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## Year of Upsurge in Black Africa

## Witch-hunt Against Trotskyism in Britain

By Michael Baumann

In a smear campaign reminiscent of the tactics utilized by the late Senator Joseph McCarthy in the United States, Britain's major capitalist daily, the *Times* of London, has opened a witch-hunt branding British Trotskyists as extremist "infiltrators" who have won influence in the Labour party through mastery of undemo-

cratic methods of manipulation.

The main target of the attack has been the grouping of Labour party members who support the views of the *Militant*, a weekly newspaper published in London by an editorial board that has a Trotskyist background. A prominent member of the editorial board is Ted Grant, a veteran of

the British Trotskyist movement.

The campaign, which is plainly a carefully orchestrated effort, appears to have been mounted by leading members of the Labour party in collusion with key representatives of British capitalism.

In a series of speeches in early December, three of the most prominent leaders of the Labour party—former Prime Minister Harold Wilson, Prime Minister James Callaghan, and party General Secretary Ronald Hayward—not only endorsed the witch-hunt but helped carry it several steps further.

An article in the December 5 London *Sunday Times*, under the headline "Wilson joins in battle against the infiltrators," reports the Labour party tops' poisonous contribution:

SIR HAROLD WILSON yesterday joined forces with his successor as Prime Minister, James Callaghan, in calling for urgent action to save the Labour party from a take-over by extremist infiltrators whom he described as "small and unrepresentative groups."

Callaghan's fierce denunciation of recent events in local Labour parties was made in Leeds on Friday night but only became generally known yesterday. He told party workers that the most hateful slogans he had heard recently were: "What do we want? Everything! When do we want it? Now!" "That's not socialism, that's fascism," Callaghan said. "There are too many of these people who have infiltrated this party already. Get them out!"

Ostensibly at issue are the efforts of *Militant* supporters and other Labour party activists to replace certain Labour party candidates in the next elections with candidates deemed more responsive to protecting workers' rights and living standards.

Since candidates are chosen by party members active in local Labour party constituencies, the fight has tended to take place on the local level, particularly in areas represented by the most reactionary Labour MPs. A handful of Labour MPs profess concern for the safety of their parliamentary seats.

If this were all that were involved, however, it would be difficult to explain the sustained campaign waged in the capitalist press and the enlistment of Labour's top guns in the cause. In reality, the stakes are far higher.

The redbaiting campaign was launched during Callaghan's secret negotiations with the International Monetary Fund for a \$3.9 billion loan, designed to ease the present difficulties of British capital. The IMF, dominated by Britain's chief competi-

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tors in the United States and West Germany, has prescribed considerable belt-tightening as a prerequisite for granting the loan.

Britain's rulers adopted a double tactic. They bowed to the pressure of the IMF to put the squeeze on the working class; at the same time they wrung their hands for mercy, pointing to the danger of a revolution in Britain (the Trotskyist threat being proof) and the need for help from abroad to combat it.

As an initial step, the Labour party government announced December 15 a two-year program of social-spending cuts totalling \$4.2 billion, as well as tax increases.

The new cuts, coming on top of previous slashes earlier this year, can be expected to ignite further protests by hard-pressed workers. A particular target will be the Callaghan government, which claims to be acting in the interest of labor.

These facts provide the real perspective for examining the course of the witch-hunt campaign.

The slanders against supporters of the *Militant* actually date back to at least November 1975, when the Labour party leadership drew up a venomous document known as the Underhill report. This document, which purports to detail "entryist activities" in the Labour party, devotes a section to alleged activities of the *Militant* supporters.

Portions of the document were leaked to the press at the time, but the failure of the redbaiting effort to take hold proved sufficiently embarrassing to persuade the Labour party National Executive Committee (NEC) to table the report and take no further action on it. Matters rested there for almost a year.

Accordingly, the opening salvo in the current phase of the campaign, which appeared in the form of an article on the front page of the London *Times* November 29, is worth examining with care. Reporter Neville Hodgkinson wrote:

Infiltration of the Labour Party by a Trotskyist group seeking the creation of a mass revolutionary Marxist party in Britain is causing widespread concern among Labour officials, constituency workers and MPs.

Details of its aims and methods have emerged in Bradford, where it is at the heart of secret preparations for an attempt to remove from the House of Commons Mr Edward Lyons, QC,

## 1976 in Review

In this issue of *Intercontinental Press*, the last one of 1976, we present a series of articles summarizing the major events and trends that typified world politics throughout the year.

