miracles" that have vanished like pricked bubbles.

The Political Crisis Deepens

Parallel to the country's economic crisis, an equally deep political crisis was developing. The control the bourgeois government had known so well how to maintain over the masses of workers and peasants began to erode rapidly when the standard of living fell to rock-bottom levels.

To avoid an outcome that could prove fatal to it, the government of the Partido Revolucionario Institucional [PRI—Institutional Revolutionary party] has alternated repression with concessions,

1. That is how members and sympathizers of the Democratic Tendency within the Sindicato

concessions that have been smaller and smaller.

After 1968, when the student movement showed the world the savagely repressive character of the supposedly democratic government of Mexico, the government understood that it had to polish up its image and, of course, that it could not openly continue killing hundreds of those who opposed its rule.

When Echeverría's six-year term began in 1970, that course was shifted and an attempt was made to relax social tensions by avoiding massacres insofar as possible, by making the repression selective, and especially by following a "Third Worldist" foreign policy.

But from the outset the regime's limitations were clearly indicated. In addition to the economic crisis, which was beginning to get worse, there was the basic fact that the workers and peasants had embarked on the course initiated by the students—mobilizations independent of the direct control of the government. And independent mobilizations have always been a mortal sin in Mexico, one that must be repressed with fire and sword.

Independent of any possible personal desires, Echeverría had to repress the struggle of the masses. On June 10, 1971, a new massacre of students in Mexico City took place, while at the same time the government launched a campaign in all centers of study to regain the control lost in 1968.³ The struggles of the democratic railway workers⁴ that same year were met with paramilitary groups, jail for some leaders, and the open support of the bosses and government to the trade-union bureaucrats imposed on the railway workers union against the express wishes of the workers.

In 1976 the struggle reached a higher level, as did the repression.

The year began with the burning down of a shantytown, "Campamento 2 de Octubre." Those living there had emigrated from the countryside and in view of the poverty they experienced in the city, had no recourse but to occupy some land to build their shacks.

The electrical workers continued to fight for union democracy. Although the leadership of the tendency called for support to "progressive rulers" like Echeverría and refused to propose a political alternative consistently independent of the PRI, their

3. In 1968 a mass student movement arose in Mexico, independent of the control of the government and the PRI. Since then, students have been the main voice of the opposition in Mexico.

4. The members and followers of the Movimiento Sindical Ferrocarrilero [MSF—Railway Union Movement], which headed the struggle for democracy in the Sindicato de Trabajadores Ferrocarrileros de la República Mexicana [STFRM—Railway Workers Union of the Mexican Republic].



Los Angeles Times

movement has suffered attacks of all sorts. Their demonstrations have been banned by the authorities and assaulted by groups of strikebreakers. Their leaders have been slandered by all the mass media.

On July 16, faced with the threat of a nationwide electrical workers strike, the government sent in the army to occupy the trade-union headquarters and those of the electric company. It was the first time since the repression against the railway workers in 1959 that the army intervened against industrial workers.

In mid-1976 the army was also sent to repress the struggle of the students at the Escuela Nacional de Agricultura [National School of Agriculture]. As in 1968, this struggle was simply one for democratic demands.

Julio Scherer, the publisher of *Excelsior*, was dismissed through a coup organized by the government. *Excelsior*, the most important daily paper in Mexico, had been known for allowing dissident intellectuals to express themselves in its pages and for reporting on what was happening in the country in a more truthful way than is customary in Mexico.

Afterwards, Scherer was victimized in other ways. For some time he was prevented from leaving the country. When he tried to begin publishing a new magazine, he was accused of having stolen 650,000 pesos from *Excelsior*. After much effort, Scherer has launched the magazine *Proceso*, with the collaboration of all those who left *Excelsior* at the time of his expulsion.

One element that complicated the political crisis even more was the fact that the

Partido de Acción Nacional [PAN—National Action party], the only bourgeois party that traditionally ran against the PRI presidential candidate, did not participate in the presidential elections because of a serious internal crisis.

Valentín Campa, the candidate of a coalition headed by the Partido Comunista Mexicano [PCM—Mexican Communist party], was not permitted on the ballot. Thus, although the PRI has never lost an election in forty years, this time it was unable to even organize the farce.

In the midst of all this, a new element arose—the murder of cops. It was something completely different from the actions of the urban or rural guerrilla groups that proliferated in Mexico after the defeat of the student movement. Periodically, a group of individuals who identified themselves as members of the "Liga Comunista 23 de Septiembre" [September 23 Communist League] would go into the lunchrooms where the police eat and spray everyone there with machine-gun fire. On each occasion, the government staged a big song and dance over the death of the cops and launched a virulent campaign "against Communism."

But after a time, doubts began to be raised. Marlise Simons wrote in the June 6 issue of the *Washington Post*:

... political analysts and journalists are questioning the authenticity of the league as a leftist guerrilla group and are strongly suggesting that its numerous dramatic actions stem from the growing hysteria and militancy among Mexico's far right.

While the controversy rages over whether these armed bands are fish or fowl, many activists have been kidnapped and tortured by the different Mexican police agencies.

At the end of May, seven leaders and founders of the Liga Comunista 23 de Septiembre, who at the time were serving jail sentences, issued an open letter saying that their organization no longer existed, that it had been destroyed by the combined effects of the repression and the exacerbation of its own internal conflicts.

The Peasant Struggle Grows

The hottest spot in Mexico at present is in the countryside. The capitalist agrarian reform carried out by Lázaro Cárdenas is completely bankrupt, because the number of real *ejidatarios*⁵ has been declining precipitously and the agricultural proletariat has increased to the same extent. Currently, the majority of the Mexican peasantry is landless. But at the same time, there is little work in the countryside and the wages are very low. Poverty and starvation are the main plagues of the

5. The *ejido* is a type of landholding in which a certain number of peasants receive several hectares to work. They are not owners of the land and cannot sell it. But they can pass it on to their heirs or rent it out.

Mexican countryside.

Under these circumstances it is not at all surprising that the rural areas are a veritable powder keg. And one part of that powder keg exploded at the same time that the Mexican peso was sinking, the rumors of a coup were spreading, and capital was leaving for the United States. Moreover, it exploded in the most important agricultural zone of the country, the one where the tie to North American agribusiness is most direct—the states of Sonora and Sinaloa in the northwest of Mexico.

The events in Sonora and Sinaloa are not isolated. All over the republic peasants have been occupying land. In all cases the army came to defend the big landowner's property. Sometimes the peasants resisted. There have been many who were killed, wounded, jailed, or who have "disappeared." If the massacres of peasants are not known even in the cities of Mexico, it is because up to now the peasantry has been completely isolated from the sectors that could be their allies.

But there is one peculiarity about Sonora and Sinaloa—agriculture there is highly industrialized. Moreover, the peasants of the zone have a tradition of struggle that dates from the days when the Indians fought against the Spanish invaders. Porfirio Díaz⁶ met with tenacious and persistent resistance from the peasants of the zone.

NACLA's Latin American & Empire Report described the situation of the peasants in Sonora and Sinaloa in its July-August 1976 issue:

In Sinaloa, where the development of corporate farming has grown more quickly than elsewhere, the number of farm workers doubled between 1960 and 1970—from 66,000 to 126,000.

The majority of these workers are permanent members of the proletariat. . . . But an important percentage of the rural workforce, approximately 40% in Sinaloa, is still made up of ejidatarios whose plots of land either produce less than they need for survival or are rented out to large landowners. . . .

In Sonora, about 70% of the ejidos are rented, especially in the irrigated areas of Navajoa and the Valle del Yaqui, while estimates for the percentage of rented ejidos in Sinaloa range between 40% and 80%.

The big landholders who "rent" the ejidos of the richest land in Mexico are some eighty multimillionaire families closely linked to North American agribusiness.

About 75 percent of the tomatoes exported by Mexico and 80 percent of the grain produced are grown on those lands. Many of the winter vegetables consumed in the United States are also grown there.

In addition to their economic strength, these landholders are very well organized to defend their interests. They have gangs of gunfighters and assassins working for

them. They have formed the Confederación de Asociaciones Agrícolas del Estado de Sinaloa [CAADES—Federation of Agricultural Associations of the State of Sinaloa], and they are linked to other sectors of their class through the national chambers of commerce and industry.

Clave, the fortnightly newspaper that reflects the viewpoint of the Liga Socialista (Bolchevique Leninista) [Socialist League (Bolshevik Leninist)], described the structure of these big landholdings in its November 15-27 issue:

In Sonora the land appears to be owned by small landholders, who [according to the constitution] should not have more than fifty hectares since the land is in the irrigated district. But that is only the appearance. In reality these are large landholdings disguised as smallholdings—family estates registered in the name of even recently born children when they aren't registered in borrowed names.

Clave also noted that the peasants' struggle against such "small landholders"—as the concealed big landowners call themselves—"is not new, since these invasions have been going on for about a year. They were momentarily stopped by the killing of 'invading peasants,' which took place October 24 in San Ignacio Río Muerto. . . ."

Last December, after that massacre, the big landowners made a show of force when the government tried to give out some of their lands to quiet down the peasants' struggle.

At that time, the landholders paralyzed production and organized demonstrations of tractors along the highways and streets of the cities of northwestern Mexico.

The *Arizona Republic*, a publication of agribusiness interests, said in its December 15, 1975, issue:

The speed and efficiency with which the growers' strike was organized and the substantial support it received from business and financial leaders of the country have obviously shaken those close to the party [PRI] hierarchy. . . . Before the strike ended it created a reaction in at least a dozen Mexican states and produced a fresh flow of Mexican capital into Arizona, Texas and California.

In 1975 Echeverría succeeded in alleviating the situation without giving land to the peasants, by creating a commission that was to take charge of "solving" the problem. Of course, the commission decided that the lands would remain in the hands of the big landowners.

Throughout 1976 the situation continued to be very unstable, as could be expected. In February, the peasants once again occupied some of the lands that had been taken from them. By April, 25,000 acres were occupied and the struggle continued to spread.

At the beginning of September, Félix Barra García, the PRI secretary for agrarian reform, reported that the president had reversed his orders: in the two months remaining of his rule, big landholdings in

Sonora, Sinaloa, and other states were to be liquidated.

After almost thirty years of waiting in vain for the government to turn over to them what is theirs, the peasants decided that this was their chance. Land occupations spread rapidly, mainly in the holdings that the president himself had mentioned.

By the beginning of November, the peasants had invaded thousands of hectares. They told the press that this time "not even God the Father" would drive them out. Even the government-controlled peasant organizations, which a few days earlier had said that the occupations were "counterrevolutionary actions," had to give in, since it would obviously be preferable—if possible—for them to lead the peasants. The Confederación Nacional de Campesinos [CNC—National Confederation of Peasants] and the Unión General de Obreros y Campesinos Mexicanos [UGOCM—General Union of Mexican Workers and Peasants] began to demand the expropriation of the big landholdings.

Finally, on November 19, Echeverría announced the expropriation of 247,000 acres of land (the property of seventy-four families). But before the land could be really turned over to the peasants, the big landowners responded vigorously.

This year they went beyond what they had done in 1975. On November 24 they organized an employers' work stoppage that affected, to one degree or another, fifty of the country's cities. The merchants and some businessmen's organizations supported them ecstatically. They launched a national campaign of hysterical propaganda in all the mass media:

With one stroke of the pen constitutional guarantees were violated; with one stroke of the pen the labor of free men was destroyed; with one stroke of the pen fifty years of economic and social progress have disappeared in the storm clouds of institutionalized demagoguery; with one stroke of the pen Mexico, for the first time in history, faces the spectre of starvation. . . .

Let us dispatch the invaders and condemn them; let us dispatch the agitators and condemn them; let us clearly denounce the big landholders, if there are any. What cannot be permitted is that the people of Mexico be condemned!

That is what one of the many full-page display advertisements that appeared in the newspapers November 23 said in large-point type.

Another advertisement, evidently paid for by the landowners but signed in the name of the "Coalición de Campesinos de México Emiliano Zapata" [Emiliano Zapata Coalition of Mexican Peasants], explained the evil ideas that had been put into the heads of the peasants.

"We have been duped with false promises from those we consider our leaders—Gómez Villanueva [president of the PRI], Félix Barra, and Celestino Salcedo [leader of the CNC]. They have told us that we have the right to invade property that does

6. Porfirio Díaz was the dictator of Mexico from 1876 to 1911, when the onset of the revolution forced him to leave for Europe.

not belong to us, that we have a role to play in the revolution, that we must make another revolution, that the landowner exploits us, that the wheat we produce in the countryside should be ours."

A chill must have run through the bodies of the landowners who prepared that advertisement. Those same "exotic" ideas unleashed the revolution of 1910.

In face of the offensive by the landowners, the government began to retreat. The November 24 issue of *Excelsior* reported:

After asking that the Sonora growers henceforth first check the legal status of land to be used in setting up new farms, Agrarian Reform Secretary Félix Barra García today issued an accord excluding from the land turned over to the peasants in the Yaqui and Mayo valleys the areas where pig and fowl farms are located, so as not to impede the development of these industries.

The final arrangement, made November 26, was that "the two sides accepted" a proposal from the landowners to distribute 32,000 acres of land to the peasants. That is a joke, since there are about 10,000 peasants waiting for land and the original proposal of the landowners (prior to November 23) was that 49,000 acres would be given out. This step will only exacerbate the situation, because it is obvious that the peasants will demand more land and will be more and more unwilling to abandon the land in return for promises.

In fact, even at present there are groups of peasants who refuse to leave the lands that they had been told were theirs. The new maneuvers open the way for the masses to go beyond the limits the government is trying to impose on them, and this is a danger of the first magnitude for the regime. The government is discussing the conflict between its economic need to stimulate capitalist production in the countryside and the political need to maintain, if only at the formal level, the *ejido* of the peasants.

The devaluation of the peso, the rumors of a coup, Echeverría's diatribes, the land occupations by the peasants, and the bosses' work stoppage and hysterical propaganda created an atmosphere of panic throughout Mexico. The myth of the economic and political stability of Mexico has been smashed to bits.

Some people think that changing López Portillo for Echeverría will resolve the situation. This is not so. No bourgeois president will be able to solve Mexico's problems. Capitalism can survive only by taking away from the Mexican workers and peasants their bread, land, work, and—at times—their very lives. □

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Polish Dissidents Detained in Warsaw

Interview With Jacek Kuron

On the night of November 23, Warsaw police arrested fifteen members of the Committee to Support Worker Victims of Repression. The fifteen were attending a meeting of the committee at the home of one of its members. They were taken in by the police, interrogated, and released later that night.

The committee was formed by Polish intellectuals and dissidents to defend workers involved in the June 1976 strikes. It has raised funds for workers fired and framed-up by the bureaucracy.

The November 25 issue of the French Trotskyist daily, *Rouge*, published an interview with Jacek Kuron, one of the fifteen arrested. Kuron, a founder of the committee, is one of the best-known Polish oppositionists.

Question. What happened?

Answer. The militia showed up around six in the evening at the apartment of one of the members of the committee. We were then taken to the police headquarters, where they checked our identification. Four of us were detained, the others were set free immediately. We were returned to the apartment, which the police searched. Then the person who lived in the apartment, Ziembinski, Lipski, and myself were taken back to the police headquarters. We were not released until later that night.

Q. Did they interrogate you?

A. Not me personally. However, I know that they wanted to interrogate me from the other people they tried unsuccessfully

to question. But no one said a word to me directly.

Q. What was the reason for this police operation?

A. It was a form of intimidation, for it cannot really be called repression. They are trying to make life impossible for us, but given the conditions we are familiar with in this country, this incident seemed rather commonplace.

Q. The government considers the Committee to be illegal. What is your view?

A. Our committee would be illegal under the Law of Association of 1932 [a law decreed by the reactionary government of that time—*Rouge*]. But our committee was formed to aid worker victims of the repression. For that reason, this law does not apply to it. Besides, what constitutes illegality is made very explicit in the penal code, and we have not overstepped these limits. So far as the laws are concerned, we have done nothing illegal.

Q. The government has just said that no worker has been sentenced to prison, or fired for striking.

A. Some workers are still imprisoned, and many have not yet found work. Those who have been rehired have been employed at lower grades, with very bad working conditions, and with a salary lower than before. It is very difficult to obtain a full picture of this type of repression, but it is certain that strikers have been fired in massive numbers. □

French CP Leader Scores 'Soviet Bureaucracy'

The problems of the Soviet economy cannot be solved without "a total change in relations between the state and its citizens," without the establishment of genuine political democracy in the USSR.

These were the words of Jean Elleinstein, leading intellectual figure in the French Communist party and assistant director of the Center for Marxist Study and Research of France.

Elleinstein was speaking in a debate on the Soviet Union with ex-CP youth leader Philippe Robrieux, held on November 24 at Châtelleraut, France.

In the course of the debate, he also scored the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia. After expressing regret that the French Communist party did not have a full discussion of the invasion (which was

criticized by the French Stalinists), Elleinstein said:

"The USSR did not invade Czechoslovakia for strategic reasons. Its leaders feared the experiment with democratic socialism that was being tried out, because they were well aware that aspirations of the same type were being expressed in their own country."

In contrast to Robrieux, who characterized the Soviet Union as a form of "oriental despotism," Elleinstein rejected the idea that what they both termed the "Soviet bureaucracy" was a "new class." He said that while the bureaucracy had "material privileges," in his opinion these privileges were not handed down on a hereditary basis, which he saw as a proof that the bureaucracy was not a separate class. □

Women's Movement on the Rise in Spain

By Larry Seigle

BARCELONA—Linda Jenness, a leader of the Socialist Workers party and a well-known American feminist, began a speaking tour of Spain November 24 with a meeting before some 2,000 persons at the University of Barcelona. Jenness is speaking on "Feminism and Socialism."

The tour, which will take Jenness to six cities throughout Spain, coincides with a powerful upsurge in the women's liberation movement.

In the midst of this growing ferment, there naturally is wide interest in what a socialist and feminist from abroad has to say. "'Governments fear us,'" the Barcelona daily *Mundo Diario* headlined its account of a news conference Jenness held at the Barcelona Press Club.

"I believe governments throughout the world fear the feminist movement, because the questions we are raising challenge the basic institutions of societies based on oppression," Jenness told the news conference, which was attended by more than a dozen reporters, most of them women.

Questions ranged from the current status of the fight for the Equal Rights Amendment to the American constitution, to Jenness's views on the relationship between the fight for women's liberation and the struggle for the emancipation of the working class.

"We see the fight for socialism and the fight for women's liberation as struggles that must go hand in hand," Jenness said.

Jenness also spoke out in opposition to the arrests of members of the LCR,¹ which had occurred just a few days before the news conference. "My party in the United States is pledged to participate in a worldwide campaign to demand and win the release of these prisoners, and the dropping of all charges against them," she said.

Following the news conference, Jenness held discussions with members of the UGT,² the union organization led by the PSOE,³ a social-democratic organization. The UGT, like all other union organizations, is still banned by the government of King Juan Carlos. The meeting took place in the union's Barcelona headquarters.

About forty persons came for the discus-

1. LCR—Liga Comunista Revolucionaria (Revolutionary Communist League).

2. UGT—Union General de Trabajadores de España (General Workers Union of Spain).

3. PSOE—Partido Socialista Obrero Español (Spanish Socialist Workers party).

The Fight Against Franco's Adultery Law

A suspicious husband rounds up some police inspectors and stages a raid on the apartment of the woman who is his legal wife. The couple lives apart, but there is no right to divorce in Spain.

Just as they hoped, the raiding party finds the woman in bed with another man.

Under Spanish law, it is the husband—not the surprised couple—who is the victim in this situation. As one whose "honor" has been violated, he is entitled to bring criminal charges and demand a prison sentence of as long as twenty years. The wife is guilty, according to Article 449 of the Penal Code, if she "copulates with a man who is not her husband."