After a two-week break, we will resume publication with the issue dated January 17, which will contain the index for our Spanish-language articles.

Labour member for Bradford, West.

An interview with a former Labour Party branch secretary in the city who was drawn for a while into the fringes of the group's activities will be published in *The Times* tomorrow. He says that it has its own area officials, full-time regional and national organizers, fund-raising machinery, secret "manifesto," and six MPs closely associated with its views.

It also has a printing works in London and at the centre of its activities a well produced weekly newspaper of 12 pages, *Militant*, described as "the Marxist paper for labour and youth."

The threat to Mr Lyons arises from a coalition of forces, with militant supporters playing a key role. The MP's opponents have control of three of the seven members' branches . . . and are seeking new members, so that they can increase the number of delegates they send to the constituency party's general management committee.

A branch can send an extra delegate for every ten new members it has on its books. There has been heavy recruitment this year. . . .

So far, the case against *Militant* supporters is limited to one party constituency, with charges against them amounting to being "Marxists," publishing a "well produced weekly newspaper of 12 pages," and being among the most active recruiters of new members to the Labour party.

More specifics are provided:

One of those at the heart of the militant campaign is Mr Keith Narey, chairman of the Manningham branch, a mature student on a peace studies course at Bradford University. Aged about 30, he is a leading light on the management committee and on socialist student organizations at the University and Bradford College.

He also attends meetings of the local branch of the Labour Party Young Socialists, which has grown considerably in numbers and influence in the past year. The organization is under the control of militant supporters nationally.

To be noted here is the suggestion that prominent *Militant* supporters have also been overly zealous in building the Labour party's youth arm which, apparently as a result of their activity, has "grown considerably in size and influence."

Additional particulars follow:

Until recently Mr Narey lived at 2 Fairbank Terrace, Bradford, where three other militant supporters, all either students or former students, still reside. They are: Mr Stephen Davison, secretary of Manningham branch, who graduated last year and is now understood to be working in a foundry; Mr Geoffrey Kernan, secretary of the Bradford Labour Party Young Socialists; and Mr Peter Watson, another management committee delegate from Manningham branch.

Mr Kernan sometimes takes over a table at the front of management meetings to mount a display of militant newspapers and literature.

Equally suspect is their choice of associates:

The militant group rely for some of their support on Bengali members of the party headed by Mr Manawa Hussain, an Asian leader in Bradford who in 1972 became the first Asian alderman in the United Kingdom. Although not a left-winger by inclination, he has allied himself with the extreme left because, he says, he has



London Evening News

SIR HAROLD

always found it prepared to support the Asian cause, whereas he has met prejudice and resistance from a racialist element in the party establishment.

A brief accompanying item, headlined "Warning on 'infiltration,'" undertakes to convey the gravity of the threat. It reports the call by a member of the Labour party National Executive Committee for a "fresh look at how far 'militant Trotskyists' had infiltrated the party":

Mr John Cartwright, MP for Greenwich, Woolwich East, said that the latest attempt to infiltrate the party was "very much broader, very much larger, than anything we have seen before." The party was more vulnerable than it



had ever been. "It does not any longer have the sort of mass membership which enables it to fight off these attempted infiltrations." . . .

He said that the report on Trotskyists by the party's national agent, Mr Reginald Underhill, should be brought up to date and submitted to the national executive committee.

On its front page the following day, the *Times* featured excerpts from the statement by an informer, one Robert Hallam, promised in the previous article. Hallam explained the pernicious success of *Militant* supporters as being obtained by the following means:

They infiltrate a ward party, planting a supporter in it, and when they have gotten sufficient support to control it they move on to another. . . .

They also work inside the Labour Party Young Socialists, building them up in each area as a base for operation.

The campaign was stepped up December 1, with the *Times* printing two redbaiting articles and an editorial-page column. The main article was extravagantly headlined: "Activities of 'Militant' group in Bradford alleged to be undermining the unity and strength of the party: 12 Labour MPs 'fearful of moves by Trotskyists to oust them.'"

To be noted is the inverse proportion between the escalation of sensationalistic charges and the dwindling of names, dates, places, or any other supporting "facts."

About a dozen Labour MPs are secretly fearful for their future because of a threat from the extreme left similar to that facing Mr Edward Lyons, QC, MP for Bradford West, according to an MP in a neighbouring constituency. . . .

Mr Thomas Torney, Labour MP for Bradford, South, says that although he has "a few way-out left-wing people," including *Militant* supporters, on his own management committee, he knows of no threat against himself at present.

But from discussions with colleagues at the Commons, most of whom are reluctant to speak of their fears publicly, he estimates that about a dozen Labour MPs whose cases have not been publicized are under threat because of moves in their constituencies. A dozen others are finding themselves subject from time to time to hostile motions passed at poorly attended meetings by the activists, who nevertheless are far from having a management committee majority.

In addition, Mr Torney says, there are between 50 and 100 constituencies where *Militant* supporters or similar groups are "a bit of a nuisance" because of the organized and vigorous ways in which they seek to "educate" the party and the public concerning their views.

In the same issue, right-wing Labour MP Douglas Eden enthusiastically endorses the witch-hunt against the "Trotskyites," suggesting only that it not be limited to them:

The NEC has failed to stop and even refused to discuss the reported infiltrations which are no longer seriously in dispute. The NEC selected a leading young Trotskyite militant, Mr Andy Bevan, as the party's national youth officer from a field of 20 candidates on the eve of the party conference. Why do the trade union leaders not

put a stop to this? The Trotskyites take the flak for the party's swing to the left, but it is the trade union leaders who effectively if inadvertently and unintentionally underwrite the swing.

Having temporarily exhausted fresh



CALLAGHAN

material, the December 2 issue of the *Times* rehashed the Underhill report under the headline, "Decision not to publish report on Trotskyists angers and frustrates regional organizers: Labour inaction on warning 'spurred left-wing infiltration.'" To be noted is the fact that the words in single quotation marks in the headline appear nowhere in the article.

An article in the December 4 *Times* reworked the now somewhat stale Underhill report, this time under the headline, "'Militant' endeavours to establish a group of MPs: The Trotskyists' hidden aims."

So, the outbursts by Wilson and Callaghan, in time for the weekend editions December 5, came at an opportune moment. They were not enough, however, to prevent a note of skepticism from entering, particularly in the American press. *New York Times* correspondent Robert B. Semple, Jr., cabled the following report from London December 10:

Prime Minister James Callaghan, his predecessor, Sir Harold Wilson, and the general secretary of the governing Labour Party have joined some of this country's newspapers in warning against a party takeover by "extremist infiltrators," mainly youthful Trotskyists. Judging by the headlines given these warnings, the average British reader could easily conclude that the party is ripe for takeover, if not already in bondage. In fact, the militants are few in number, and only about a dozen seats in Parliament are being seriously challenged.

In the same vein, columnist C.L. Sulzberger said in the December 15 *New York Times*:

. . . in reality, the "Reds under the beds" inquiry bruited in British headlines is much ado about little and isn't anywhere near the same category of such important questions as will the British economy pick up or will the United Kingdom survive at all. . . .

Why then were such pains taken in Britain to portray the Labour party as "ripe for takeover"? Was this perhaps intended primarily for international consumption, as a bargaining ploy in the IMF negotiations? Is that why Sir Harold, who is much better known abroad than his successor, was brought out of retirement? Persuasive evidence exists for this view.

Arguing for moderation from the IMF, an editorial page column by Fritz Stern in the December 6 *New York Times* sounds many of the same underlying themes as Wilson and Callaghan but mentions the Trotskyists only in passing. The difference is that he has no need for shrill headlines more suitable for an ongoing, front-page campaign. Stern writes:

Given the British performance, it is not surprising that fiscal experts insist that radical cuts in public expenditures should precede a new loan. . . . [But] fiscal wisdom can be political folly; economic stringency applied at the wrong time can set in motion political events that produce an unimaginable upheaval. In the 1930's, the guardians of fiscal orthodoxy clung to "sound" policies that brought about social catastrophe.

There are sound reasons for helping—without demanding Draconian reforms. . . .

The response of foreign leaders has to be finely calibrated: Massive austerity could produce a violent reaction that would be harmful to both major parties.

Stern asks his Wall Street readers: Suppose the Labour party were turned out of office by the Conservatives. Could they be expected to be as successful as the Labour party in applying austerity?

Will the trade unions accept from Mrs. Thatcher, whom they would immediately brand as "a class enemy," what they would deny their own party? A return of the Tories with mounting unemployment could well turn the hope of social peace into the certainty of social conflict. The Labour party might finally split; a new socialist party, with a Trotskyist core and its class anger, would constitute the most radical party in Europe.

\* \* \*

It is no accident that in seeking a plausible focus for their undercurrent of fear, the red baiters centered their fire on the Trotskyists. The truth is that they can see the potential of Trotskyism.