Her male partner in crime, however, is not so vulnerable. For the man to be held liable, it must be proved in court that he knew at the time that the woman was married. Not so easy.

In a case ruled on by a Madrid court on November 24, both the wife and her partner were found guilty. It turned out that he was the personnel director at the hotel where the woman worked, and, arguably, knew her marital status.

The aggrieved husband, in addition to demanding that the two adulterers be sent to jail for six years each, had demanded payment from them of \$73,000 for the abuse of his "property"—that is, his wife.

The judges ruled that the plaintiff's demands were excessive. They reduced the sentence to seven months in prison each, and ordered the couple to pay the husband \$730.

The trial was the target of protests organized by Madrid feminist groups demanding an end to the laws that discriminate against women.

Incidentally, if the tables had been reversed, it would have been impossible for the wife to bring charges against her husband. The husband is only guilty if he brings his mistress to live in the married couple's house, or if he is otherwise "notorious" about his activity.

One of the gains won by women during the period of the Spanish republic inaugurated in 1931 was the legalization of divorce and the elimination of other discriminatory laws.

With the victory of the fascist forces in the Civil War, however, the right to divorce and other advances were lost.

Today, with the growing feminist movement, the rulers are being forced to weigh some concessions. There have been several published reports in the Spanish press that a special government commission is considering a new law to make divorce a civil, not a church question. The new law would reportedly make divorce legal in a large number of cases.

sion with Jenness, almost all of them young and the great majority women. Luis Fuertes, the general secretary of the UGT of Catalonia, introduced Jenness to the group. Fuertes stressed the importance of the women's liberation movement for the working class and the entire labor movement. He added that he hoped Jenness's visit would be the first of many opportunities to exchange experiences and opinions with socialists from the United States.

The union activists wanted to know, What effect has the women's struggle had on the unions in the United States? What did Jenness think about the argument that women constituted a separate class whose struggle should be aimed against all men rather than against society's rulers? How did she explain the Stalinist betrayal of the revolutionary advances made by So-

viet women after the 1917 revolution? What in her opinion were the most important issues for women?

The women were especially interested in Jenness's description of the Coalition of Labor Union Women and other organizations reflecting the impact that the radicalization of women has had on the American labor movement.

"Women's liberation," she said, "is shaking up the union bureaucracy and fighting to transform the unions into what they ought to be and must become if they are to survive—social movements that fight for the rights of the working class and particularly the most oppressed layers of the class: Blacks, Chicanos, Puerto Ricans, and women."

One of the most widely publicized issues



Linda Jenness (center), with leaders of LC and LCR at University of Barcelona meeting November 24.

in Spain has been the battle to overturn the country's barbaric laws prohibiting divorce and giving men the power to victimize women on charges of adultery.

The cases of individual defendants, facing fines and jail terms on charges brought by their husbands, have become rallying points for the feminist movement.

In Barcelona, the center of attention has focused on the case of Maria Angeles Muñoz, a twenty-eight-year-old woman charged with adultery. Her husband left her, but because there is no right to divorce, he retains his legal power over her.

Although she has not yet been tried, a judge has ordered Maria Angeles to give up her daughter to the custody of her husband's parents. This she has refused to do, and the judge is threatening to lock her up unless she complies.

The case has triggered a storm of protest. On the afternoon of November 18, more than 5,000 persons marched through Barcelona. The demonstration was allowed to proceed for about an hour and a half, but was then broken up without warning by cops using truncheons and rubber bullets.

Two days later, 50 women began a sit-in in a church in a workers' neighborhood in the outer part of town. The sit-in was held in a church basement because the cops generally do not break up meetings in churches. The twenty-four-hour protest, which grew to include some 200 women, received widespread publicity. In addition to women from the neighborhood, it was joined by members of many of the feminist and socialist groups.

Jenness joined the women in the church, and presented greetings to their struggle on behalf of the women's liberation movement in the United States.

The women participating in the sit-in took the opportunity to discuss issues facing them. The session turned into a

combination consciousness-raising group, legal counseling service, and free-for-all discussion on strategy and tactics for the movement.

A lawyer was present, and some of the women described personal situations they faced and asked for legal and other kinds of advice.

One woman, whose husband regularly beat her and her children, was desperately trying to find ways to obtain a separation, which only the church can grant.

The woman's voice was full of bitterness as she told how she had been informed that she could get her separation in one day if she made a "contribution" to the church of \$8,000. Other women acknowledged that the rich find their ways around the laws without difficulty, while it is the poor who suffer the most.

During the sit-in, cop cars periodically circled the church. Many neighborhood residents gathered outside, attracted by the publicity and the activity around the church. Banners were strung up across the street. Among their demands were: "Amnesty for women" (referring to those who have been convicted for "women's" crimes such as adultery, and abortion); "Abolition of sexist and discriminatory laws," and "Women, unite! Fight for our liberation."

The cops eventually tore down these banners and hauled them away. As soon as their car had turned the corner, however, some men who had been watching produced cans of spray paint and began painting the slogans, more permanently, on the wall of their neighborhood church.

The hall at the University of Barcelona was packed for Jenness's speech on November 24. People sat on the stage and filled the aisles, and many had to stand in the hallway outside.

Banners in the Catalan language decorated the walls, and posters and literature were being hawked outside. One of the pamphlets on sale was a Spanish translat-

ion of Jenness's pamphlet *Socialism and the Fight for Women's Rights*.

Jenness, who was speaking at the invitation of the philosophy department, was joined on the platform by leaders of two Trotskyist groups in Spain, the Liga Comunista (LC—Communist League) and the LCR, both sympathizing organizations of the Fourth International.

The audience was divided about equally between women and men. They responded enthusiastically to Jenness's talk, which was delivered in what one paper the next day described as "perfect Spanish."

After discussing the origins of the American women's liberation movement, Jenness told the crowd: "Today in the United States there is a new phenomenon, the growing number of women who are beginning to connect socialism and feminism. In struggling for their own rights, women are learning that their complete freedom and equality cannot be won by reforming the system. They are learning that they will have to challenge every institution in society, including the church and the state. They will have to make a socialist revolution."

"In my opinion," she said, "we can win only by building a mass women's liberation movement, a movement that can reach out to the millions of exploited and oppressed women and involve them in struggles around issues of particular concern to women. And, at the same time, we must build a revolutionary socialist party—a party composed of women and men—a party whose reason for existence is to make that socialist revolution that will lay the economic and material basis for the freedom of all."

The question period was a lively exchange of a number of points of view. One man from a Maoist group took the floor to argue that it was wrong to fight against the laws on divorce and adultery, because the real problem was the family. Instead of

fighting against the laws on divorce, he said, "we should fight against marriage."

Several women spoke from the Feminist Collective, the group led by Lydia Falcón, which argues that women are a class, and that it is wrong for women to join parties with men in them. Speakers from the LC and the LCR also took part in the discuss-

ion.

Two statements were approved by the meeting. One was a statement of solidarity with Maria Angeles Muñoz, and the other was a declaration of protest against the arrests of the members of the LCR.

After leaving Barcelona, Jenness flew to Madrid, where she is to continue her tour.

Statement by the Liga Comunista

For a Boycott of Spanish Referendum!

[The following statement was issued November 25 by the Euzkadi Executive Committee of the Liga Comunista (Communist League), a sympathizing organization of the Fourth International in Spain. The translation and footnotes are by *Intercontinental Press*.]

1. The political "reform" recently approved in the Cortes¹ has a fundamentally undemocratic character, since it completely ignores the great aspirations of our people. Excluded from this "reform" are a total amnesty, freedom for the oppressed nationalities, and democratic rights. Instead, the "reform" maintains the ban on an absolute majority of the political and trade-union organizations of the workers. Its aim is not to give the people a say, but to create through this "reform" a Cortes that will continue the reign of those who have held power for forty years.

It is thus not strange that the government is resorting to an equally undemocratic maneuver to promote this "reform"—the December 15 referendum. This referendum is a farce like the one in 1966. The oppressed masses cannot give their opinion freely since there is no freedom of assembly, expression, or information, and they have no freedom to demonstrate.

The referendum will be completely manipulated by the government, which controls all the mass media, imposes whatever laws it wishes, and permits those it is interested in to meet and state their views. At the same time, it persecutes and viciously represses working-class, radical nationalist, trade-union, and youth organizations (arresting members of the LCR-ETA VI, PTE, our party, LJC, UGT, Workers Commissions, and so forth³).

1. The Francoist parliament.

2. The 1966 referendum approved the Organic Law of the Spanish State, designating a method of selection of a head of government and altering representation in the Cortes.

3. Liga Comunista Revolucionaria-Euzkadi ta



KING JUAN CARLOS

2. That is why the workers and the people should not vote either yes or no on the question asked by the government. They should express a rousing "no" to the referendum by abstaining from voting. This should be an active boycott. Abstention should be accompanied by mass meetings and work stoppages in the work and study centers, stores should be closed, and demonstrations should be held to make clear that we reject the regime's reformist plans. All working-class and radical nationalist organizations should join forces in this undertaking.

Azkatasuna VI (Revolutionary Communist League-Basque Nation and Freedom VI), Partido del Trabajo de España (Spanish Labor party), Liga de la Juventud Comunista (Communist Youth League), Unión General de Trabajadores (General Workers Union).

3. In opposition to Suárez's⁴ "reform" and the referendum, the Liga Comunista believes that the people will be able to have a say only through a constituent assembly. In the case of Euzkadi, for the people to have a say means being able to exercise the right of self-determination through a Basque constituent assembly.

In all cases, the election of such assemblies through universal suffrage can only take place with full democratic guarantees, once the most pressing needs of the oppressed working masses have been met. That is, after there has been a total amnesty; legalization of all political parties and trade-union organizations; unrestricted exercise of the right to hold meetings, demonstrations, and strikes; unrestricted guarantees for the exercise of democratic freedoms and rights through a genuine dismantling of the repressive bodies and the repeal of all the repressive legislation.

4. The Liga Comunista does not believe that negotiations with the Suárez government will speed the day on which the people win freedom. We believe that it is through actions by the workers, the youth, and other sectors—like those of the 27th—that we will approach this goal.

Nor do we believe that the formation of a "government of broad democratic consensus," in which capitalists, bourgeois politicians, and even Francoists participate, will guarantee meeting the aspirations of the masses of people. We believe that the only government capable of establishing and consolidating a democracy of the type we described, without any limitations, would be a government that has the full confidence of the workers and the oppressed, that is based on them and their struggles and organizations, including the trade unions and strike committees. This government can only be a workers government, formed by the most influential workers parties—the PCE and the PSOE.⁵

The formation of such a government would require:

a. Breaking right now all relations that both parties maintain with the bourgeoisie in Coordinación Democrática,⁶ conditioning and limiting their entire activity.

b. Taking the initiative in forming a workers alliance of all workers parties, radical nationalists, and organizations representing trade unions, youth, and women so as to drive resolutely and immediately toward a general strike throughout the state. Such a strike could bring an end to the present enthroned dictatorship.

The referendum is a good opportunity to move in this direction. □

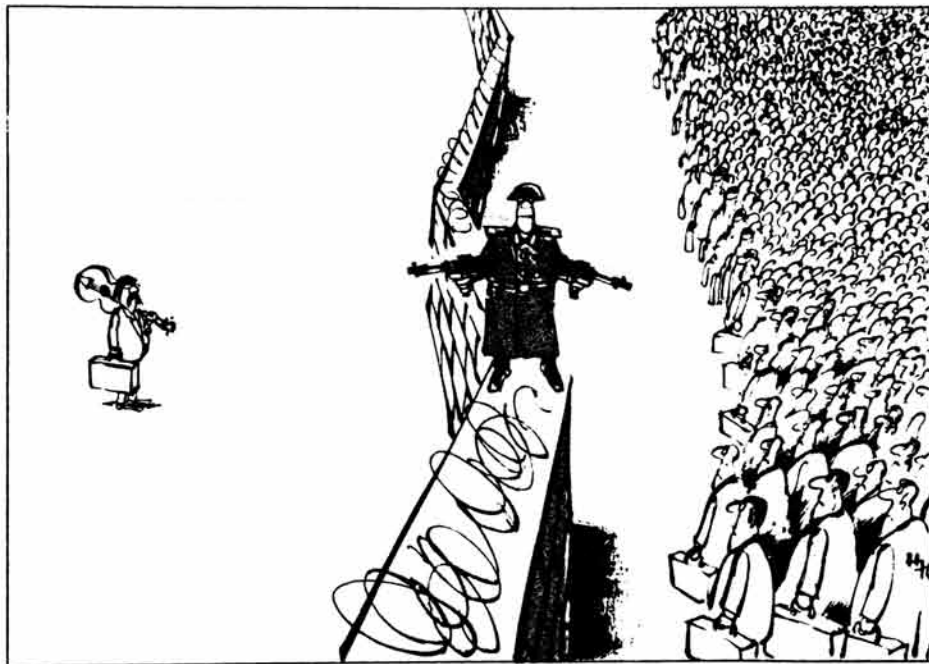
4. Prime Minister Adolfo Suárez.

5. Partido Comunista de España (Spanish Communist party), Partido Socialista Obrero Español (Spanish Socialist Workers party, the Social Democrats).

6. Democratic Coalition, a popular-front formation.

Biermann Case a Hot Potato for Stalinists

By Gerry Foley



Reprinted from Der Spiegel

The pro-Moscow Stalinists in West Germany argue that Wolf Biermann's banishment from the German Democratic Republic (GDR) strengthened the "socialist state."

"By this banishment," a local Stalinist paper said, "an ideological bridgehead has been removed—a center of the fifth column for ideological warfare against the détente, democracy, and socialism." (Reprinted in the November 25 issue of the West German CP organ *Unsere Zeit*.)

Conversely, the Stalinists claim that opposition to this expulsion weakens "socialism." In the same issue of *Unsere Zeit*, a statement by the leadership of the CP youth organization said that the protests against Biermann's banishment were "part of the strategy of imperialism in the Federal Republic, designed to split the progressive forces and isolate the Communists."

This presentation of Biermann as an instrument of anti-Communism, however, flies in the face of the reality that tens of millions of people in both East and West Germany have been able to see in the poet's TV appearances and interviews in the press. The attitude of all shades of procapitalist opinion in West Germany toward him also makes clear what Biermann really represents.

The Springer gutter press and the bourgeois Christian Democrats raised a howl against the broadcasting of Biermann's Cologne concert over West German TV. In its November 20 issue, the Springer paper *Bild* denounced the dissident poet as a "Communist" who "spits on democracy in the Federal Republic."

The liberals and Social Democrats take a more flexible attitude. They don't denounce Biermann, generally, for being a communist. But they are against challenging the Stalinist authorities in the name of the masses as Biermann does. A revolutionary workers government is the last thing they want in East Germany. That would "dangerously" upset the status quo. Thus, in its November 22 issue, the liberal weekly *Der Spiegel* wrote:

The Biermann case has disrupted the carefully balanced relationship between the German states worked out by treaties and agreements, the tacit understanding between Bonn and East Berlin to remove the fundamental problem of the German Question from day-to-day political business. Now the case of this poet threatens to arouse unwanted feelings about German unity in both West and East.

The only realistic perspective for democratic reform in East Germany, the author or authors of this article suggested, was that Bonn could slowly draw the bureau-

cracy onto a democratic course by offering more trade and credits. It was explained that Willy Brandt and those around him had worked out such a plan:

The Federal Republic should be ready to subsidize the GDR heavily in the future, even without any quid pro quo, so as to make the other German state as strong and self-confident as possible.

These planners assume that only when the GDR is in a position of stability domestically and internationally can the forces develop in the official party that can give impetus to democratic socialist reform.

The Biermann case therefore was a disaster:

The tighter the SED [Sozialistische Einheitspartei Deutschlands—Socialist Unity party of Germany, the East German CP] clamps down the lid after the Biermann affair, the less chance there is for such a concept succeeding in the foreseeable future.

An article in the November 29 issue of *Der Spiegel* reported that "the expressions of sympathy for the reform-Communist Biermann exceeded the fears even of the pessimists in the SED. On the Alexanderplatz in the GDR capital, signatures were collected in support of the banished writer. At the cast iron eagle on the Weidendamm Bridge, which Biermann sung about as a 'Prussian Icarus,' passersby laid flowers. And in Humboldt University classrooms, students forced public discussions of the case."

Der Spiegel's interviewers could not get Biermann either to express doubts about socialism or to question the usefulness of defying the Stalinist dictatorship. They asked him: "How can you praise something that has spit you out?" He replied:

I don't praise the reactionary Stalinist mandarins, who are afraid of losing their power, and with good reason. They know precisely how threatened they are because they have the state security apparatus, and it reports to them everything the people are thinking. What they see is far worse than anything I can imagine in my wildest dreams.

Biermann denounced the bureaucracy in particular as being the biggest asset of the anti-Communists:

Aside from its own stupidities, what most impedes the left here is that close-by it has a repellent example of a bureaucratically deformed society that calls itself socialist. The West German working class, the largest part of the population, does not base its idea of the chances for a socialist transformation of its own society from studying some theoretical writings but from an observation of the reality as they can see it. Naturally they do not look at some utopian socialist model but at the very real model of GDR socialism.

They see that there people have less freedom to express themselves than in bourgeois society. They see that the legal rights of individuals are violated in the most brutal way.

Biermann said that he was glad that the broadcast of his Cologne concert gave the East German people a chance to form their

own judgment about his political position. The interviewers responded: "But the official judgment has been in for a long time."

Biermann replied: "That's because the functionaries responsible for banishing me . . . confuse the fate of socialism with their personal fate, with their personal power, for which they have good reason to fear."

The interviewers asked if Biermann expected those who shared his views in East Germany to risk imprisonment or exile to propagate them. He said: "Everyone makes that decision for themselves."

They don't do it for Biermann but for the ideas they hold and for what they want to achieve in the GDR, and not by running away. This is a new attitude, and it will be fruitful for the GDR to the extent that it spreads."

As for himself, Biermann said: "I always suspected that the day would come when they would either lock me up or lock me out, the day when the political forces in the GDR working for socialist democracy had become strong enough, when the ideas I expressed in my songs became a material power. I could not wish for more." □



ARGENTINA DICTATOR VIDELA

Behind Bars in Argentina

Appeal for 'Política Obrera' Prisoners

[The following article appeared in the November 4-10 issue of *Informations Ouvrières*, the Paris weekly reflecting the views of the Organisation Communiste Internationaliste (Internationalist Communist Organization). The translation is by *Intercontinental Press*.]

Two Brazilian citizens, held in Argentina, have recently been freed from the prisons of the Videla military junta. They had been held a year and a half. One of them, María, was imprisoned at Villa Devoto, where our comrade Diana Cuatrocchi is being held. The other, Abi, was held in the prisons of Rawson, Resistencia, and Alcañal, and at Central Police Headquarters. There he met our comrades from *Política Obrera* (Workers Politics) Horacio Correa, R. Galitelli, Gelman, and Perretti.

A representative of *Informations Ouvrières* met with them in Europe, where they are at present in exile. Here is their testimony and the appeal they have made on behalf of their comrades still in prison.

* * *

Question. What are the conditions facing political prisoners in the prisons of Resistencia?

Answer. After the coup, we were subjected to four inspections a week. At the end of April, they refused to let us have books, magazines, and newspapers. On May 4, at dawn, some 300 army noncoms ordered us into solitary confinement cells after forcing us to strip naked. They began to humiliate us. Cigarettes and matches were confiscated. Since that date, all prisoner contact with the outside world has been forbidden. They have not authorized any family visits and have withheld mail. I want to point out that there were 520 of us in Resistencia. Previously, all letters we received were opened and censored by the guards. Beginning in May, we stopped

getting mail.

Q. And the women, in Villa Devoto?

A. Beginning November 22, 1975, that is, before the coup, they put us under maximum security. The situation is similar to the one described by Abi. But it should be pointed out that in our section there were twenty comrades, with small children, and that access to water was limited to six minutes a day. Hygienic conditions were atrocious. We could not get the food that was sent by our families, and the prison food was inedible.

Diana Cuatrocchi was in section 41, next to me. She was the one who made the strongest protests. What spirit that comrade had!

Q. How was the comrades' morale in the prisons?

A. We had an underground coordinating committee in Resistencia, and this helped keep up comrades' spirits. Horacio Correa was savagely beaten, just as we all were. Montenegro, who was the section representative, was savagely tortured. Galitelli was a great organizer; he was in charge of gymnastics. We used to call him minister of culture and sports.

Q. How many political prisoners are there in Argentina?

A. According to the estimates of the prisoners themselves, there are around 20,000. In section A2 of Resistencia, there were twelve workers, five doctors, one lawyer, two engineers, seven students, four bus drivers, two soldiers, four foreigners, three eighteen-year-old minors, nine office workers, and an ex-seminarian. That makes fifty prisoners in one section, out of a total of eight sections in Resistencia.

Q. And is there a list drawn up by the

government with the prisoners' names?

A. We do not know for sure, but the government refuses to publish such a list. Surely, given the total arbitrariness with which the prisons function in Argentina, there must be many prisoners the government does not know about. We have to demand that such a list of prisoners be published as a means of safeguarding their lives. We know that thirty comrades murdered by the AAA [Alianza Anticomunista Argentina—Argentine Anticomunist Alliance] in Pilar were among the prisoners being held at the Coordinación Federal [Office of Federal Coordination], and that they were gunned down by the police.

Q. What do you think the international workers movement and its organizations should do about this situation?

A. The best thing we could say is what Correa and the others told us when we left: "Don't abandon us." This shows the confidence that political prisoners have in the international workers movement. All workers should join in the fight to win the release of those imprisoned. The demand must be raised that the government take responsibility for the lives of all prisoners.

Workers organizations must mobilize to win the release of all political prisoners and for them to be granted the right to leave the country.

Those not charged or facing trial should be able to leave Argentina immediately, as is their right according to the Constitution. They must be afforded the right of asylum. □

Strikes and Demonstrations Sweep Sri Lanka

By Ernest Harsch

Prime Minister Sirimavo Bandaranaike is facing growing opposition. Since mid-November, a wave of strikes and student demonstrations has swept the country, protesting the regime's repressive policies and calling for an end to the state of emergency that has been in force for more than five years.

The student actions were the largest since Bandaranaike crushed an uprising in 1971 led by young members of the Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna (JVP—People's Liberation Front).

The protests began in response to the police killing of a student demonstrator November 12 at the Peradeniya campus of the University of Sri Lanka in Kandy. Two days earlier, 2,000 nonacademic staff members had gone out on strike at Peradeniya to press their demand for the ouster of P.W. Vithanage, the campus president. About 2,000 students joined the protest, confining Vithanage and several other officials to their offices.

Police were sent to the campus. After using tear gas against the students and beating some of them with batons, they fired into the protesters, killing W.M. Weerasuriya.

The November 19 *Ceylon Daily News* quoted a student's description of the shooting: "We could not do anything, so we started running. As we were running, Weerasuriya (deceased) who was on my left-hand side fell on the ground with his face downwards and I observed a big 'hole' in his back. I looked at the hole and saw blood flowing out like water flowing from a fountain."

Weerasuriya was the first student in Sri Lanka's history to be killed by police on the grounds of a university campus. About sixty other students, the majority of whom were women, were wounded. Four of them were in critical condition.

Student unrest at Peradeniya had also surfaced earlier this year, when 1,000 undergraduate students staged a boycott of examinations to protest the arrest of some students.

The killing of Weerasuriya triggered a storm of protest. The nonacademic staff at all campuses staged a strike November 15 to demand immediate action against the police responsible for the attack and to demand the ouster of Vithanage. Students, teachers, and campus workers at the Jaffna campus held a demonstration the same day and burned an effigy of the minister of education. On November 16, which was called as a day of mourning for all schools in Kandy, students marched to



Abu Abraham/Christian Science Monitor

BANDARANAIKE

a rally, shouting slogans along the way.

The opposition parties in parliament, including the conservative United National party and the ex-Trotskyist Lanka Sama Samaja party (LSSP—Ceylon Equal Society party),* called for the establishment of a parliamentary select committee to investigate the police attack at Peradeniya.

Bandaranaike rejected that demand, appointing instead a supreme court judge, D. Wimalaratne, to "investigate" the shooting. Wimalaratne was a former chairman of one of the Criminal Justice Commission courts, the special tribunals that tried and sentenced thousands of JVP members and sympathizers after the defeat of the 1971 uprising.

Although the original protests focused on the Peradeniya massacre, other grievances were soon raised. Acting Minister of Defence and of Foreign Affairs Lakshman Jayakody complained in the National State Assembly November 15 that "posters of all types" had appeared.

Posters at Jaffna University in the north condemned the police action, called for a change in the university administration, and demanded the ouster of the minister of education. After high-school students

*The LSSP was expelled from the Fourth International in 1964 for accepting posts in Bandaranaike's capitalist regime. Since Bandaranaike dropped the LSSP leaders from her cabinet in September 1975, the party has adopted a more critical stance toward the regime.

walked out of classes in Colombo, antigovernment slogans were painted on walls, and buses were plastered with posters, some of which denounced Bandaranaike.

Three trade-union federations controlled by the LSSP held a one-day strike November 19 to protest the Peradeniya massacre. Although the regime claimed it was a failure, Ceylon Federation of Labour General Secretary Batty Weerakoon said the strike was 80 percent effective in the private and public industrial sector.

However, the LSSP-controlled unions did not participate in a similar one-day strike staged by twenty unions November 26. The November 26 strike call was issued after a joint meeting of trade unionists and representatives of student organizations that was held November 18.

A resolution passed at the meeting said that the strike was "in protest against police terrorism against the people. . . . This meeting further resolves that the mass token stoppage of November 26 be also treated as a token of a united demand for the ending of the emergency forthwith."

The November 26 strike affected banks, mercantile firms, and tea, rubber, and coconut plantations. One of the participants in the strike was the Ceylon Mercantile Union, which is led by Bala Tampoe, a central leader of the Revolutionary Marxist party, the Sri Lanka section of the Fourth International.

During the student and labor actions, the police arrested students for putting up posters, dispersed a meeting of students of the Medical Faculty, and cut down white flags displayed at Weerasuriya's funeral. On November 22, the regime banned all demonstrations on public highways and threatened to arrest students found outside schools and universities during working hours. Six campuses of the University of Sri Lanka were closed indefinitely.

In addition, guards were thrown up at all entrances to Colombo and armed mobile units and riot squads were placed at all police stations. Police armed with automatic weapons paraded through the streets of Colombo November 18.

Speaking in parliament November 24, Bandaranaike declared, "We have to admit, that there is general indiscipline in the country. Not only in the police—in schools, workplaces, government departments there is a breakdown of discipline. Take the schoolchildren for instance. During the past few days their conduct illustrates the high incidence of indiscipline."

She claimed that "certain political elements" were trying to exploit the Peradeniya killing and were inciting "innocent schoolchildren" to write "filthy slogans" on walls and buses.

Bandaranaike warned the protesters that her regime would "do everything in its power" to bring under control "the lawlessness and indiscipline that we have witnessed." □

Interview With Two Leaders of the Israeli CP

By David Frankel

Tawfiq Zayyad and Felicia Langer, both members of the Israeli Communist party (Rakah), are known around the world by those familiar with politics in Israel and the struggle of the Palestinian people there. Zayyad is the mayor of Nazareth, the largest Arab town in Israel, and Langer is perhaps the best-known of those lawyers defending Palestinians victimized by the Israeli regime. I spoke with them while they were in New York on October 2 and 3.

Zayyad played a leading role in organizing the March 30 Day of the Land protest by Arabs in Israel. "In general," he said, "the government took the position that it was necessary to 'teach the Arabs a lesson.' As a result of this, six people were killed, eighty people were injured, and hundreds were imprisoned.

"In Nazareth, nobody was killed, thanks to the awareness and cool behavior of the people. But nevertheless, some young people were hit by the police, and the police attacked my own house despite the fact that I am the mayor of the town and despite the fact that I am a member of the Knesset [parliament].

"They attacked the house, beat members of my family, and broke a door and window and some of the furniture. Also, they fired at the ground in front of the house."

Zayyad pointed out that "in Saknin, where three of the inhabitants were killed, in Arraba, where one young man was killed, and in Kfar Kana, where another young man was killed, this was the result of police intervention and provocation. In other villages, where the police did not appear, the strike was complete, many demonstrations took place, but nobody was hurt.

"Only in the villages chosen by the government were people killed. Arraba, Saknin, and Deir Hanna were chosen by the government because it is planning to confiscate land there, and the government wanted to teach them not to stand up against the confiscation plans."

The demonstrations and general strike of March 30 were called to protest the Israeli regime's confiscation of Arab land. As Zayyad explained:

"The smashing majority of the land which used to belong to the Arabic population of Israel has been confiscated. We estimate that about 1.7 million dunams [one dunam equals about one-quarter acre] have been confiscated from the Arab citizens of Israel. This does not include the millions of dunams that were expropriated

from Arab refugees immediately after the 1948 war.

"This confiscation of land is a continuous process. Every one or two or three years there is a new wave of confiscations. The confiscation of Arab land is the most severe expression of the policy of national discrimination and national oppression instituted by the government against the Arab population."

Discrimination in Every Sphere of Life

When asked to describe some of the other ways in which the Arabs in Israel are oppressed, Zayyad said, "You have to understand that the policy of national discrimination affects all aspects of the life of the Arabs in Israel. In education, the smashing majority of schools in Nazareth are physically unfit. Also, there are not enough classrooms—there is a shortage of at least 6,000 classrooms in the Arabic schools.

"Children are taught not in real schools, but in rented space. In the majority of villages, the school is spread out in rooms all over the village.

"Arab children represent 20 percent of all those in the Israeli elementary schools. In the secondary schools, the percentage drops to 7.7. This drops to 1.7 or 1.8 percent in the universities.

"Many faculties in the universities, especially scientific faculties, are in practice closed to Arabic students. Also, it is a problem for Arab graduates to find work. Many of them graduate from the university and then have to work in construction or in other unskilled work.

"Public services are another area of discrimination. The smashing majority of Arab villages are without electricity. All the Arab villages are without any drainage systems. Most are without telephone service. There is not even one public library in the Arab towns and villages—not even in Nazareth. [The population of Nazareth is 43,000.] There are no theaters; there are not enough playgrounds for the children, and the same is true for youth clubs.

"More than 60,000 Arab workers out of a total of 80,000 work outside their towns and villages. There are virtually no factories in the Arab towns and villages, and of course the wages of Arab workers are much less than those of Jewish workers. When there is an increase in unemployment, the Arab workers are always fired first."

Felicia Langer discussed another aspect

of the oppression of the Palestinian people—the regime in the occupied territories. She estimates that between 30,000 and 35,000 Palestinians from the occupied territories—3 percent of the total population—have passed through Israeli prisons since the 1967 war.

"Right now," she says, "I think there are about 4,000 prisoners from the occupied territories in Israeli jails. They do not have enough room in the prisons in the occupied territories, so they are putting Palestinians who protest the occupation in prisons inside Israel—in Beersheba, in Ramle, and in Kfar Yona.

"No political activity against the occupation is allowed. Therefore, anybody who is against the occupation, anybody who distributes a leaflet, or demonstrates, or who even joins a political organization, is a criminal according to the Israeli occupiers. I have many clients who have received years of imprisonment for raising a Palestinian flag, or for writing slogans on a wall."

What about the treatment of those arrested?

"In my experience—which I am sorry to say is a vast one after all these years—the treatment during investigations is very rude, very cruel, and in many, many cases my clients are tortured.

"This is a matter of practice, of a system, not simply excesses by individual 'enthusiasts.' The Israeli intelligence force—the Shin Bet—uses force as a matter of course during the investigation period. Prisoners are held incommunicado during the investigation, sometimes for months. Representatives of the Red Cross are not allowed to see them during this period.

"Sometimes there are marks which I am able to see afterwards; sometimes the marks disappear after a period of months; and sometimes, the beatings have been carried out in such a way that there are no marks at all.

"The courts simply refuse to accept the testimony of prisoners that they have been beaten. In nine and a half years I never succeeded even once in convincing any judge that somebody was beaten during an investigation. Many times I have shown the court marks of the beatings, and other prisoners who saw the victim after the beatings gave convincing testimony, but the intelligence officers deny everything, and their word is always taken."

Because of the efforts of figures like Langer and Zayyad, the Israeli Communist party is looked upon as a defender of the rights of the Palestinian people inside Israel. Nevertheless, like its counterparts around the world, the Israeli CP places strict limits on its defense of the Palestinian cause.

Thus, in a news conference in New York held in connection with the visit of Langer and Zayyad, Emile Touma specifically dissociated the Israeli CP from the demand for a democratic secular Palestine raised by the Palestine Liberation Organi-

zation. Touma is the editor of the Israeli CP's Arabic-language newspaper and a member of the Knesset.

It is the official policy of the Israeli CP—and of the world Stalinist movement as a whole—to deny that Israel is a colonial settler-state and to call for the recognition of Israel. I had the following exchange with Zayyad on this question:

Question: Wasn't the oppression of the Palestinians a necessary outgrowth of setting up a separate Jewish state on Arab land?

Answer: I don't think so. It is a logical outcome of the *policy* of the rulers of the country. The existence of the state of Israel is not responsible for the oppression. It is like any other state in which there are oppressed minorities. It is not because of the existence of the state but because of the policy of its rulers. By changing the present policies and rulers of Israel, it will become possible for Arabs and Jews to live peacefully together in one country.

Q. How would it have been possible to set up the Israeli state without oppressing or expelling the Palestinians?

A. It would have been possible to establish the Israeli state according to the United Nations resolution. They could have established a state without kicking out hundreds of thousands of Arabs. It was not inevitable.

But because of the Zionist dreams of the rulers of Israel, they were not satisfied with the section of Palestine allocated to the Israeli state, and they occupied other territories in 1948.

Q. Didn't the Palestinians have the right to oppose the partition of their country? In Africa, if white settlers came and took over a part of an African country, wouldn't you oppose that, even if they didn't take the whole thing?

A. I think that this is different, much different. In Palestine before 1948, thanks to special conditions, there developed two people. And the national democratic forces, the United Nations, found that the best practical solution was the division of Palestine and the establishment of an Israeli state and an Arabic state.

This is not the same as in South Africa. There is a qualitative difference.

Zayyad's emphasis on the 1947 resolution of the United Nations to partition Palestine is not accidental. As he says, the "national democratic forces"—meaning the Soviet regime and its East European puppets—voted in favor of the partition.

This subordination of the rights of the Palestinian people to the policies of the Kremlin was also reflected in Zayyad's refusal to say that he opposed the Assad



Jerusalem Post

Palestinian prisoners in Israeli jail.

regime in Syria. At the time, Assad's troops were killing Palestinians in Lebanon, but Zayyad insisted on separating the question of the character of the Syrian regime from its actions in Lebanon. The reason is that Moscow continues to support Assad.

When Langer was asked what solution she saw to the oppression of the Palestinians, she replied:

"I think there has to be complete withdrawal, a complete evacuation of the occupied territories. It must be done immediately. . . .

"Evacuation of the occupied territories must come together with recognition of the right of the Palestinians to establish a state—which we think will be on the territories left by Israel, the Gaza Strip and the West Bank. The Palestinians have said that they will establish a state on any territory left by Israel.

"Also, the refugees have to receive either the right to return or else compensation. If this is done, it will lead to recognition of Israel by the Arab world. We think that Israel has a right to exist, but

not as a state that has such expansionist aims, that wants to swallow up its neighbors. It must be a state that supports the strivings of the people of the Middle East against imperialism, and not the opposite."

Certainly it is necessary to struggle for the withdrawal of Israel from all of the territory seized by the Zionist regime in the 1967 war. And if the Palestinians, in the course of their independent struggle, were able to establish an independent state on part of the territory currently occupied by Israel, that would be all to the good. But that would only be a partial victory in the fight to liberate all of Palestine.

But that is not what is involved at all in the proposals of various governments for a Palestinian entity on the West Bank and in the Gaza Strip. In the current context, such a formation would not be an independent state at all, but rather a puppet, a Bantustan with phony independence, like Transkei in South Africa.

Such a Palestinian entity, formed as part of an overall deal aimed at institutionalizing imperialist domination in the Middle East and gaining formal recognition for Israel, would be an obstacle to the Palestinian national liberation struggle rather than a step forward. It would not be allowed to make treaties with the Soviet Union, for instance, or to maintain an army, or to insist on its economic independence from the Zionist state.

The Palestinians would be expected to recognize the Israeli state and renounce their rights over the bulk of Palestine in return for the promise of a Bantustan. Those who continued to resist Zionist oppression would be denounced for upsetting the new "peace."

But Langer backs the continued existence of a Jewish state in Palestine. From her point of view, the Palestinians must give up the bulk of their claims. We had the following exchange on this:

Q. Don't you think that the expulsion of the refugees in 1948 was implicit in setting up a Jewish state in Palestine?

A. You know, to speak in terms of absolute justice is very hard if you have changing conditions and are living in reality. In the course of Israel's history, and in the wake of colonization, there is now an Israeli nation. It was not created by just means, but still, it exists. You can't make out of this nation a nation of refugees.

A solution—not an ideal solution, but one that the peace forces in Israel can be mobilized behind, and which there is a worldwide consensus around, is the solution that I am proposing.

It is a concession—we need a concession from the Palestinians. It is obvious that they are the ones who are making the waiver. But the conditions and the balance of power in the world are such that today

no other solution is possible.

Of course, we can't exclude another solution, and we do believe that sometime in the future there will be a federation, or perhaps a state, a democratic, even a socialist state, and the barriers will fall. But it is a utopia to demand that now.

Q. Would you use the same criteria in South Africa, where there is a Boer nation? Would you say that therefore it would be right to partition the country and allow the whites their own state in South Africa?

A. It is a hard question. I don't know the exact conditions in Africa, but it is not the same. We have the state of Israel, which was established according to the United Nations resolution of 1947. Of course it swallowed much more territory than it was allowed under the resolution.

But it is an established state that is recognized by almost all the members of the United Nations. It is not the same in Africa. In Africa you have a state that is governed by a white minority, suppressing the Black majority, which has nothing.

In the Middle East there was a resolution establishing two states, a Jewish state and Arabic state. This resolution of partition was not an ideal one, but it took into consideration that there were two nations.

Our solution is taking into consideration the same fact: that there are two nations which are not able at their present stage of development to live together in one state. They have to live, for the time being, in two states. This would be in accordance with a world consensus. There is not such a consensus in Africa; in Africa there is a consensus that there is an oppressed majority.

Q. Isn't it true that at one time there was a world consensus on the right of the European powers to colonize and rule Africa? It was not so long ago.

A. Yes, but if the world consensus is based on the right of self-determination, it is just.

I don't say that a world consensus, imposed by some set of powers with might enough to impose their arbitrary will, is justified. But the consensus [on Israel] is just, because it takes into account the legitimate rights of the two peoples.

It is not doing absolute justice to the Palestinian people. That is true. But the question is, can this be done now? Can we achieve absolute justice for the Palestinians? Not without terrible wars and bloodshed, and even World War III.