To the labor lieutenants of British capital, the Trotskyist movement represents the wave of the future—a tiny splintered current now, but one that can come to express the will of tens of millions of revolutionary-minded workers. □



## Southern Africa—Flashpoint of the World Revolution

By Ernest Harsch

Nineteen seventy-six was a bad year for imperialism in southern Africa.

Washington and Pretoria—the two greatest enemies of African liberation—experienced a political setback in Angola when they were forced to end their direct intervention in the civil war there. Most importantly, the white supremacist regimes in Namibia, Zimbabwe, and South Africa itself were shaken by mounting national and class struggles, as the oppressed Black masses in those countries surged forward in their historic battle to rid the continent of white colonial rule.

This new rise in the African freedom struggle has set alarm bells ringing in imperialist capitals around the world.

### Washington's Black Eye in Angola

As the year opened, the civil war that began in Angola in 1975 was still raging. Three nationalist organizations, each of which had a record of struggle against Portuguese colonialism, were now battling each other for control of the mineral-rich former colony.

Neither the MPLA, FNLA, nor UNITA<sup>1</sup> represented the interests of the Angolan workers and peasants. Nor did they favor the overthrow of capitalism in Angola, the only basis for the attainment of real national independence. The civil war was basically a factional struggle for power between three procapitalist forces.

The conflict also reflected the tensions between the three main nationalities in the country. The FNLA was based primarily among the Bakongo in the north, the MPLA among the Mbundu in the Luanda-Malange region, and the UNITA among the Ovimbundu and other peoples of central and southern Angola.

The imperialist powers, with Washington and Pretoria in the lead, sought to take advantage of this factional war to attain their own objectives. They intervened directly in the conflict in order to prolong and heighten it, thus weakening the Angolan independence struggle as a whole and making it easier to press for concessions from all sides involved. Another goal was to prevent Moscow, which was aiding

the MPLA, from gaining increased diplomatic influence as a result of an MPLA victory.

To achieve these aims, the White House launched a major covert operation in 1975 to bolster one side in the war, sending tens of millions of dollars in arms to the FNLA and UNITA. (Significantly, the American Gulf Oil Corporation was at the same time paying the MPLA more than \$100 million in taxes and royalties on the oil produced from its Cabinda wells.)

In addition, Washington urged the South African regime to send its own troops into Angola against the MPLA. Besides sharing the general aims of the other imperialist powers, Pretoria also saw an opportunity to strike out at the southern Angola bases of the South West Africa People's Organisation (SWAPO), which is fighting for Namibia's independence from South African rule.

In an effort to provide a political cover for its aggression, Washington conducted a bellicose diplomatic campaign against Moscow and Havana for their aid to the MPLA. But the American people, who had passed through the experience of the Vietnam War and were familiar with Washington's phony justifications, did not sit back and allow the Ford administration's war plans to go unchecked.

The broad antiwar sentiment in the United States forced Congress to limit the White House's ability to continue its direct intervention. That in turn prompted the South Africans to pull their own troops out of Angola, the last of whom left the country March 27. With the South African withdrawal, the most immediate danger to Angola's independence had receded.

The MPLA won the civil war with massive Soviet military aid and the direct backing of thousands of Cuban troops. It drove many of the FNLA forces out of the country and forced the UNITA to abandon the cities it controlled in central and southern Angola. But having retained some support, the UNITA reverted to guerrilla warfare in the countryside, carrying out actions against the MPLA and Cuban forces for the remainder of the year.

The repressive course of the new MPLA regime became obvious within a few weeks. The MPLA's secret police rounded up scores of dissidents, many of them to the left of the MPLA tops, and threatened some with execution. When a wave of strikes broke out in May, dozens of striking workers were also jailed.

Despite the MPLA's "socialist" verbiage,

it has sought to bolster capitalist economic relations within the country and has reopened Angola's doors to foreign investors. Shortly after the end of the civil war, Gulf Oil resumed its operations in the oil-rich territory of Cabinda. By far the largest imperialist holding in Angola, the Cabinda oil wells earn Gulf about \$20 million a year. The MPLA made it clear that other foreign investors would also be welcome.

### Smith Regime on Shaky Ground

The failure of the U.S.-South African intervention in Angola had an electric effect throughout southern Africa, especially in those countries still under white colonial rule. It proved to the Black masses that Washington and Pretoria—the principal bulwarks of racist oppression in southern Africa—were not invincible, encouraging them to step up their fight for freedom.