What is preferable? To have this solution, which has tremendous prospects, which can be a step to a unified state, or to leave things as they are, to strive for something which is impossible to achieve? We have to choose what is better for the peoples, what is better for the people of Palestine too.

Not only is this solution just, but because of the consensus in favor of it, it is much easier to realize. I think that to obtain absolute justice is very difficult. In fact, I don't know if such a thing exists at all in international relations.

This is the best solution—the least painful one. Even for this solution you have to fight very hard inside Israel, you have to mobilize the people of Israel for such a solution. It will be very hard to implement; but for the other solution, you can't mobilize anybody.

Who Has Right to Self-Determination?

Langer raises two basic arguments. On the level of principle, she argues that since two peoples exist, both should have the right to self-determination, and consequently there should be both an Israeli and a Palestinian state. But this argument ignores the fact that the two nations involved are an oppressor nation and an oppressed nation.

Regardless of the objections of Zayyad and Langer, the fact is that the Israeli state was imposed at the expense of the Palestinian masses, and could have originated in no other way. The United Nations partition plan set aside an area for a "Jewish state" with a population that was 50 percent Palestinian. To survive as a Jewish state, Israel had to either disenfranchise and suppress the Arab population or else eliminate it. It has tried both.

That continues to this day—not as a policy that can be changed with a new Israeli leadership, but as an essential condition for maintaining the Israeli state. For instance, the *Jerusalem Post* reported with racist worry October 17 a U.S. Library of Congress study estimating that even if Israel relinquishes all of the territories occupied during the 1967 war, it will have an Arab majority by 2079.

The Zionists continually face the same dilemma, which is at the root of the conflict in the Middle East: If they are to have a Jewish state, they must expel the Palestinian population or deprive it of its basic political rights. It does not matter whether the Arab regimes recognize Israel—this problem will remain as long as Israel exists.

And if more Palestinians are expelled in an attempt to overcome this "demographic problem," as the Zionists call it, will Langer still say that "Israel has a right to exist"?

The right to self-determination has no progressive content except within the context of a struggle against national oppression. Since the maintenance of the Israeli state requires the oppression of the Palestinians, the struggle for its maintenance—that is, the struggle for Israeli self-determination—is reactionary to the core.

What is involved in the demand for a democratic secular Palestine is not the creation of a new nation of refugees, as

Langer falsely alleges, but simply the establishment of a united Palestinian state in which both Arabs and Jews could live together.

What Is 'Practical'?

All of Langer's other arguments come down in the end to the claim that it is not "realistic" and "practical" to fight for the full rights of the Palestinian people, and that therefore they should content themselves with less. Since when, however, have Marxists counseled the oppressed to accept the injustices committed against them because an immediate victory for their cause is not likely?

Lenin, in his essay on *The Right of Nations to Self-Determination*, said in regard to this: "The bourgeoisie is most interested in the 'practicability' of the given demand—hence the perennial policy of coming to terms with the bourgeoisie of other nations to the detriment of the proletariat. For the proletariat, however, the important thing is to strengthen its class against the bourgeoisie and to educate the masses in the spirit of consistent democracy and socialism.

"This may not be 'practical' for the opportunists, but it is the only real guarantee, the guarantee of a maximum of national equality and peace in spite of the feudal landlords and the *nationalist* bourgeoisie."

What is really behind Langer's proposed solution, and her preoccupation with the "world consensus," is the false argument that peace is obtainable if the Soviet Union and the American imperialists are able to reach an agreement. Such an agreement would have to include guarantees for the maintenance of the Israeli colonial-settler state, and the Stalinists are willing to give such guarantees, just as they were willing to back the formation of Israel in 1948.

Langer asks, "Can we achieve absolute justice for the Palestinians? Not without terrible wars and bloodshed, and even World War III."

But the constant wars in the Middle East have not been caused by the struggle of the Palestinian people, or by the refusal of the Arab regimes to recognize Israel. They have been caused by the Zionist state, which must use force to perpetuate its existence, and by the imperialist powers, which use Israel as a bludgeon against the Arab masses. The signing of a formal peace between Israel and the Arab powers would not end the threat of war in the Middle East.

As long as the Zionist state exists, the oppression of the Palestinians will continue, and with it, their struggle against Israel. Langer, Zayyad, and others like them cannot consistently fight for the rights of the Palestinian people as long as they continue their support to the Stalinist regime in the Soviet Union and its counter-revolutionary foreign policy. □

Thousands of Activists Seized in Thailand

By Ernest Harsch

In an effort to avoid the appearance of direct military rule, the Thai junta appointed a 340-member National Assembly November 20. Most of the hand-picked members are from the far right, and more than half are present or former military officers. A month earlier, the junta, called the National Administrative Reform Council (NARC), named a new cabinet and a civilian prime minister. The junta announced that it would now function in a "purely advisory capacity to the prime minister."

Although the NARC has chosen to adopt a phony parliamentary cover, it has not altered its basic policy of repression.

Since the October 6 coup, during which more than 100 students were massacred at Thammasat University, the NARC has carried out a broad witch-hunt against alleged "Communists" and "troublemakers." More than 3,000 persons, mostly students, were arrested in the immediate aftermath of the bloodbath. During the following weeks, hundreds more were seized in Bangkok and other cities, bringing the total number of political arrests to an estimated 5,500.

The Thai military reportedly maintains lists of persons considered "detrimental to national security." The list of those deemed to have "international contacts" contains about 300 names, some of whom were prominent liberals who were seized while trying to flee the country. There are other lists for "communist cadres" and "communist suspects."

Many of those picked up were student activists of the National Student Center of Thailand (NSCT).

The labor movement has also been hit by the repression. All strikes were banned on the day of the coup, and on October 15 the junta issued martial law Order 22, which allows for the detention without bail or charges of anyone suspected of being a "Communist" or of promoting strikes. Immediately after the decree was issued, union offices were raided, the Labor Council of Thailand (the central labor federation) was abolished, and key leaders of the council were arrested.

As part of its contention that the October 6 coup was directed against a "Communist plot" emanating from Hanoi, the junta has sought to whip up a chauvinist hysteria against Vietnamese living in Thailand. When nearly 100 Vietnamese were arrested in Nong Khai, the police alleged that they had also seized about 3,000 "Communist" documents.



THAI BUTCHER SA-NGAD: Outlaws teaching of "democratic concepts."

Since the coup, more than 500 Vietnamese have been detained throughout the country.

In order to accommodate all the political prisoners, the new regime is constructing five new detention centers in the Bangkok area alone. In the meantime, the prisoners are being detained in police stations, regular prisons, military barracks, or special camps for "Communist suspects."

A recent report by the Thailand Information Center, dispatched from Hong Kong, describes the treatment of the prisoners:

Armed with a preconception that "all the arrested are communists, and communists are not human," those arrested—a majority of whom are students in their early twenties—are reported to have been extremely ill treated by the prison guards, who, in most cases, are none other than soldiers or police from the American-trained combat force.

Prisons or detention centers are so overcrowded that detainees do not even have enough space to sit. Only through voluntary rotation are detainees able to sit.

Tortures and beatings are reported to be widely used, though categorically denied by the regime. The degree of such abuse is said to be intensified in the rural areas. At least eighteen student leaders are said to have been killed in prison.

Out of the more than 3,000 persons who were arrested at the time of the coup, about 2,500 have been released on bail so far. There are about 400 prisoners who are too

poor to pay the bail, which ranges from \$1,500 to \$5,000. About 150 of those arrested during the coup, including the leadership of the NSCT, have been labeled "hard core" and are thus not eligible for release on bail. None of those arrested in the dragnet operations after the coup will be allowed bail.

Among the student activists detained are Sutham Saengprathum, the general secretary of the NSCT, and Surachart Bamrungsuk, the deputy president of the Chulalongkorn University student union.

The junta has announced that the political prisoners will be tried by special military tribunals. According to the October 13 *Bangkok Post*, the students arrested during the coup "are facing charges of conspiracy to commit murder, attempted murder, rioting, possession of weapons and ammunition and explosives." The junta recently extended the pretrial detention period from 84 days to 180 days, indicating that some of the prisoners may not be brought to trial for months.

Thailand's schools and colleges, which were shut down after the coup, reopened November 1, with the exception of Thammasat University. But the atmosphere on the campuses, which were centers of political activism for more than three years, has become totally repressive.

The teaching of all political theory, "including democratic concepts," has been outlawed. Millions of books and magazines have been burned and bookstores selling leftist literature have been shut down. All student organizations of a political nature have been forbidden and university lecturers have been ordered to report any "suspicious" students to the local police. Some teachers have also been told that their lectures will be monitored by state security officials. At Chulalongkorn University in Bangkok, the wearing of long hair and blue workshirts has been banned (blue workshirts had been a symbol of student solidarity with the peasants).

Despite the reopening, attendance at the universities has plummeted. Only 16,000 students out of a precoup enrollment of 50,000 returned to Bangkok's Bamkamaeng University. Both Silapakorn, a fine arts university, and Mahidol, a medical school, now have a low attendance.

According to a report in the November 6 *Bombay Economic and Political Weekly*, "Only an embarrassingly small trickle of students have returned to campuses; student unions are deserted and bare, stripped of their posters and sound amplifiers; key professors have resigned or disappeared; bookstores are naked of any of the leftist material which had been so prominently displayed before; and everywhere there is police patrolling the grounds."

Thousands of persons throughout the country have gone into hiding or have fled the country. Some of them have joined the guerrilla forces of the Communist party of Thailand (CPT), which has been conducting operations in the countryside for years.

The Crisis of the Bureaucratic Leadership in China

[The following declaration of the United Secretariat of the Fourth International was adopted at its meeting of November 13-14, 1976, by majority vote.]

* * *

1. The death of Mao Tse-tung has not only placed a question mark over the existing precarious balances in the upper reaches of the Chinese party and state, but more generally has broken an essential element of the bureaucracy's mechanism of leadership. Because of the prestige he enjoyed in the eyes of the masses, the party cadres, and various sections of the bureaucracy, for decades Mao had represented a factor of cohesion as the authority of highest appeal, especially during times of the most acute crises. It was precisely this role played by its top leader that had enabled the Chinese bureaucracy to avail itself of methods different from those used in the USSR during the time of Stalin and thus to maintain more effective links with the masses, whose mobilization was stimulated at important moments, although within channels and with objectives laid down from above. The sudden liquidation of the group of four, which had emerged from the events of the cultural revolution and the subsequent phases as the most solid nucleus of the Maoist faction, has provided an incontestable demonstration of the change that has occurred.

Nevertheless, the recent events must be viewed within the framework of a much broader crisis of the bureaucratic leadership. In reality, the nearly twenty years of postrevolutionary Chinese history—beginning with the 1958 turn toward forced march industrialization, the introduction of the people's communes, and the subsequent retreat, beginning with the outbreak of the conflict with the USSR, which took shape just after the twentieth congress of the Communist party of the Soviet Union in 1956—have been marked by a high degree of instability. The crisis has assumed more acute and striking forms during the past ten years, affecting the entire leading nucleus and the whole broader leadership structure which, in spite of the recurrent emergence of differences and a few sensational liquidations, had remained relatively intact for a long period.

The cultural revolution, which shook the historic leadership at all levels, was a dramatic attempt on the part of Mao and the group around him to resolve the crisis by means of reform measures within the context of the bureaucratic regime,

through promoting new cadres (especially among the middle and peripheral layers) and through newly strengthened links with the masses. But as soon as the most advanced sectors of the mass movement, first among the red guards and then among the working class, embarked on a dynamic that went beyond the objectives laid down by the Mao faction, this faction openly set itself against the movement from below and pressed for restabilization, resorting to the intervention of the army, which had previously remained unaffected by the crisis. On the other hand, the solution for which the Mao faction opted did not at all involve any revision of the essential orientation of economic policy or any qualitative change in the political structures.

The ninth congress of the Chinese Communist party (1969), convoked in order to ratify the results of the cultural revolution, recompose a leading nucleus, and resolve the problem of succession by explicitly designating Lin Piao, was intended to bring the crisis to a close. Instead, new conflicts and breaks soon occurred. The fall of Lin Piao and the other leading personalities of the cultural revolution, the return and then the second fall of Teng Hsiao-ping, and the new campaigns of denunciation and rectification rapidly led to the explosion of the crisis of last September, very soon after the two major leaders disappeared from the scene. There is no sign that the equilibrium that has now been established will be any more solid or long lasting. On the contrary, the situation seems more than ever laden with tension and conflict. The new leadership around Hua Kuo-feng probably represents a compromise solution among various groups and orientations; it has yet to define itself clearly, does not possess figures who enjoy great popularity among the masses, and may be reshuffled or transformed, even in the short run.

2. The economic, social, and political problems that lay at the origin of the crisis of 1965-69 also lie at the root of the most recent crisis.

China has achieved undeniable economic growth during the past several years, especially in some sectors. But from a more long-term standpoint, the rate of industrial development still remains largely insufficient and depends, at least in part, on the possibility of reaching accords with imperialist countries, not only on questions of foreign trade, but also on questions of acquisition of machinery and even entire plants (with the related problems for the balance of payments, the tendency to fall into debt, and so on). The situation is not

substantially different as regards agriculture, which in general continues to register only very modest rates of growth (with the consequent difficulty in compensating for the constant increase in the population). Socially, a series of factors continue to weigh on the situation: insufficient improvement of the living standards of the urban masses after the historic conquests of the revolution and the immediately subsequent years; the contradictory pressures to which the peasants are subject, on the one hand deriving benefits from collective organization in the framework of the communes, on the other hand retaining their interest in cultivating their own small plots as the main priority; the tensions with broad sectors of the so-called educated youth who, unable to fit into the urban economy, have been compelled to move to the countryside, where they also find difficulties in integrating themselves and adapting to the situation; the discontent and attitudes tending toward criticism among the intelligentsia and sectors of the students, who suffer from the rigid control of artistic endeavor, degraded to the level of pedagogic moralizing or vulgar propaganda.

Politically, there has been no resolution of the strident contrast between the proclamation of the sovereign role of the masses and the partial possibility of decision-making at peripheral levels on secondary points on the one hand and the monopoly on political choices and management of national affairs held by the narrow bureaucratic leadership on the other hand.

3. Neither the Sino-Soviet conflict, especially given the content it assumed in the first phase, nor a phenomenon like the so-called cultural revolution can be explained without noting the specificity both of the revolutionary process in China and of its bureaucratic degeneration. During various phases revolutionary Marxists have emphasized these specific features and the national and international factors in which they originate: victory of the revolution as the conclusion of a prolonged civil war, with a considerable section of the territory under the control of the Red Army before the overthrow of the ruling class; relative autonomy of the leadership of the Chinese CP even during the periods of most rigid control by the Kremlin over the international workers movement; the structural weakness of the working class in the 1930s; bureaucratization which developed parallel to the construction of the new regime from its very origins; continuity of the leading group, unbroken by massive bloody purges; concern, except during certain periods, for development

relatively balanced among the various sectors of the economy, and concern, following reflection about the consequences of the Stalinist collectivization of the early 1930's, for maintaining solid relations with the peasants; understanding for a certain period that in view of the threatening attitude of discrimination adopted by imperialism, it was useful for China to favor revolutionary struggles in other countries; understanding of the danger represented by the tendency toward Social Democratization of the large Communist parties, with the trend toward their integration into the national and international capitalist system, etc.

Nevertheless, all this could not eliminate the common basic features of the Chinese bureaucratized transitional society and the other bureaucratized societies that have arisen up to now. These features, the origin of which lie in the simultaneous existence of the collectivist relations introduced after the overthrow of the capitalist system and the limits of this collectivization (both because of the insufficiency of material conditions and because of the devastating consequences of bureaucratic degeneration) are essentially as follows: nationalization of the industrial economy, the banks, trade, etc.; state monopoly of foreign trade; agricultural relations intermediary between a collectivist mode of production and individual agriculture; economic planning managed by the summits of the party and state; absence of political structures of proletarian democracy; complete hegemony of the party in all institutions and mass organizations (the trade unions in the first place); ideological and cultural monolithism. On the basis of these features a whole series of tensions emerged in the past and have tended to operate permanently: a) tensions related to the development of industry, with the counterposition between material and moral incentives, between centralization and decentralization, between the need for central planning which takes account of sociopolitical factors in addition to strictly economic ones and the need for "objective" control with a partial survival of market laws; b) tensions in agriculture arising from the difficulties in combining the need for collectivization with the necessity of maintaining positive political relations with the peasantry; c) political tensions arising from the contrast between the need to obtain the active participation of the masses and the bureaucracy's need not to endanger its hegemony; d) tensions arising from the contradiction between the need for science to enjoy a maximum of creative independence and the will of the bureaucracy to rigidly control it in order to prevent breaches from being opened in its system of rule.

In various forms and at various times such tensions have characterized the USSR before and after the death of Stalin as well as the other deformed workers states (quite transparently, for example, in

the cases of Yugoslavia and Poland) and China itself, provoking oscillations among differing if not diametrically opposite solutions as well as sharp turns and striking breaks. Obviously, all these tensions may be traced back to the basic



HUA KUO-FENG

contradictions of bureaucratized transitional society, and particularly to the contradiction arising from the attempt to construct a collectivized society without allowing the masses to participate actively and without allowing the working class to actually exercise its own hegemony, and to the no less rending contradiction entailed in trying to impose a national limit (socialism in one country) on socialist construction, which actually requires supranational economic unity as a necessary condition.

Mao and his faction repeatedly sought a way out by insisting on the specificity of the Chinese road, counterposing this road ever more sharply to the "revisionist" road, attempting to maintain contact with the masses, and lending priority, especially during the cultural revolution, to political-ideological factors rather than socioeconomic ones. At the same time, partly because of the necessity engendered by Moscow's abrogation of economic accords, they hailed self-sufficiency while nevertheless finding themselves constrained to seek accords and compromises with the imperialists, that is, to resort to the road taken by the USSR and the other countries of the USSR's sphere of influence. In the final analysis this attempt failed, as is confirmed by the heritage of difficulties and contradictions Mao left his own heirs, which provoked a new explosion of serious crisis at the very moment of his death.

4. The present crisis of the leadership comes in a context not of demoralization or apathy among the masses, but on the

contrary in one of activation and politicization. A whole series of events entitle us to make this judgment. Limiting ourselves to the past three years, we may note the antibureaucratic ferment and strikes in Canton, the demonstration of retiring soldiers in the same city, and the Hangchow strikes, not to mention the demonstration in Peking last April 5. On the other hand, during the crisis of the second half of the 1960s, vanguard cadres and militants were forged in the heat of the mobilizations of the student youth and combative layers of workers. These cadres and militants underwent significant experiences and reconsidered not only the character of the leadership as a whole, but also the character of the Maoist faction itself. During the new phase, they will be able to express the aspirations of broad layers of the masses better than in the past, to develop a clearer comprehension of what is at stake, and to take initiatives within the perspective of an antibureaucratic struggle.

The post-Mao leadership, whether the present one or another that may emerge from some possible change, is surely not unaware of this situation and of its own weakness. For a certain period, this leadership will be able to hesitate and even emphasize the continuity of conceptions and orientations. But it is likely that the new leadership will gradually have to opt for the road of rectifications and turns. Some official documents have already revealed a desire to draw attention to the need to stimulate production. An effort in this direction would have little possibility of finding support among the masses unless it was accompanied by the prospect of an improvement in living conditions; in other words unless there was a concurrent shift of emphasis from moral incentives to material ones. To the extent that they succeed in making real concessions on this point the new leaders could be able to acquire a certain credibility and temporarily broaden their maneuvering room. A similar operation may be worked out in regard to the peasants, making concessions to their aspiration to concern themselves more with their individual plots. At the same time, the new leadership could propose a certain loosening of bureaucratic control over scientific and artistic activity through a return to a more flexible version of the "let a hundred flowers bloom" policy. These shifts in orientation could be presented in government propaganda as a logical development of the struggle against the four, who have already been denounced as having been guilty of insensitivity toward the needs of the masses and as advocates of the most rigid bureaucratic control. This may be combined with counterposing the figure of Chou En-lai, whose prestige was confirmed during the Peking demonstration last April, to the group of four.

In other words, the most conservative

tendencies, that is, those most strongly linked to the state and party apparatus, have been and will be strengthened by the disappearance of Mao. But in the given context they will not be able to directly rely on a policy of tightening bureaucratic control and repression. They will have to take account of the state of mind and maturation of broad layers of the masses and will have to seek to overcome or attenuate the crisis through a series of readjustments, of rectification of conceptions, even rather profound ones, in the direction indicated.

The new leaders will not be able to avoid drawing a balance sheet on international policy. After some initial successes, the policy of conflict with the USSR has run up a heavily negative balance. The Chinese leadership has seen its attractive power in the eyes of the Communist parties and other sectors of the international workers movement reduced to a minimum, and after Pakistan, the Sudan, Chile, Angola, etc., its prestige in the eyes of the liberation movements of the colonial and neocolonial countries has plummeted. The conception that the USSR is the main enemy has also had negative consequences on Chinese policy and the orientations of the most orthodox Maoist organizations and has reduced Peking's maneuvering room even on the level of state policy. In the end, rectification will probably take place, although its scope and pace cannot be predicted, given the need of a leadership that is anything but consolidated to avoid providing pretexts for a counterattack by the personalities who have been defeated in the recent tests. A first step could be to accentuate the difference already introduced in the past between policy of the state and policy of the party.

5. The Fourth International must be in position to positively exploit the crisis of the Chinese bureaucratic regime and Maoist ideology. Its task is to contribute to the definition of a perspective of antibureaucratic struggle in the People's Republic of China and to the recomposition of the forces that are now acting and will act in the future within the perspective of a political revolution against bureaucratic oppression and for the establishment of a proletarian democracy in which the hegemony of the working class in socialist construction is asserted in reality and not merely in hypocritical constitutional formulas.

Revolutionary Marxists are committed to the struggle against any form of bureaucratic constraint and repression. They fight for conducting political conflicts in the most democratic forms; for the right of all to express themselves and fight for their conceptions and orientations; for all to know the real terms of the questions under discussion at the various levels of the state and the party; for an end to the antidemocratic practice of first settling

things in narrow leadership bodies and then granting the right to speak only to the faction or group that has prevailed, which can then proceed to deform or falsify the positions of the defeated factions or groups, denouncing them as agents of the enemy and intriguers and plotters who deserve the severest punishment. Revolutionary Marxists fight for the abolition of all repressive measures against those who criticize or form oppositions. While not at all sharing the positions of the group of four or of any of the other factions, revolutionary Marxists demand their right to express their point of view without suffering repressive sanctions of any sort. They demand that their present state be made known, as well as the state of the leaders and militants purged after previous battles. They demand the broadest information on the fate of those who have been victimized by repression in the past, particularly the Trotskyist militants who were arrested or deported at the beginning of the 1950s and have not been heard from since. All those who have been deprived of their freedom because of their political opinions must be immediately released; all measures of

discrimination against them must be halted.

Revolutionary Marxists insist that in a party based on democratic centralism there must be freedom of expression and freedom to organize tendencies, as was the constant practice of the Bolshevik party before the Stalinist degeneration and of the Communist International at the time of Lenin and Trotsky. They insist that the trade union organizations must have an equally democratic internal structure and must function independently of the party and the state. They confirm that a proletarian democracy must be based on a freely elected soviet structure in which representatives can be recalled at any moment and enjoy no material privileges.

Revolutionary Marxists fight for condemnation of the aberrant theory that the USSR is the main enemy and for the end of a political practice that has led to shameful collusion with American imperialism and with the most reactionary sectors of the international bourgeoisie. They reaffirm the demand for the unity against imperialism of all the workers states and all the organizations of the workers movement throughout the world.

A Leader of the Grupo Obrero Revolucionario

Rafael Lasala Murdered by Argentine Dictatorship

[The following statement was issued in Buenos Aires September 12 by the Political Bureau of the Grupo Obrero Revolucionario (GOR—Revolutionary Workers Group), a sympathizing organization of the Fourth International in Argentina. We have taken the text from the November 25 issue of *Inprecor*, a fortnightly news bulletin published by the United Secretariat of the Fourth International.]

* * *

Our Argentine comrade Rafael Lasala ("Nestor"), a leader of the Grupo Obrero Revolucionario, was murdered in cold blood in the prison in La Plata August 29.

The authorities are trying to present this crime as a suicide, but the body given over to the family bears unmistakable marks of torture. After receiving various information, we are now in position to describe what really happened. The guards found a message on Nestor during a search. They took him to a punishment cell and subjected him to three sessions of torture, which he did not survive.

This crime is one of the most brutal of the military dictatorship, comparable to those committed against the comrades imprisoned in Córdoba, who have been killed "while trying to escape."

Comrade Nestor had studied at the

University of La Plata, where he participated in the student struggles of 1958-1960. He entered into contact with left organizations before returning to his native village of General Roca (in the province of Rio Negro). In 1967 he decided to plunge actively into revolutionary activity, to give up his profession, and to move to Buenos Aires. There he joined the PRT-Combatiente, in which he took part in the debate that led to the 1971 split that resulted in the formation of the GOR.

He assumed all the tasks of our organization, from intervention in the workers movement to political elaboration to armed action. He represented the GOR at the Tenth World Congress of the Fourth International in January 1974. Arrested in August of the same year, he was tortured but refused to give out any information at all; he was imprisoned in Villa Devoto, Rawson, and La Plata prisons.

He always maintained a high revolutionary morale and participated in the political life of our organization to the utmost of his possibilities. The responsibility for the crime belongs to the prison authorities in La Plata and the military dictatorship.

We painfully dip our flag in homage to this murdered comrade, who joins the already long list of those who have fallen for the socialist revolution. □

Capitalism Fouls Things Up



Flow of Dollars From Alaska Pipeline

Although it is not yet completed, the Alaska pipeline continues its stupendous flow of profitable contracts.

The latest item is \$150,000 to examine the reasons for the unpredicted cost overruns. The state of Alaska announced November 22 that Terry F. Lenzer, a Washington lawyer who was on the staff of the Watergate committee, has been hired to identify areas where poor management was at fault. If Lenzer succeeds, the Alaska Pipeline Commission will attempt to rule out these amounts in calculating a fair return when the pipeline begins transporting oil.

The calculations involve the 12.5 percent royalty interest held by the state in the wellhead value of the oil.

The first estimate of the cost of the pipeline, made in 1969, was \$1 billion.

In 1974, the estimate was jumped to \$5.982 billion.

The latest estimate is \$7.7 billion. To this must be added the interest costs of the oil companies, which will raise the amount to about \$10 billion.

Robert A. Breeze, a member of the Alaska Pipeline Commission, was quoted as saying: "We have to fix the cost realistically. The consumers and the state of Alaska will have to pay for it and the return of capital and profits of the owners and operators will be guaranteed."

Among the items to be checked is a bill

of \$100 million for reinspecting welds in the pipeline.

In an audit last year, 3,955 faulty welds were reported. At a cost of \$55 million, the Alyeska Pipeline Service Company repaired all of these except 612 for which it asked exemption. However, while awaiting a ruling, the company went ahead and repaired most of them. On November 29, the company said that just 34 faulty welds remained unrepaired.

Of these, the Department of Transportation granted exemption on only three welds, where the pipeline crosses the Koyukuk River.

Meanwhile, the ostensible reason for building the pipeline was blown sky high. The Nixon administration had argued that by opening up a fresh source of oil for the California market, the project would help cut American dependence on shipments of oil from abroad. Congress saluted Nixon and the oil companies, and approved construction of the pipeline, brushing aside the warnings concerning the almost inevitable disastrous ecological consequences.

Last September the state of California barred the delivery of oil by tankers to a terminal near Los Angeles, citing the hazard of greatly increased air pollution.

In addition, it was revealed that California could use only a fraction of the North Slope oil. Richard Maulin, chairman of the

California Energy Commission, suggested in a letter to the Senate Interior Committee that Japan should be considered as a possible market for the surplus.

Sohio, one of the oil companies involved, echoed Maulin's suggestion that oil from Alaska could be exported to Japan. The Japanese in return could swap oil they would otherwise have received from the Persian Gulf, sending it to East Coast dealers in the United States.

At present new surveys are being made on possible alternatives to the original scheme, all without cutting into the main purpose of the pipeline, which is to assure a flow of dollars. □

Idaho Governor Nixes Kepone Burial

The Allied Chemical Company, fined \$13 million for polluting the James River in Virginia with residues of the highly toxic pesticide Kepone, is still in trouble.

The company sought to make a deal with a Twin Falls, Idaho, waste-disposal firm to bury 65 tons of Kepone-contaminated materials in a deactivated underground Titan missile launching chamber in Idaho.

Cecil D. Andrus, the governor of Idaho, announced November 19 that he was forbidding the deal. He told a news conference that he was sure there were closer disposal sites on the East Coast and that Idaho had no desire to get a reputation as "a dumping ground for other people's mistakes."

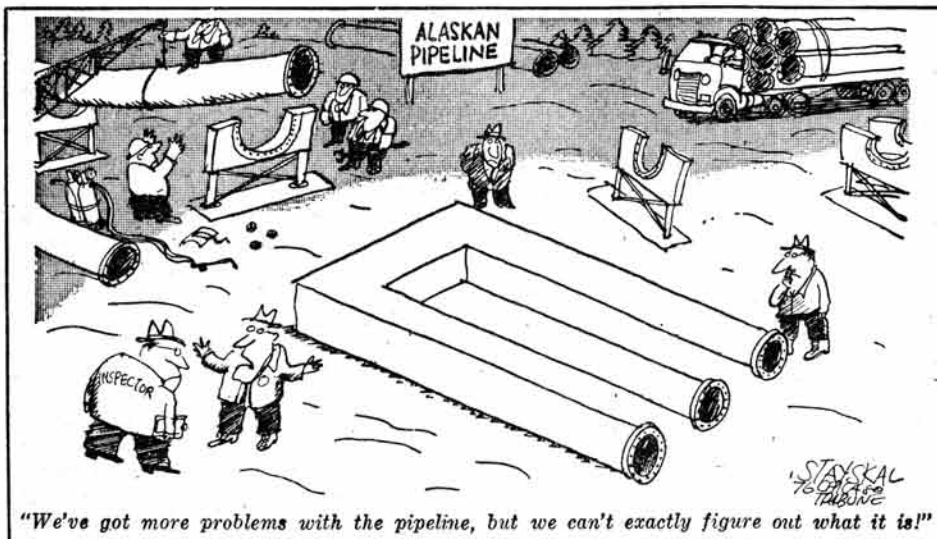
Promise to Reduce Noise Pollution

The U.S. federal government has promised that it will launch a program to reduce noise from jet planes.

There are two catches. First, the promise is to reduce the noise by only 15 to 30 percent. Second, this will be spread out over the next eight years.

According to the project, the airlines will have eight years to muffle their jet planes or to replace them with quieter ones. In some instances, the period of grace is four years.

Transportation Secretary William Coleman said November 19 that the program will cost the airlines between \$5 billion and \$8 billion. But the government may help some of the lines to cover the cost.



Selections From the Left

klasse-kampen

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

Under the headline "The Maoists Were Paper Tigers," Torben Kristensen comments in the November issue on the situation in China following the purge of Mao's closest associates, now known as "the four dogs."

"In industry, the wage freeze is to be ended, and the party leadership hopes that the workers will increase production so as to provide more goods to be bought with the greater buying power.

"In the countryside, the restrictions on private plots are to be eased.

"Education will be drastically reorganized. Emphasis will be placed on the exact sciences. . . . The hated practice of sending students to forced labor in agriculture is not yet to be ended, but their living conditions in the countryside are to be improved. The cultural policy through which the Maoist faction exercised a sort of 'monopoly of taste' is to be liberalized. . . .

"The government wants to appear 'more democratic' itself, although it will give up none of its real power. . . .

"The Shanghai four and the entire Maoist faction had gradually become thoroughly unpopular. This was shown, among other things, by the demonstration earlier this year in Tien An Men Square in Peking in support of Chou En-lai and his policy of the 'four modernizations.'" In reality, the demonstration was against the Maoist faction.

"Many Chinese now hope that the new party leadership and the purge of the Maoists will lead to a new policy by which their living standards will be improved. . . .

"The purge of the four from Shanghai, Mao's closest political associates, so soon after his death shows how weak the Maoist faction really was."

Magyar Nemzet

"Hungarian Nation," published daily in Budapest by the Patriotic People's Front.

The November 28 issue reports that the Communist party organization in the Berlin section of the East German writers union issued a statement in support of the government's decree exiling the poet Wolf Biermann. The article also notes that this statement condemned the open letter protesting the expulsion from a number of prominent East German artists and

writers. It gave the names of nine of the signers.

According to *Magyar Nemzet*, the vote in the CP fraction was 110 in support of the statement backing the government, against 4 abstentions.

la gauche

"The Left," French weekly paper of the Revolutionary Workers League, Belgian section of the Fourth International.

The November 25 issue devotes a page to the question of gay liberation. The editors note that it may surprise some readers that they have given so much space to such a question but that "since May 1968 we have continually pointed out that the struggle for socialism is not confined to the fundamental arena of social struggles and that more and more it is attacking all facets of the bourgeois order, from the bourgeoisie's various institutions . . . to its way of life."

The writers of the article, a group of homosexual militants, say that what makes it difficult to understand the role of gay liberation is that the oppression of homosexuals is not explained by the relationships of production but by institutions (the division of society into fixed categories) and ideology (authoritarianism and male supremacy).

The article explains that homosexuals are outcasts in bourgeois society because they are archtraitors to all the social categories—to the family, to the sexes, and to their class and race. "The French author J. Genêt said that he discovered the Algerian revolution by making love to an Arab youth. Many bourgeois have discovered the proletariat in the same way. (Yes, Marchais [French CP general secretary], I have even met homosexual workers). . . .

"Psychologically, homosexuals are rebels. From adolescence on, they understand that in order to survive they have to reject the sexual norms imposed by society. This first challenging can lead to a reexamination of other social norms and customs. Homosexuals are skeptics par excellence, rebels against norms and classifications. . . .

"The bourgeoisie puts bars on windows, locks on doors, and handcuffs on flowers. They don't do this for the fun of it (they don't do anything for that). Reich explains that the energy used up in repressing our own sexuality is energy diverted away from the struggle. . . .

"In every authoritarian and commercialist society, homosexuals are inevitably rebels. . . .

"The strategy of social integration, involving a partial struggle to eliminate

the prejudices against homosexuals, which is the strategy of the 'homosexual reformists,' is wrong in our opinion. It is not by chance or out of misunderstanding that the bourgeois rejects us. . . ."

"We will have a lot more things to say about the concrete experiences of the homosexual movements, both reformist and revolutionary; about homosexuality and feminism; about whether or not there is a need for an independent movement of homosexuals; and about the struggle that has to be waged in the revolutionary organizations to end the kind of repressive tolerance that exists, to get the comrades to understand that they have to fight for this cause too."

neuvostovalta sovjetmakt

"Soviet Power," a magazine published in Helsinki in Finnish and Swedish by a group of supporters of the Fourth International.

The editorial in issue No. 2 for 1976 deals with the fall of the popular-front government in Finland in September. This article appears in the country's second official language, Swedish, as well as Finnish. It begins by pointing out:

"Ten years ago, in the spring of 1966, a popular-front government was formed in this country. It aroused great hopes in many sections of the workers movement. There was talk about a new era in Finnish politics, a Third Republic that would open up the way for a new progressive Finland. Today, in the fall of 1976, the attempt to revive this popular-front artificially has failed. The reactionary winds in social and political life are gaining strength."

The main article takes up the question of popular fronts again in the context of a discussion of the Stalinists' theories and practice of democracy.

In the last decade, Finland has been the only country in West Europe besides Portugal where the Communist party has been officially in the government. Like the Swedish CP, the Finnish Stalinists are split into two more or less public factions, while retaining formal unity. The majority is trying to develop a "democratic" image. The minority opposes anything that contradicts any aspect of the Kremlin line.

"In the last years, we have seen . . . more and more tensions and splits within and among the parties in the 'world Communist movement.' The monolithic unity that was imposed in Stalin's time has broken up, and disputes over 'party democracy,' 'bourgeois democracy,' and 'the democratic front,' as well as about 'socialist democracy' have divided Stalin's heirs into sharply opposing currents."

The article attacks the concept that multiclass unity was possible on the basis of democratic demands. It points out that the bourgeoisie has a different interpretation of democratic rights than the workers. It explains that the Stalinists' policy of making alliances with bourgeois forces in the name of democracy has often led them to support attacks on the democratic rights of the masses. A number of such cases are mentioned, from the American CP's support for the internment of U.S. citizens of Japanese origin during World War II to the Argentine CP's support for the Videla coup in March 1976.

"In reality, by this policy of the 'democratic' front, the CPs have opposed the workers struggle for the democratic rights they need for their own struggles. . . ."



Journal of Irishwomen United. Published in Dublin.

The name of this magazine comes from the Gaelic Bean Sidhe, "fairy woman," who was supposed to wail when death threatened a chief or member of a chieftain's family. An article in issue No. 5 for 1976 discusses the place of women in ancient Irish society.

"Martial training was compulsory for women in Ireland until A.D. 697, when St. Adamnan, a Christian bishop, suppressed the practice. Historically, this marked the decline of women in the martial arts in Celtic society. Perhaps a major reason for this was the changing concept of femininity. The institution responsible for this was the Catholic Church. To the pre-Christian Celts, audacity, strength and independence of mind were just some admirable feminine qualities. The equality of women in the martial arts was a fact reflected in the organisation of society embodied in the Brehon laws [tribal customary law]. By accepting the suppression of this practice, Celtic women came to believe what the Catholic Church was telling them: it was unfeminine to practise the art of war. The sixth revision of the Brehon Laws, called the Senchus Mor and written by Saint Patrick, proclaimed the man to be the head of the marital union. The man, being the superior sex, is the head of the woman. What a strange new idea for Celtic women!"

**lutte
ouvriere**

"Workers Struggle," Paris weekly supported by a grouping of militants who view themselves as Trotskyist in orientation.

The November 27 issue comments on the recent suspension of five leaders of the left-wing of the Portuguese Socialist party. This group headed the opposition to Soares in the SP congress that met October 30-November 1, and its slate got more than a

quarter of the votes in the SP National Committee elections.

"There is nothing surprising about this crisis in the SP. The Soares government has taken a number of measures cutting back the gains the workers made following the April 1974 coup. The most recent of these steps was a decree-law ordering payment of the annual Christmas bonuses in treasury bonds.

"Over time, such a policy could only result in losses for the SP. Because in exploiting the confidence it won from the masses who have awakened to politics in the last two years, the SP is also using up its capital, at the same time as opening the way for a return to power by the right.

"It is hard to predict exactly what effect the working people's disenchantment with the SP will have at the ballot box. But the masses have had the same sort of illusions as the worker militants in the SP, who, for the most part, were recruited in the workers commissions set up in 1975 on the basis of the SP offensive against the Communist party. In this framework, they were mobilized primarily against the sectarianism and bureaucratism of the CP and in support of 'democratic' positions. It was these militants who subsequently made up the Labor Commissions inside the SP. It is they also who have been taking positions opposing the party apparatus, and they have asserted a relative independence. It is these militants who today are particularly unwilling to accept Soares's policy.