The impact of the imperialist setback in Angola was most immediately felt in Zimbabwe, which is ruled by a white minority regime headed by Prime Minister Ian Smith. Of all the remaining white regimes in southern Africa, the Smith regime is the weakest, being based on a white population of only 250,000, compared to a Black population of more than 6 million.

Beginning in February, the Zimbabwean freedom fighters sharply increased their guerrilla campaign against the Smith regime. After the Smith regime invaded Mozambique to strike at the guerrilla bases, the Mozambican regime closed its border with Rhodesia March 3, cutting off one of the Smith regime's major trade routes.

The sharp rise in the struggle for Black majority rule in Zimbabwe has eroded the position of the Smith regime, a fact that Washington and the other imperialist powers are acutely aware of. They fear that Smith's continued intransigence will provoke an even greater upsurge of the Black struggle, leading to a collapse of the colonial-settler regime and possibly threatening imperialist interests in Zimbabwe and in the rest of southern Africa as well.

In an effort to defuse the Zimbabwean freedom struggle and pave the way for the establishment of a Black neocolonial regime willing to protect imperialist economic and political interests, Washington, London, and Pretoria joined hands to pressure Smith into making some com-

1. Movimento Popular de Libertação de Angola (People's Movement for the Liberation of Angola), Frente Nacional de Libertação de Angola (Angolan National Liberation Front), União Nacional para Independência Total de Angola (National Union for the Total Independence of Angola).

promises. Henry Kissinger personally took charge of the operation when he began his first tour of Africa April 24.

The fruits of this campaign became evident when Smith announced September 24: "Rhodesia agrees to majority rule within two years." Although he went on to detail a number of escape clauses that in effect would have perpetuated white domination, his announcement was an admission of the regime's weakness and led to the opening of negotiations with the major Zimbabwean nationalist leaders in Geneva.

When the talks began on October 28, government officials in Washington and London openly displayed their pleasure. It allowed them to stall for time and gave them an opportunity to try to play the various Zimbabwean leaders off against each other and to channel the struggle for majority rule in a "safe" direction.

So far, the four most well-known nationalist leaders—Joshua Nkomo, Robert Mugabe, Abel Muzorewa, and Ndabaningi Sithole—have been willing to participate in the talks. None of them has pressed for immediate Black majority rule.

By the end of the year, however, the imperialists had not yet been successful in dampening the conflict within Zimbabwe itself. The guerrilla war continued to escalate and the Smith regime stepped up its terrorist attacks against the civilian population.

One sign of the rising militancy among the Zimbabwean population was the staging of demonstrations in October in Salisbury and Bulawayo, the two largest cities, to greet two of the nationalist leaders. Both demonstrations drew crowds of more than 100,000 Blacks.

### Pretoria's War Against Namibia

The freedom struggle in Namibia, which has been governed as a direct colony of South Africa since the end of World War I, has also advanced.

In the wake of the South African pullback from southern Angola, SWAPO guerrillas operating from bases in that country stepped up their actions against the South African occupation forces in Namibia. SWAPO's political influence among the Namibian population also increased during the year.

In face of this mounting resistance, Pretoria adopted a two-sided approach to protect its vast political and economic interests in the territory.

It strengthened its military forces in the colony and carried out a mass campaign of terror against the civilian population, particularly in the north, a traditional area of SWAPO support. Since June, between 40,000 and 50,000 villagers were uprooted, some of them being routinely tortured.

The other side of Pretoria's strategy involves the phony "constitutional" talks being staged in Windhoek between white

officials and African tribal chiefs. On August 18, the participants announced plans for the establishment of a "multiracial" regime that would supposedly lead the country to independence by the end of 1978. SWAPO, which refused to take part in the talks, rejected the scheme as another attempt by Pretoria to isolate SWAPO and perpetuate South African domination.

### Under the Heel of Apartheid

The most massive Black struggles of the year erupted in the imperialist bastion of South Africa.

The first student protests that began in the Black city of Soweto June 16 were specifically directed against the imposition of Afrikaans, the language of the Boer section of the white population, as a language of instruction in some Black schools.

The language issue, however, was only a detonator that touched off a deep rage among the Black population as a whole against the entire system of apartheid.

South African society is based on the domination and exploitation of nearly 22 million Blacks<sup>2</sup> by a white population of only 4.3 million.

Although Blacks provide the bulk of the labor, whites own virtually the entire wealth of the country, which has a highly industrialized economy. About 87 percent of South Africa's entire land area is officially allocated for whites, while Africans can only own land in the overcrowded reserves, called Bantustans.