"For the SP leadership, the problem is to bring the entire party to heel. However, a left split could be a logical result of the political situation in the SP, and would be nothing new. Most Socialist parties have split after they got into power. One example of this is the split in the SP in France in 1936, which produced the Workers and Peasants Socialist party in 1938, led by Marceau Pivert. Another is the PSU [United Socialist party], which split to the left in 1956 from the SP of Guy Mollet, who sent the troops to Algeria. It would not be surprising today if a new formation to the left of the SP arose in the same way in Portugal. There are persistent rumors that a Portuguese Socialist Workers party may be born out of a split by the minority 'workerist' wing.

"But such a split from the Portuguese SP could contribute something positive to the working class only if instead of following an opportunistic policy tail-ending the SP, the CP, or even Carvalho . . . the Portuguese revolutionists were able to offer a perspective to the disillusioned SP activists and win them for their policy."

THE CALL

Monthly magazine published in New Delhi on behalf of the Central Committee of the Revolutionary Socialist party.

A lead article in the October issue offers

an assessment of the Great Helmsman's achievements, stating that "there can be little doubt that he was by any criterion one of the greatest revolutionary leaders of our times. It is given to few men to bestride the epic course of history from epoch to epoch in the manner that Mao Tse-tung did. . . ."

After recounting a few historical events and referring to Mao's role in the factional struggles within the Chinese Communist party, the article notes: "Mao may have had his limitations—subjective as well as those flowing from the constrictions of political power inside China and outside. But which leaders of men were above such limitations?"

"But despite those mistakes the oppressed and exploited peoples of the world are beholden to all of them for they taught them the scientific way to change the imperialist-capitalist social order and make revolution. Mao was the last of the revolutionary Mohicans. . . ."

Turning to the purge of the "gang of four," a more critical evaluation of Mao's legacy is offered in the November issue:

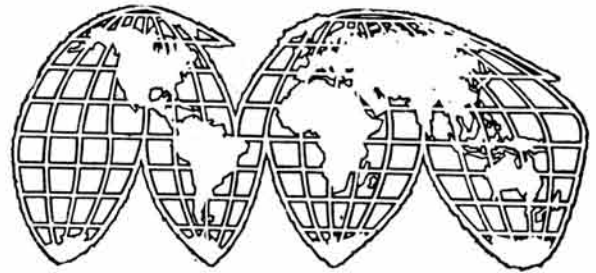
"The Chiang Ching-ling Shanghai trio was nothing but an opportunist faction of the ruling bureaucracy in the CPC trading in 'radicalism.' It had won its stripes and top positions in Party hierarchy by helping to repress both rebellious workers (particularly in Shanghai) and the independent Red Guards (the 'revolutionary rebels') during the last phase of Cultural Revolution, when Mao cried halt.

"It was this repression of the authentic grassroot level left that enabled Mao to make his right-turn at the end of the Cultural Revolution. This right-turn was, in its turn, soon to affect both the international and diplomatic policy line as well as the internal strategy of the CPC and People's China. Internationally, the CPC increasingly came to isolate itself from the revolutionary toiling people's movements beyond China's frontiers. Diplomatically and strategically, China came to be deliberately and planfully aligned by the Maoist leadership with US imperialism for the purpose of opposing Soviet 'social-imperialism.' . . ."

Predicting a victory for the "hard-headed pragmatist administrators, bureaucrats, technocrats and army generals" in the current factional struggle, the article concludes that there will be no fundamental change in Peking's policies:

"The basic forces at the disposal of the ruling Communist Party to carry out those tasks [of industrialization] also remain the same: not the organised forces and conscious initiative of the masses of toiling people, of the proletariat and peasantry from below, but the serried ranks of Party bureaucracy, the Party controlled administrative hierarchy and the army. The results would be the same: bureaucratic degeneration of Socialism. Mao could not prevent it so long as he lived. His successors would not even want to prevent it."

AROUND THE WORLD



Black Panther Party Files Suit Against Washington Officials

A \$100 million suit against nearly two dozen high federal officials was filed December 1 by the Black Panther party and families of former party members killed as a result of government actions.

Black Panther leader Elaine Brown said in a news conference that the suit would show "that the most extreme and violent actions were employed by high government officials against citizens of this nation."

Among those charged with attempting to destroy the party and its members were representatives of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Central Intelligence Agency, the Army, the Treasury Department, and the Internal Revenue Service.

Indonesian Regime Reports Release of 2,650 Political Prisoners

The Indonesian government said December 1 that it had released 2,650 political prisoners who had been jailed following the overthrow of the Sukarno regime in 1965. A group of 150 prisoners were freed at a public ceremony in which they were required to swear allegiance to the government and renounce Communist beliefs.

According to the Jakarta regime, 29,000 persons jailed in 1965 are still being held. It has promised to free the remaining prisoners within three years.

Angola Joins the United Nations

Angola was admitted to the United Nations December 1 by a vote of 116 to 0. Although no government opposed its entry, the American representative abstained from the vote, citing the continued presence of Cuban troops in Angola.

The Maoist regime declined to participate in the vote in the General Assembly, in keeping with its claim that the Kremlin is interfering in Angola.

Peking Appointment Approved by Capitalist Dailies

The announcement that Peking's ambassador to the United Nations, Huang Hua, has been appointed as China's new foreign minister was greeted with undisguised satisfaction by the editors of the *New York Times*, who explained why in a December 5 editorial.

"Much of the attention Mr. Huang has won at the United Nations in recent years has derived from his vigorous debates with Soviet representatives and his attacks on Soviet policy. His appointment will therefore be seen as another signal that Peking expects no fundamental changes in its relation with Moscow . . .," the editorial said.

The *Times* editors further advised that ". . . Peking needs friends whose possession of the most modern military equipment can help discourage any adventurist ideas in Moscow. Coming from his service in New York, Mr. Huang would seem ideally suited for the task of cultivating these friends here and elsewhere in the West."

The editors of the *Christian Science Monitor* also hailed the appointment December 6, calling it "a step likely to receive a cordial welcome in Western capitals, including Washington."

Qaddafi Buys Chunk of Fiat

Plans for the Libyan regime of Col. Muammar el-Qaddafi to buy a 9.6 percent interest in the giant Fiat industrial conglomerate were made public December 1. The deal would give Fiat about \$415 million, with some \$208 million of the total in the form of loans. Giovanni Agnelli would remain as head of the corporation, and the Agnelli family would continue to hold a controlling 30 percent interest in Fiat.

Agnelli asserted that the deal would not result in any "political interference in the affairs of Fiat by Libya," which will be granted two seats on Fiat's fifteen-member board of directors, and one seat on its five-member executive committee.

Fiat, which produces steel, tanks, and helicopters in addition to trucks and automobiles, will presumably continue to sell goods to Israel.

New York Hospital Conditions Worse than on Battlefield

The newly opened Lincoln Hospital in New York City's South Bronx is in danger of losing its accreditation as a result of medical and nursing staff shortages, administrative turmoil, and equipment breakdowns.

Dr. Jack Katz, the president of the house staff at the hospital, told an investigative commission December 4 that conditions at the new municipal hospital were worse

than those found at army field hospitals in battlefield situations.

"Indeed," said Katz, "with purposeful planning and all the money that went into this building, we could cover this 10-acre plot with Quonset huts and offer a superior product to what is presently obtainable."

Katz gave examples in which patients at the hospital had died because of the lack of nurses and of space in the intensive-care wards. "One attending Lincoln physician has stated a situation exists for the patient 'where it is more dangerous and life-threatening to come to the hospital than to stay at home,'" Katz noted.

Lincoln Hospital was opened in March to replace three older hospitals in the heavily Black and Puerto Rican South Bronx area. The older hospitals were closed as part of the budget cutbacks in New York. The new building, however, leaves much to be desired. The roof leaks, communications systems don't work, and the emergency rooms are designed so that it is impossible for more than one stretcher at a time to negotiate their doorways.

Tourists Skip Rhodesia This Year

Only 8,500 visitors vacationed in Rhodesia this September, officials of the white-minority government there complain, compared to almost double that number twelve months earlier. It is expected that this year will be the worst one for the tourist trade since the racist regime in Rhodesia declared its independence from Britain in 1965.

López Portillo Takes Office

José López Portillo was sworn in as president of Mexico December 1. The new head of state pledged to overcome the country's economic crisis through an austerity program. "The economic theme of the speech reflects the kind of philosophy that businessmen can understand," Al R. Wichtrich, president of the American Chamber of Commerce in Mexico City, commented following the inauguration.

Crackdown in Taiwan

Seven Taiwan businessmen have been sentenced to 7 to 15 years in prison on charges of plotting an armed rebellion against the regime of Prime Minister Chiang Ching-kuo. All seven, who were accused of receiving instructions from the Chinese embassy in Tokyo, were native

Taiwanese. They all had served prison terms during the 1950s when Chiang Kai-shek—the present prime minister's father—was still consolidating his grip over the native Taiwanese population.

A twenty-four-year-old woman student was also sentenced to three years of "reform education" for participating in the alleged plot.

The sentences came six weeks after an October 21 order closing down the *Taiwan Political Review*, a dissenting magazine. Huang Hua, the managing editor of the magazine, was sentenced to ten years in prison.

Treaty Outlaws 'Severe' Methods of Environmental Warfare

The United Nations General Assembly voted December 3 in favor of a ban on some types of environmental warfare. Under the treaty, which has yet to be approved by individual governments and which has no mechanism for enforcement, signatories pledge to "not engage in military or any other hostile use of environmental modification techniques having widespread, long-lasting or severe effect as the means of destruction, damage or injury to any other state party [to the agreement]."

Among the techniques for modifying the environment that are judged to have effects that are neither widespread, long-lasting nor severe are rainmaking and defoliation. In fact, however, huge areas of the Vietnamese countryside were devastated and made unproductive by American defoliation projects during the Vietnam War.

Washington insisted on including the loophole allowing further use of such environmental warfare before it would support the treaty.

U.S. Unemployment Hits 8.1%

Unemployment in the United States rose from 7.9% in October to 8.1% in November, the Labor Department reported December 3. The 8.1% figure is the highest level of unemployment since November 1975, when the jobless rate stood at 8.5%. The announcement came a few days after it was reported that capital appropriations by the 1,000 largest American manufacturers fell by 9% in the third quarter.

Marcos Ups Price for U.S. Bases

State Department officials announced December 3 that tentative agreement had been reached on a new military and economic aid pact with the Philippine regime. The deal, negotiated by Henry Kissinger and Philippine Foreign Minister Carlos Romulo, would have doubled American aid to the Marcos dictatorship over the next five years in return for continued use of military bases in the Philippines.

However, on December 4 Marcos rejected

the \$1 billion deal. He was reportedly dissatisfied with the \$500 million military aid commitment in the package.

Two of the largest American bases in the world—Clark Air Base and the Subic Bay Naval Base—are in the Philippines. Both bases were used extensively during the Vietnam War.

Washington frequently ties its military and economic aid programs aimed at propping up repressive regimes to the purchase of military base rights. This was the case with the recent accords signed by the Ford administration with the governments of Spain and Turkey. American military bases in those countries were retained at the cost of a \$1.2 billion, five-year accord with Spain, and a \$1 billion, four-year accord with Turkey.

New Information on CIA Subversion

A dispute between two former officials of the CIA has resulted in the publication of new information about the agency's subversive activities in Europe during the 1950s. James Angleton, former head of special operations and counterintelligence for the CIA, revealed in an interview with the *New York Times* November 29 that formation of clandestine paramilitary groups for use against the East European workers states were authorized by the U.S. government in 1950.

Angleton gave the interview following the publication of a book telling how the CIA handled the release of Khrushchev's secret speech denouncing Stalin at the Twentieth Congress of the Soviet Communist party. When the CIA obtained the document, Angleton said, it began promoting "vast preparations for refurbishing

operational groups" to intervene in East Europe.

The CIA planned to keep Khrushchev's speech secret until its commando units were "up to snuff," Angleton said, but this plan was vetoed by then-President Eisenhower and his advisers, who wanted a more rapid publication of the speech. Angleton complained that premature release of the speech provoked nationalist uprisings in Poland, Hungary, and Rumania too soon for the CIA's paramilitary units to respond. The secret commando groups were disbanded in 1958, according to Angleton.

Spanish Social Democrats Hold Open Congress in Madrid

The Spanish Socialist Workers party opened its first legal congress in Spain in forty-four years December 5. Several thousand delegates and guests at the Madrid meeting heard greetings from former Swedish Prime Minister Olof Palme and former West German Chancellor Willy Brandt.

Other Social Democratic leaders at the congress included Carlos Altamirano, the exiled head of the Chilean Socialist party; Michael Foot, deputy leader of the British Labour party; and François Mitterrand, the head of the French Socialist party.

Spain: Foreign Debt Rising

The Spanish foreign debt—estimated at a total of \$12 billion—is continuing to grow. In 1976, for the second year in a row, Spain is expected to have a balance-of-payments deficit of about \$3.5 billion. The deficit in 1974 also topped \$3 billion. As much as one-third of the total foreign debt is owed to major American banks.



"Hello, Chief? ... I think we're in for some more bad press ..."

Mike Peters/Dayton Daily News

For an SP-CP Vote in the Japanese Elections!

[The following statement appeared in the November 22 issue of *Sekai Kakumei* (World Revolution), the weekly newspaper of the Japan Revolutionary Communist League (JRCL), Japanese section of the Fourth International. The translation and footnotes are by *Intercontinental Press*.]

* * *

In early November the Central Committee of the JRCL held its Sixth Plenum since the Eighth National Congress [in January 1976]. The plenum decided on the policy of calling for votes for candidates of the Socialist party or the Communist party in the elections to the House of Representatives, and decided to announce that decision in the following appeal to all working people. In the struggle taking place around the elections, we call for dealing a mortal blow to the Liberal Democratic party,¹ and we will carry on a determined fight to bring about the victory of the SP and CP, which are parties of the working class (even though their platforms are petty bourgeois). We call on all working people to join in this struggle. Needless to say, our struggle does not stop after the election. We will try to fight this battle as one axis of a larger struggle to force the SP and CP to form a workers united front and to establish a workers and farmers government based on that united front. This is the position that serves the interests of the entire working class. Working people, with our own demands and struggles, must force the SP and CP to carry out a class-against-class struggle.

* * *

To all working people of the country!

The Japan Revolutionary Communist League (Japanese section of the Fourth International) calls for votes for the candidates of the Socialist party and Communist party in the present elections to the House of Representatives.

These elections mark the first time in postwar history that elections to the lower house have been held at the end of a full term.² The present bourgeois Diet sailed smoothly through its term. During the Diet

1. The LDP is by far the largest bourgeois party in Japan. It has held governmental power for over twenty years.

2. The Japanese Diet (parliament) is divided into an upper House of Councillors and a lower House of Representatives. Under the Japanese constitution, elections to the lower house must be held at least once every four years.

sessions there arose no political confrontations making it necessary to dissolve the Diet to "seek the people's mandate." The rule of the LDP continued intact throughout the term, never encountering any crises.

Working people, is that really true? No, on the contrary, the whole term was a monkey show, an insult to working people. The previous lower house elections were held at the end of 1972. Four full years have passed since then. What kind of years were they?

The significance of those four years become abundantly clear if we point out a few historic events. First of all, the collapse of Saigon (now Ho Chi Minh City) on April 30, 1975, marked the victory of the Vietnamese revolution and the first defeat in history for American imperialism. With the Vietnamese revolution leading the way, the Asian revolution surged forward. In Timor, in Thailand, and in other countries the struggles of workers and peasants confronted imperialism and its puppets. This advance of the Asian revolution will surely spread to the prison nation of South Korea, now ruled by the Park military dictatorship.

From these four years we can see clearly that the confrontations of the Japanese and South Korean peoples against the Far Eastern counterrevolutionary alliance are more intimately linked than ever before. Although the U.S.-Chinese and Japanese-Chinese detentes were established, it turned out that there was no detente on the Korean peninsula. The Park dictatorship continued its rule with even bloodier repression. The conflict between Park and the South Korean people is absolutely irreconcilable. Japanese imperialism backs the Park dictatorship, and together with U.S. imperialism has formed a Far Eastern alliance to save Park. The struggles of the workers and farmers of Japan and South Korea must increasingly confront this counterrevolutionary alliance. There can be no perspective of winning our struggles while avoiding that confrontation.

Secondly, the history of rapid growth of the economy came to an end during the last four years.

Working people, four years ago you still held illusions in the economic boom. The Tanaka government, with its "Plan to Restructure the Archipelago,"³ was trying

3. This name was given to the economic policy of the previous LDP government headed by Prime Minister Kakuei Tanaka, which called for

to perpetuate the boom. But world capitalism came upon an impasse, and all the contradictions of the boom period (such as pollution and uneven regional development) became explosive. The oil shock of autumn 1973 dealt a coup de grâce to the boom.

The lifespan of postwar Japanese capitalism was prolonged by the economic boom, and for that very reason the end of the boom created a crisis that has shaken Japanese capitalism to the core. The bourgeoisie responded first by attacking weak sectors of workers. They planned to shift the crisis onto the working class through a reconversion of the industrial structure entailing massive rationalization. In their drive to prolong the life of capitalism they prepared new attacks on the working class to enforce their policies. The past four years have seen a shift from the era of reforms to the era of confrontations.

Thirdly, we've seen the advancing crisis of the LDP's rule, a crisis whose tempo has increased from the money-power politics of Tanaka up to the present Lockheed scandal.

In the lower house elections of 1967, the LDP's vote total fell below 50 percent, and the party lost its formal majority under the bourgeois parliamentary system. The LDP was able to maintain its one-party rule only by increasing the number of Diet seats from rural areas (where it has its main base) and decreasing the number of seats from urban areas (where it has fallen into a distinct minority position). On the basis of this electoral setup, the LDP has barely managed to hold onto a majority. Now even that slim majority is endangered. The current elections will probably register even more clearly the crisis that the one-party rule of the LDP has fallen into.

Working people! The three focal points of the situation that we have summarized here—the advance of the Asian revolution, the bankruptcy of the economic boom of Japanese capitalism, and the crisis of the LDP's rule—can be summed up as the crisis of the capitalist LDP government.

The situation facing working people, the context in which workers' struggles take place, has changed fundamentally in these past four years. Although in a restricted way, the present elections will express the consciousness of working people at this turning point.

Treachery of the Reformist Leaderships

Think back for a minute. Four years ago, the Japan Communist party was ecstatic about the big parliamentary gains they had made. They immediately started putting out propaganda as if a democratic coalition government⁴ would soon be

massive public-works projects to aid expansion of heavy industry.

4. A "democratic coalition government" is the

formed. Since then, the CP has crystallized its legalistic, parliamentarian, and revisionist line. Having turned against the Buraku Liberation League, the CP joins hands with the bourgeoisie on the Buraku question.⁵

They have opposed strike struggles. Saying that workers in education "follow a sacred profession," and that local government workers are "servants of the people," the CP has rejected their strike struggles. By openly renouncing the dictatorship of the proletariat, the CP has gone further in its process of social-democratization.

During the period of rapid economic growth the CP also grew rapidly. That is, it swam with the reformist current of the boom era. Even now, with the boom at an end and reformism becoming nothing but betrayal, the CP goes on spreading reformist illusions among the working people. They are preparing a dangerous course that will lead the working people to defeat.

Working people! The Socialist party has been stabbing you in the back even more than the Communist party. In the crisis situation created by the Lockheed scandal, the SP completely failed to point the way for working people's struggles against the LDP. They obscured the power struggle within the LDP,⁶ and remained on friendly terms with the ruling party right up to the end of the Diet term. The SP capitulated without engaging in a single battle against the thoroughly corrupt LDP. And in the end they made deals to increase the National Railway fares and telephone rates, and to force Korokyo⁷ into binding arbitration. This was nothing but an open betrayal of working people.

The Kanase Incident,⁸ along with the SP's lukewarm pursuit of the Lockheed scandal, show how deeply this party is submerged in the swamp of corrupt bourgeois politics.

Working people! Remember the oil shock, the runaway prices, and even the "toilet

Communist party's term for any government that includes the CP.

5. The Buraku people are a minority of the Japanese population who have been victims of pervasive discrimination since feudal times. See *Intercontinental Press*, December 6, p. 1754.

6. During the summer of 1976, an intense struggle broke out between opposing factions of the LDP, leading to a reshuffling of posts in the Miki cabinet. In addition to posing the threat of a major split, the struggle further damaged the party's public image by focusing attention on the way it settles internal disputes, with wealthy power brokers playing a key role.

7. The major railway lines, the telephone system, and certain other industries of Japan's "public sector" are administered by the government, so the Diet must vote on price increases. The public-sector workers union Korokyo is prohibited by law from striking.

8. Kanase is a former SP Diet member charged with demanding bribes from construction firms in his election district.

paper panic"?⁹ When the economic crisis was destroying our standard of living, did the SP and CP call on the people to struggle?

Remember when Kim Dae Jung was kidnapped from a Tokyo hotel by Park's



S. Yamafuji/Asahi Evening News

MIKI

agents, or when Kim Chi Ha faced the threat of a death sentence, or when several South Korean youths were arrested and executed on charges of espionage?¹⁰ Did the SP and CP appeal to working people to join struggles to save the life of Kim Chi Ha, to rescue Kim Dae Jung, to call for the release of all political prisoners?

Or when the unprecedented Lockheed bribery scandal broke out, causing a crisis that brought the Miki LDP government to the verge of its downfall and imperiled the unity of the LDP itself, did the SP and CP call on working people to join in a struggle to bring down the LDP government?

Working people! You have suffered two successive defeats in the Spring Labor Offensive—not to mention the right-to-strike struggles—under the line of the SP and CP.¹¹ And nevertheless the SP, the CP, and the bureaucracy of Sohyo¹² are preparing to lead us into a third defeat

9. Japan experienced an inflation rate of more than 30 percent and shortages of many commodities in the wake of the rise in petroleum prices in 1973.

10. Former Presidential candidate Kim Dae Jung and poet Kim Chi Ha are political prisoners in South Korea.

11. Wage raises in new trade-union contracts were limited to less than 15 percent in 1975 and less than 10 percent in 1976. See *Intercontinental Press*, May 24, p. 844.

12. The General Council of Trade Unions of Japan, the largest trade-union federation, affiliated with the SP.

with the same line in the 1977 Spring Labor Offensive. They refuse to admit that the end of the economic boom has made it absolutely impossible to win wage raises or defend our rights through the same methods of struggle as before. They are striving to collaborate even more closely with the bourgeoisie, to "come in from the left" to save capitalism from its crisis.

They are joining hands with the Komei and Democratic Socialist parties¹³—the reserve troops of the LDP and the bourgeoisie—in order to come in from the left to rescue the capitalists from the crisis of one-party rule by the LDP.

Working people! In the recent situation we have learned certain things very well. We know it is impossible for the capitalist government to maintain stable political control. We have entered a period of chronic governmental crises for the LDP and the bourgeoisie.

And it is not only on the enemy's side that there is a crisis. Our side also finds itself in a crisis because we must confront the LDP and the bourgeoisie saddled with the leadership of the SP and CP, who are incompetent to lead working people's struggles in the present situation.

SP Chairman Narita has publicly announced his plan for a "coalition government of both conservative and reformist parties." In the context of the present crisis of the LDP's one-party rule, the LDP and the bourgeoisie are drawing the reformist workers parties toward a coalition government. They are squirming to avoid a head-on collision between the crisis of capitalism and the struggles of the working class. The line of what Narita calls a "conservative/reformist coalition" shows clearly that he himself has jumped on the bourgeoisie's bandwagon, which signifies a betrayal of the working people.

A "conservative/reformist coalition" government would respect bourgeois rule and force the working class to surrender before the attacks of the bourgeoisie. But would it be able to rescue capitalism from its crisis through labor-management collaboration? No! The deeper the crisis of capitalism becomes, the more all the contradictions of capitalism will be forced onto working people through violent and authoritarian means.

The only possible resolution of the crisis is a fundamental and revolutionary one. We can't break out of the crisis of capitalism by means of a "conservative/reformist" coalition nor through a popular front. That would only prepare the subsequent defeat of the working class.

Working people! We are calling for votes for the SP and CP in the elections to the

13. The Komei (Clean Government) party is a petty-bourgeois party based on the Soka Gakkai Buddhist sect. The Democratic Socialist party emerged as a right-wing split from the SP in the late 1950s. Although it receives the endorsement of leaders of the right-wing trade-union federation Domei, its base of electoral support is among urban petty-bourgeois layers.

lower house. Perhaps some of you will criticize us, saying that it is a mistake to call for votes for the worthless parties.

It is clear indeed that both the SP and CP are established leaderships that are incapable of responding to the crisis situation of the LDP government. We have been sounding the alarm for quite some time, warning working people that both the SP and the CP are not to be trusted. We are opposed to placing any confidence in these parties, and we certainly don't think that working people should give these parties a blank check.

Voting for the SP and CP does not imply trusting them nor giving them a free hand. We assert the necessity of working people taking the real first step in the struggle. Working people at present lack a correct revolutionary leadership. We are challenging the established leaders, we are candidates for the leadership of the working class. But are working people to be made to "wait" until a correct revolutionary leadership has been constructed? The class struggle does not permit that.

In order that working people may begin the struggle, this is what we should demand of the SP and CP:

For a thorough prosecution of the Lockheed and South Korean bribery cases¹⁴ by the hand of the people!

For direct action by working people in the struggle to defend our standard of living from the bankruptcy of capitalism!

Bring down the entire capitalist LDP government!

Establish a workers and farmers government!

Establish a workers united front to unite working people in struggle!

Calling for working people to vote for the SP or CP is not for the purpose of increasing seats in the Diet and forming a government there. It is a signal for working people's struggles.

Down with the LDP government!

Down with the whole capitalist LDP government!

Against a "conservative/reformist" coalition government!

The SP and CP must form a workers and farmers government based on a workers united front! □

14. It has recently been disclosed that South Korean businessman Park Tong Sun, whose lavish "gifts" to American congressmen are at present under investigation, was also involved in dealings in Japan. The extent and details of those dealings of remain unclear.

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

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Los Campesinos Toman Tierras

Creciente Inestabilidad en México

Por Cristina Rivas

MEXICO, D.F.—"Habiendo devaluado el peso mexicano por profundas razones económicas hace solamente tres meses, el gobierno mexicano se encuentra ahora con que el peso ha caído en un círculo vicioso de incertidumbre política, rumores descahellados y una especulación creciente." Así describía Marlise Simons la situación de la moneda mexicana en el *Washington Post* del 24 de noviembre.

A partir del 31 de agosto en que fue puesto a "flotación" por primera vez en veintidós años, el peso mexicano ha llegado a cotizarse incluso a menos de 4 centavos de dólar, cayendo desde 8 centavos. Ninguno de los beneficios que los analistas burgueses esperaban de esta devaluación se ha materializado; todo lo contrario. Parece que el peso todavía puede caer más bajo.

Como siempre en el capitalismo, los trabajadores tendrán que cargar con el peso de la crisis del sistema. Los patrones intentarán imponer una explotación aún mayor y reducir aún más el nivel de vida. De hecho, el presidente electo, José López Portillo, ya ha dicho que su gobierno será "de austeridad." Ya han comenzado los llamados a asumir una actitud "patriótica y responsable." En términos concretos esto quiere decir que los obreros deben aceptar tranquilamente que tienen que pagar para que los capitalistas puedan seguir recibiendo sus grandes ganancias.

Los trabajadores de México han empezado a ver lo que les tiene reservado el gobierno. Antes de la segunda devaluación del peso el 27 de octubre, se había dado un aumento de salarios de 23% a algunos trabajadores. Además de que la mayoría de los obreros no recibirán ni siquiera eso, la Confederación de Trabajadores de México (CTM), que está directamente vinculada al gobierno, había dicho antes que el nivel de vida de los trabajadores se había deteriorado en más de un 60%.

Pero aún ese aumento del 23% ya ha sido borrado por el aumento de los precios que suscitó la devaluación que lo siguió.

Antes de tomar la medida de la "flotación" del peso, el gobierno había lanzado una ofensiva contra los sectores combativos del movimiento obrero, pues estaba claro que las medidas económicas draconianas que quiere imponer a la clase obrera exigían que no hubiera ningún sector de vanguardia que pudiera organizar una respuesta.

El ataque total que se lanzó contra los electricistas democráticos¹—que luchaban contra los burócratas para recuperar su

sindicato—tenía el objeto de someter ese polo organizador del movimiento obrero para poder dar el golpe de devaluar la moneda. Además de cargar el peso económico de una crisis en la que no tienen nada que ver, los trabajadores se enfrentan al peligro de perder aún los derechos democráticos y sindicales más elementales. La "actitud patriótica" implica el sometimiento total de los trabajadores al gobierno de los patrones.

Sin embargo, la respuesta de los trabajadores ha sido contenida por las direcciones sindicales. No sólo los tradicionales "charros,"² sino incluso los dirigentes reformistas de gremios combativos como los electricistas democráticos y los trabajadores universitarios, han bajado la cabeza y se han negado a organizar la respuesta obrera.

En esta situación, ante los golpes evidentes, algunos sectores de los trabajadores han empezado a prestar oídos a la alternativa de los socialistas revolucionarios, que insisten en la necesidad de la movilización política independiente de los trabajadores para defender sus derechos y para imponer medidas que impidan que se les cargue el peso de la crisis.

La situación de México había venido cambiando poco a poco desde hacía varios años, mientras se cocinaba la crisis. La inflación hasta antes de la devaluación era oficialmente de aproximadamente 20%; el desempleo había venido aumentando vertiginosamente; el "subempleo," que no es sino una forma encubierta de desempleo, afecta "a casi 50% de la fuerza de trabajo del país, que es de 15 millones," según informa Marlise Simons; la deuda exterior llegó a los 23 mil millones de dólares y la balanza de pagos era cada vez más desfavorable. A todo esto se aúna la fuga de capitales hacia Estados Unidos y Europa.

La "flotación" del peso se produce solamente tres meses antes de que Echeverría ceda la presidencia a su sucesor designado, López Portillo. En el periodo de cambio de presidente siempre hay desconcierto y ansiedad en México, pero este año

1. Así se conoce a los miembros y simpatizantes de la Tendencia Democrática dentro del Sindicato Unico de Trabajadores Electricistas de la República Mexicana, que ha venido luchando desde hace varios años por la democracia sindical.

2. Así se llama en México a los burócratas sindicales que están estrechamente vinculados al gobierno y al PRI.

la situación alcanzó nuevos niveles.

Empezaron a correr por todo el país rumores de que iba a haber un golpe de estado el 20 de noviembre (aniversario de la Revolución de 1910) y de que Echeverría impediría por la fuerza de las armas que asumiera la presidencia López Portillo. Estos rumores causaron verdadero pánico.

Una de las consecuencias ha sido la impresionante huida de capitales, principalmente hacia Estados Unidos.

James P. Sterba informaba lo siguiente en el *New York Times* del 26 de noviembre:

Una semana después de que se desplomara el valor del peso mexicano el 31 de agosto, la huida de la riqueza familiar, del capital de las empresas y de los ahorros personales alcanzó, según los banqueros, el altísimo nivel de 400 millones de dólares. Algunos banqueros calcularon que entre 3 ó 4 mil millones de dólares han salido de México hacia Estados Unidos y Europa en los últimos tres meses . . .

En septiembre, el temor de que el peso se volviera a devaluar, de un golpe militar o de que el presidente saliente, Luis Echeverría, intentara permanecer en el poder, desató un éxodo frenético de dinero en efectivo. Incluso mexicanos de la clase media y que no hablan inglés trataron de abrir cuentas de ahorros en los Estados Unidos por medio de llamadas telefónicas a larga distancia.

"Empezamos a recibir llamadas de todo tipo de personas insignificantes que querían abrir cuentas con 2, 5 ó 10 mil dólares," dijo Daniel A. Gramatges, vicepresidente y gerente para América Latina del Texas Commerce Bank de Houston.

"Cuando los rumores alcanzan al nada sofisticado inversionista hasta el grado de que quiere sacar los 5,000 dólares que ha ahorrado, entonces se puede decir que la cosa es grave," dijo otro banquero de Houston. "También se sabe que para ese momento el rico ya ha exprimido todo lo que podía."

La huida de capital llegó a un punto en que ya era imposible que el gobierno la tolerara impasiblemente. Se dice que tan sólo el 19 de noviembre—un día antes del supuesto golpe y cuando Echeverría anunció la expropiación de unas de las más ricas tierras—salieron del país 150 millones de dólares. El 22 de noviembre el gobierno mexicano tuvo que suspender la venta de dólares, ni siquiera los bancos del aeropuerto internacional de la Ciudad de México vendían esa moneda. También se limitó pocos días después la cantidad de dólares que cada viajero puede sacar del país. Se puso el tope de 300 dólares por persona.

El "milagro" mexicano fracasó estrepitosamente, demostrando una vez más que en esta época de crisis capitalista mundial los trabajadores de los países semicoloniales tienen que pagar el precio más alto para que el imperialismo sobreviva. México agregó su nombre a la lista de "milagros" capitalistas frustrados.

Se Profundiza la Crisis Política

Paralelamente a la crisis económica del país, se venía gestando una crisis política igualmente profunda. El control de las

masas trabajadoras y campesinas que tan bien había sabido mantener el gobierno burgués de México, empezó a erosionarse rápidamente cuando el nivel de vida cayó a profundidades abisales.

Para evitar un desenlace que le pudiera



LOPEZ PORTILLO

resultar fatal, el gobierno del Partido Revolucionario Institucional (PRI) ha alternado la represión con las concesiones, que se han ido haciendo cada vez más reducidas.

Después de 1968, cuando el movimiento estudiantil demostró ante el mundo el carácter ferozmente represivo del gobierno supuestamente democrático de México, éste comprendió que necesitaba remozar su imagen y, desde luego, que no podía continuar asesinando por centenas y ante los ojos del mundo a quienes se oponían a su dominio.

Al iniciarse el sexenio de Luis Echeverría en 1970, se vira el curso y se da comienzo a un intento por relajar las tensiones sociales, evitando en lo posible las masacres, haciendo selectiva la represión y especialmente con una política internacional "tercermundista."

Pero desde el principio se marcaron claramente las limitaciones que tenía el régimen. Además de la crisis económica que empezaba a agravarse, estaba el hecho fundamental de que los obreros y campesinos se lanzaron por el camino abierto por los estudiantes: la movilización independiente del control directo del gobierno.

Y la movilización independiente ha sido siempre el pecado capital en México, que tiene que ser reprimido a sangre y fuego.

Independientemente de cualquier posible deseo personal, Echeverría tuvo que reprimi-

mir la lucha de las masas. El 10 de junio de 1971 se realizó una nueva masacre de estudiantes en la Ciudad de México, al mismo tiempo que el gobierno iniciaba una campaña en todos los centros de estudio para recuperar el control perdido en 1968.³ Las luchas de los ferrocarrileros democráticos⁴ ese mismo año fueron enfrentadas con grupos paramilitares, la cárcel para algunos dirigentes y el apoyo abierto de patrones y gobierno a los burócratas sindicales que se impusieron en el sindicato ferrocarrilero contra la voluntad expresa de los trabajadores.

Pero en 1976 la lucha alcanza un grado más alto, así como la represión.

El año comenzó con el incendio de una colonia miserable, el "Campamento 2 de Octubre." Quienes vivían ahí habían emigrado del campo y ante la miseria que encontraron en la ciudad, no tuvieron más remedio que ocupar unos terrenos para construir sus casuchas.

En 1976 continuó la lucha que habían venido dando los electricistas democráticos. Aunque la dirección democrática llama a confiar en los "gobernantes progresistas," como Echeverría, y se niega a plantear una alternativa política consecuentemente independiente del PRI, su movimiento ha sufrido todo tipo de agresiones. Sus manifestaciones han sido prohibidas por las autoridades, atacadas por grupos de esquirols y sus dirigentes calumniados por todos los medios de información.

El 16 de julio, ante la amenaza de una huelga electricista nacional, el gobierno envió al ejército a tomar los locales sindicales y los de la empresa eléctrica. Fue la primera vez desde la represión contra los ferrocarrileros en 1959 que el ejército intervenía contra los trabajadores industriales.

A mediados de 1976 también se envió al ejército para reprimir la lucha de los estudiantes de la Escuela Nacional de Agricultura. Igual que en 1968, ésta era simplemente una lucha por reivindicaciones democráticas.

Julio Scherer, director de *Excelsior*, fue destituido por un golpe organizado por el gobierno. *Excelsior*, que es el diario más importante en México, se había caracterizado por permitir que en sus páginas se expresaran los intelectuales disidentes y por informar sobre la situación del país de manera más veraz de lo que es costumbre en México.

Posteriormente, Scherer sufrió varias

3. En 1968 se produjo en México un movimiento estudiantil masivo independiente del control del gobierno y del PRI. Desde entonces, los estudiantes han sido los principales voceros de la disidencia en México.

4. Los miembros y seguidores del Movimiento Sindical Ferrocarrilero, que encabezó la lucha por la democracia en el Sindicato de Trabajadores Ferrocarrileros de la República Mexicana.

victimizaciones. Durante algún tiempo se le impidió salir del país. Cuando trató de iniciar la publicación de una nueva revista, se le acusó de haber robado 650,000 pesos de *Excelsior*. Después de muchos esfuerzos Scherer ha lanzado la revista *Proceso*, donde colaboran todos los que salieron de *Excelsior* al tiempo de su expulsión.

Un elemento que vino a complicar aún más la crisis política fue el hecho de que el único partido burgués que tradicionalmente había presentado un candidato diferente al del PRI, el Partido de Acción Nacional (PAN), no participó en las elecciones presidenciales a causa de una grave crisis interna.

No se permitió el registro de Valentín Campa, candidato de una coalición encabezada por el Partido Comunista Mexicano (PCM). De esta manera, aunque en cuarenta años el PRI nunca ha perdido, esta vez ni siquiera se pudo orquestar la farsa.

En medio de todo esto, surgió un nuevo elemento: los asesinatos de policías. Era algo completamente distinto de las acciones de los grupos guerrilleros, urbanos o rurales, que proliferaron en México después de la derrota del movimiento estudiantil. Periódicamente, un grupo de individuos que se identificaban como miembros de la "Liga Comunista 23 de Septiembre," entraban a las "loncherías" donde comen los policías y bañaban con ráfagas de ametralladora a quienes se encontraban ahí. En cada ocasión, el gobierno respondió montando un tango sobre la muerte de los policías y lanzando una virulenta campaña "contra el comunismo."

Pero al cabo de algún tiempo la gente empezó a dudar. Marlise Simons escribía el 6 de junio en el *Washington Post*:

... los analistas políticos y los periodistas mexicanos cuestionan cada vez más la autenticidad de la Liga como grupo guerrillero de izquierda y sugieren enfáticamente que sus numerosas y dramáticas acciones tienen su origen en la creciente histeria y militancia de la extrema derecha mexicana.

Entre que si son peras o son manzanas, muchos activistas han sido secuestrados y torturados por las diferentes policías mexicanas.

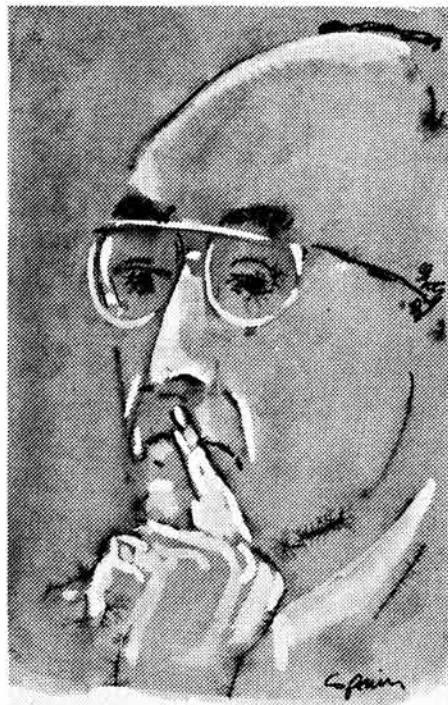
A finales de mayo, siete dirigentes y fundadores de la Liga Comunista, que en ese momento purgaban condenas en la cárcel, enviaron una carta en la que decían que su organización ya no existía, que se desbarató bajo los efectos combinados de la represión y la exacerbación de sus propias contradicciones internas.

Aumentan las Luchas del Campesinado

Sin embargo, el punto más candente en México actualmente es el campo. La reforma agraria capitalista realizada por Lázaro Cárdenas está en completa bancarrota, pues los "ejidatarios"⁵ reales han ido

5. El ejido es una manera de posesión de la tierra

disminuyendo a pasos agigantados y el proletariado agrícola ha aumentado en la misma proporción. Actualmente, el número de campesinos sin tierra abarca la mayoría del campesinado mexicano. Pero no



ECHVERRIA

sólo no tiene tierra, en el campo hay poco trabajo y los salarios son ínfimos. La miseria y el hambre son la principal plaga del campo mexicano.

No es nada sorprendente que en estas condiciones el campo sea un verdadero polvorín. Y una parte del polvorín estalló al mismo tiempo que el peso mexicano se hundía, los rumores de golpe de estado se generalizaban y los capitales huían hacia Estados Unidos. Estalló, además, en la zona agrícola más importante del país y donde la vinculación con el "agribusiness" norteamericano es más directa: los estados de Sonora y Sinaloa en el noroeste de México.

Es necesario señalar que los sucesos de Sonora y Sinaloa no están aislados. Por toda la República se han producido ocupaciones de tierra por los campesinos. En todos los casos el ejército acudió en defensa de la propiedad de los terratenientes. Algunas veces los campesinos resistieron. Hubo muchos muertos, heridos, "desaparecidos" y detenidos. Si las masacres de campesinos no se conocen ni siquiera en las ciudades de México, es porque hasta ahora el campesinado ha permanecido completamente aislado de los sectores que pueden ser sus aliados.

en que un determinado número de campesinos recibe varias hectáreas para trabajarlas. Ellos no son dueños de esa tierra, y no pueden venderla. Pero sí pueden heredarla o rentarla.

Pero Sonora y Sinaloa tienen una particularidad: la agricultura ahí está altamente industrializada. Además, los campesinos de la zona tienen una tradición de lucha que se remonta hasta los días en que los indios combatían contra los invasores españoles. Porfirio Díaz⁶ encontró una tenaz y persistente resistencia entre los campesinos de la zona.

NACLA's Latin American & Empire Report describe en su número de julio-agosto de 1976 la situación de los campesinos de Sonora y Sinaloa:

En Sinaloa, donde el desarrollo de la agricultura industrial ha crecido más rápido que en cualquier otra parte, el número de trabajadores agrícolas se duplicó entre 1960 y 1970—de 66,000 a 126,000.

La mayoría de estos trabajadores son miembros permanentes del proletariado. . . . Pero un porcentaje importante de la fuerza de trabajo rural, en Sinaloa aproximadamente el 40%, está constituido todavía por ejidatarios cuyas parcelas producen menos de lo que necesitan para sobrevivir o están rentadas a los grandes terratenientes. . . .

En Sonora, aproximadamente el 70% de los ejidos está rentado, especialmente en las áreas de riego de Navajoa y el Valle del Yaqui; en Sinaloa, el porcentaje de ejidos rentados está entre el 40 y el 80%.

Los terratenientes que "rentan" los ejidos de la tierra más rica de México son unas ochenta familias de supermillonarios estrechamente ligados al "agribusiness" norteamericano.

En esas tierras se produce aproximadamente el 75% de los jitomates que exporta México y aproximadamente 80% de la producción de trigo. También se cultivan ahí muchas de las verduras de invierno que se consumen en Estados Unidos.

Además de su fuerza económica, estos terratenientes están muy bien organizados para defender sus intereses. Tienen a su servicio bandas de pistoleros y asesinos, han formado la Confederación de Asociaciones Agrícolas del Estado de Sinaloa (CAADES), y están vinculados a otros sectores de su clase por medio de las cámaras industriales y comerciales a nivel nacional.

Clave, periódico quincenal socialista revolucionario que refleja los puntos de vista de la Liga Socialista (Bolchevique Leninista), describe en su número del 15 al 27 de noviembre la estructuración de los latifundios de Sonora y Sinaloa.

"En Sonora, la tierra se encuentra en aparente posesión de pequeños propietarios, que por tenerla en distrito de riego no deben poseer [según la Constitución] más de 50 hectáreas. Pero eso es sólo la apariencia, ya que existen grandes latifundios simulados como parcelas, cuando en realidad son latifundios familiares, que están a nombre hasta del hijo recién nacido, cuando no de prestanombres."

6. Porfirio Díaz fue dictador de México desde 1876 hasta 1911, cuando el principio de la Revolución lo obligó a emigrar a Europa.

Clave menciona también que la lucha de los campesinos contra esos "pequeños propietarios" como se autollaman los latifundistas encubiertos, "no es reciente, ya que desde hace aproximadamente un año se han venido dando estas invasiones. Estas fueron momentáneamente detenidas por la matanza de campesinos 'invasores' ocurrida en San Ignacio Río Muerto el 24 de octubre"

En diciembre del año pasado, después de la masacre que menciona Clave, los latifundistas hicieron una demostración de fuerza cuando el gobierno intentó repartir algunas de sus tierras para calmar la lucha de los campesinos.

En esa ocasión, los terratenientes paralizaron la producción y organizaron manifestaciones de tractores por las carreteras y las calles de las ciudades del noroeste de México.

El *Arizona Republic*, publicación al servicio del "agribusiness," decía en su número del 15 de diciembre de 1975:

La rapidez y eficiencia con que se organizó la huelga de los granjeros y el importante apoyo que les dieron los dirigentes de la industria y las finanzas del país han sacudido evidentemente a quienes están más cercanos de la jerarquía del partido [el PRI]. . . . Antes de que terminara, la huelga produjo una reacción en cuando menos una docena de estados mexicanos y ocasionó un nuevo flujo de capitales mexicanos hacia Arizona, Texas y California.

En 1975, Echeverría logró paliar la situación sin dar las tierras a los campesinos, creando una comisión que se encargaría de "resolver" el problema. Desde luego, la comisión determinó que las tierras siguieran en manos de los terratenientes.

Durante todo 1976 la cosa siguió muy inestable, como era de esperarse. En febrero, los campesinos volvieron a tomar algunas de las tierras que les han usurpado. Para abril, 25,000 acres estaban ocupados y la lucha se seguía extendiendo.

A principios de septiembre, Félix Barra García, secretario de la reforma agraria, comunicó que el presidente había girado instrucciones para que en los dos meses y días que quedaban de su mandato, se liquidaran los latifundios de Sonora, Sinaloa y otros estados.

Después de casi treinta años de estar esperando infructuosamente que el gobierno tuviera a bien entregarles lo que es suyo, los campesinos decidieron que ésta era su oportunidad. Se generalizaron las ocupaciones de tierra, principalmente en las entidades que había mencionado el mismo presidente.

Para principios de noviembre, los campesinos habían invadido miles de hectáreas. Declararon a la prensa que esta vez "ni Dios padre" los sacaría de ahí. Las mismas organizaciones gubernamentales campesinas, que pocos días antes habían declarado que las ocupaciones eran "actos contrarrevolucionarios," tuvieron que ceder, pues evidentemente era mejor que fueran ellos quienes encabezaran, de ser posible, a los campesinos. La Confedera-

ción Nacional Campesina (CNC) y la Unión General de Obreros y Campesinos Mexicanos (UGOCM) empezaron a exigir la expropiación de los latifundios.

Finalmente, el 19 de noviembre, Echeverría declaró la expropiación de 247,000 acres de tierra (propiedad de 74 familias). Pero antes de que las tierras fueran entregadas efectivamente a los campesinos, los latifundistas respondieron vigorosamente.

Este año superaron lo que habían hecho en 1975. El 24 de noviembre organizaron un paro patronal que afectó, en mayor o menor medida, a cincuenta ciudades del país, recibieron el apoyo delirante de los comerciantes y de algunas cámaras empresariales.

Lanzaron una campaña nacional impresionante de propaganda histórica a través de todos los medios de información.

De un plumazo se violaron las garantías constitucionales; de un plumazo se destruyó el trabajo de hombres libres; de un plumazo, 50 años de progreso económico y social desaparecen entre los nubarrones de la demagogia institucionalizada; de un plumazo, México, por primera vez en la historia, se enfrenta con el espectro del hambre. . . .

Que se consigne a los invasores y que se les condene; que se consigne a los agitadores y se les condene; que se denuncie, claramente, a los latifundistas, si los hay. ¡Lo que no puede permitirse es que se condene al pueblo de México!

Así decía uno de los muchos desplegados a toda plana y grandes letras que aparecieron en los periódicos el 23 de noviembre.

Otro desplegado, evidentemente pagado por los terratenientes pero firmado por una supuesta "Coalición de Campesinos de México Emiliano Zapata," explicaba las malas ideas que se han metido en las cabezas de los campesinos.

"Hemos sido usados con falsas promesas de los que consideramos nuestros líderes: Gómez Villanueva [presidente del PRI], Félix Barra y Celestino Salcedo [dirigente de la CNC]; nos han hecho ver que tenemos derecho a invadir propiedades ajenas a nosotros, que tenemos un papel que cumplir en la revolución, que debemos hacer otra revolución, que el terrateniente nos explota, que lo que producimos en el campo debe ser nuestro."

Un escalofrío debe haber recorrido los cuerpos de los terratenientes que redactaron ese desplegado: esas mismas ideas "exóticas" desataron la Revolución de 1910.

Ante la eficiente ofensiva de los terratenientes, el gobierno empezó a retroceder.

"Luego de solicitar a los granjeros sonorenses que en lo sucesivo, cuando se pretenda establecer una nueva granja se informe primero de la situación jurídica de los terrenos que se dedicarán a esta actividad, Félix Barra García, secretario de la reforma agraria, dictó hoy el acuerdo de que se excluyan de los terrenos entregados a los campesinos en los valles del Yaqui y Mayo, las superficies donde están

las granjas porcícolas y avícolas, a fin de no dificultar el desarrollo de estas industrias," informó *Excelsior* el 24 de noviembre.

El arreglo final, del 26 de noviembre, fue que "los dos lados aceptaron" una proposición de los terratenientes en el sentido de que se redistribuyan 32,000 acres de tierra a los campesinos. Esto es una burla, pues hay alrededor de 10,000 campesinos esperando tierra y la proposición original de los terratenientes—antes del 23 de noviembre—era que se repartieran 20,000 hectáreas. Esta medida no hace más que exacerbar la verdadera situación, porque es obvio que los campesinos demandarán más tierras y cada vez estarán menos dispuestos a abandonarlas a cambio de palabras.

De hecho, aún en esta ocasión hay grupos de campesinos que se niegan a abandonar las tierras que les habían dicho que eran suyas. Este tipo de medidas abren canales para que las masas desborden el límite que trata de imponerles el gobierno, y éste es un peligro de primera magnitud para él. El gobierno se debate en la contradicción de la necesidad económica de impulsar la producción capitalista en el campo y la necesidad política de mantener, aunque sea formalmente, el ejido de los campesinos.

La devaluación del peso, los rumores de golpe, las diatribas de Echeverría, las ocupaciones de tierra por parte de los campesinos, el paro patronal y su propaganda histórica crearon una atmósfera de pánico en todo México. El mito de la estabilidad económica y política de México se había hecho añicos.

Algunos piensan que con cambiar a Echeverría por López Portillo se resolverá la situación. Eso no es cierto, ningún presidente burgués podrá resolver los problemas de México, que emanan de una situación en la que el capitalismo sólo se podrá mantener quitando a los obreros y campesinos mexicanos su pan, su tierra, su trabajo y, en ocasiones, hasta su vida. □

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La Huelga General del 12 de Noviembre en España

Por Marcos Urrutia

Recientemente, el gobierno de la monarquía española decidió afrontar la profunda crisis económica existente en el estado español con una serie de medidas que perjudican directamente los intereses de los trabajadores:

1. Los sueldos por debajo de las 25,000 pesetas no podrán subir más que el incremento del índice oficial del costo de la vida y dos "puntos" (2,000 pesetas). Los sueldos superiores a las 25,000 pesetas sólo pueden aumentar el equivalente a dicho incremento determinado, como se sabe, por los índices elaborados por el Instituto Nacional de Estadísticas.

Ahora, hace un año, los propios técnicos de este organismo estatal hicieron pública una nota explicando que los índices por ellos elaborados quedaban muy por debajo de los incrementos reales de los precios, dado el método empleado.

2. Se suprime el artículo 35 de la Ley de Relaciones Laborales. Esto significa que si un trabajador es despedido ilegalmente, los tribunales pueden obligar al empresario a indemnizarle por el equivalente al salario de dos meses de trabajo, pero no pueden forzar a los patronos a la readmisión del empleado ilegalmente despedido. Esta medida está pensada para favorecer el despido de los líderes incómodos para la patronal.

Según la revista *Cambio 16*, la medida significará el aumento del número de parados—cerca del millón en la actualidad—en una cifra no inferior a 100,000.

Por supuesto, la huelga sigue siendo ilegal bajo la dictadura y causa de despido inmediato del centro de trabajo, sin posibilidad de reclamación alguna.

3. La ley ahora decretada establece que si en diez días de negociación para renovar los convenios no se llega a un acuerdo entre trabajadores y patronos, serán las autoridades laborales las que determinen los nuevos salarios, no pudiendo nunca rebasar los topes del índice oficial del costo de la vida. A las empresas—y en particular a las grandes, que pueden fácilmente planificar un nivel de stocks suficiente—les bastará con congelar (detener) las negociaciones con cualquier excusa para que la decisión sobre el convenio pase inmediatamente a manos de las autoridades.

El conjunto de las organizaciones políticas y sindicales del movimiento obrero permanece en la ilegalidad, manteniéndose en la legislación los "delitos" de la reunión y propaganda "ilegales," asociación "ilícita," etc. Sólo los importantes avances

experimentados por el movimiento de masas en todo el estado, especialmente tras la muerte del dictador Franco, han permitido que, cada vez más, distintas organizaciones obreras y numerosos líderes de los trabajadores hayan aparecido públicamente como militantes de una u otra corriente del movimiento obrero.

El 12 de noviembre, ante este estado de cosas, la Coordinadora de Organizaciones Sindicales (COS) integrada por Comisiones Obreras, Unión General de Trabajadores y Unión Sindical Obrera, convocó un paro de veinticuatro horas en todo el estado y en todos los sectores de la producción. Las reivindicaciones y objetivos planteados eran:

- Contra la congelación salarial, aumento de 6,000 pesetas mensuales, igual para todos.
- Contra el desempleo, creación de puestos de trabajo y seguro de paro suficiente.
- Contra el despido libre, garantía en el empleo y amnistía laboral.
- Contra la "reforma" sindical, desaparición de los sindicatos verticales y libertad sindical.

Dos millones de trabajadores respondieron a la convocatoria, según informó la COS en el diario *El País*. El porcentaje más alto de huelguistas se dio en el País Vasco (Euzkadi), seguido por Cataluña y Madrid.

La policía manifestó haber detenido a 247 trabajadores integrantes de piquetes de extensión de la huelga, anunciándose fuertes multas para todos ellos.

Evidentemente, esta convocatoria tenía una serie de limitaciones. En primer lugar, la COS no incorpora a la plataforma ninguna consigna directamente política, que exprese la voluntad de las masas de acabar con la dictadura y de conquistar la libertad. Hubiera sido necesario incorporar a la movilización aquellos objetivos políticos por los que han venido luchando amplios sectores en los últimos meses:

- Amnistía total.
- Legalización de todos los partidos y organizaciones del movimiento obrero y popular.
- Libertades democráticas sin restricción.
- Elecciones inmediatas a una asamblea constituyente.
- Disolución de los cuerpos represivos, exigencia de responsabilidades por los crímenes de la dictadura y castigo para los autores de los crímenes fascistas.

• Autodeterminación para las nacionalidades oprimidas (Euzkadi, Cataluña, País Valencia, Baleares y Canarias).

En segundo lugar, la COS expresó claramente su voluntad de controlar estrictamente la movilización. En concreto, el comité de Vizcaya del Partido Comunista de Euzkadi que apoyaba totalmente el llamamiento de la COS decía en una octavilla: "los comunistas . . . instamos a que la gran movilización del día 12 se realice dentro del más amplio sentido de autocontrol y de responsabilidad. A hacer veinticuatro horas de protesta ni más ni menos, sin caer en provocaciones irresponsables, ni en ningún tipo de aventurerismo."

En Euzkadi, lo mismo que en otras nacionalidades del estado español, no era ésta la primera vez que se hacía una jornada de lucha. El día 13 de septiembre, por ejemplo, medio millón de obreros fueron a la huelga en protesta contra el asesinato de Josu Zabala, militante de Comisiones Obreras. Pero en esa ocasión, la acción no comprendía sólo la realización de paros simbólicos. La producción se detuvo, las asambleas se formaron fábrica por fábrica, y los trabajadores eligieron a sus delegados para poder unificar y coordinar la respuesta que iban a dar. Los obreros salieron masivamente agrupados de cada empresa y confluyeron en el centro de las poblaciones (Sestao, Erandio, Basuri, etc.).

Pero, para la jornada del 12 de noviembre no se plantearon así las cosas. El deseo de sus promotores era apoyar un día de paros, pero sin hacer asambleas, sin hacer concentraciones y manifestaciones de protesta contra el gobierno, sin plantearse objetivos políticos de ningún tipo.

¿Por qué fue que la COS puso estas limitaciones a la jornada del 12?

La única explicación es que hoy los dirigentes de Comisiones, de la UGT y de USO, tienen adquiridos fuertes compromisos con sectores capitalistas, como la Democracia Cristiana y el Grupo Independiente. Estos compromisos obligan a recortar, a limitar, los objetivos por los que ya hoy se precisa luchar.

En estas condiciones, con tanto obstáculo a la movilización independiente, es muy difícil reunir las suficientes fuerzas para defenderse de la patronal y su gobierno. La alianza con los capitalistas que se auto-proclaman "democráticos" no sólo no nos ofrece soluciones efectivas cara al mañana, sino que también perjudica ya hoy mismo nuestra lucha. Dicen que los trabajadores debemos pactar una tregua con el gobierno, por lo menos "hasta que lleguen las elecciones." Nosotros sabemos que esas "elecciones" van a ser falsas, ya que no se concede la legalización de los partidos y organizaciones obreras y populares y, además, no puede haber tregua mientras el gobierno congela salarios, impide negociación, reconoce el despido libre y castiga la huelga. □