The conditions in the reserves, where between one-third to one-half of the African population lives, are wretched. Since very little of the land is cultivable, malnutrition is endemic. In the Transkei, Pretoria's "showcase" Bantustan, about 40 percent of African children die before the age of ten. Employment in the reserves is almost nonexistent, forcing the inhabitants to seek work on a migrant labor basis in "white" South Africa.

In the urban areas, where about one-third of all Africans live, the conditions are little better. Soweto and the other Black townships are nothing but overcrowded and segregated slums.

Blacks have virtually no rights. The all-encompassing system of apartheid controls every aspect of their lives, regulating where they can live and work, how much they can be paid and for what jobs, and whom they can and cannot marry. Strikes by Africans are banned and African trade unions are not recognized. The Vorster regime has at its disposal a vast array of

2. South Africa's Black population is composed of 18.6 million Africans, 2.4 million Coloureds, and 746,000 Indians. The Coloureds are descendants of the early white settlers, Malay slaves, and native Khoikhoi, San, and other African peoples.

repressive legislation, which is enforced by large and heavily armed police and military forces. Each year, one in every four Black adults is arrested.

On October 26, the apartheid regime launched a further attack on African rights when it declared the Transkei "independent." The more than 3 million Africans assigned to the Transkei, whether they live there or not, were denied their South African citizenship on the claim that they were "citizens" of the Transkei.

Much of the active Black opposition to racist rule had been suppressed after the 1960 massacre at Sharpeville, in which sixty-nine Blacks were gunned down.

In the late 1960s and early 1970s, however, a new layer of Black militants emerged. They formed organizations like the South African Students Organisation (SASO), the Black People's Convention (BPC), and the South African Student Movement (SASM). They advocated the concept of Black Consciousness, condemning all apartheid institutions and stressing Black self-reliance and the organization of Blacks themselves to attain their liberation.

In addition, the growing proletarianization and urbanization of Blacks, as well as the achievement of independence in Mozambique and Angola, were factors that reinforced the combativity of the Black population.

### Soweto

Tsietsi Mashinini, a central leader of the Soweto uprisings, described how the first student protests were organized, in an interview he gave after going into exile (see *Intercontinental Press*, November 15, p. 1632).

Mashinini was president of the SASM branch at Morris Isaacson High School. Explaining that "we were sick and tired," he said, "I called the students together, and on Wednesday a week before June 16, we talked about it."

He then contacted student leaders in other high schools and junior secondary schools in Soweto. On Wednesday, June 16, he said, "we went on the streets demonstrating. We were very peaceful all the time and there were just placards denouncing Afrikaans as another method of oppression."

The 10,000 protesting students were confronted by a group of police, who fired directly into the crowd, killing at least two students, one of them only seven years old.

The murders of the students enraged the entire Black population of Soweto, many of whom took to the streets to express their anger against the apartheid regime. In the days that followed, the protests escalated as Black youths attacked all symbols of white authority, such as schools, "Bantu administration" offices, government-run beer halls, and the police.

The sentiment expressed in these uprisings was clearly against the entire apar-



theid system. One common slogan shouted by protesting youths was "Amandhla!" (power).

In an effort to teach the Black population a "lesson," the police, acting on the direct orders of Minister of Justice, Police, and Prisons James T. Kruger, attacked the demonstrators in force, using helicopters, armored cars, automatic rifles, and machine guns. According to the official death toll, 174 Blacks were killed in the first few days of the Soweto uprisings. Estimates by Black community figures placed the number several times higher. By November, the official toll had climbed to nearly 400.

In face of this fierce repression, the protests continued to spread to other parts of the country. By August 20, more than seventy Black townships, near every major city in the country, had been swept by the massive unrest. From Pretoria and Johannesburg to Durban, Port Elizabeth, and Cape Town, Black youths stood up to the police bullets to demand their liberation.

The strength and determination expressed by Blacks in these uprisings forced the regime to make a few token concessions in an effort to defuse the Black anger. The ruling on the use of Afrikaans in Black schools was scrapped. Urban Africans, except for those in Cape Province, were told that they could now buy or build their own homes in the townships without first becoming "citizens" of the Bantustans, as Pretoria had previously insisted.

Pretoria coupled these token measures with a broad witch-hunt against Black organizations and individuals. By the end of October, more than 4,600 Blacks were known to have been arrested, including more than 400 held under the country's various security laws, which allow indefinite detention without trial. Virtually every Black leader in South Africa known to the regime was seized in Vorster's dragnet.

Rather than beating the young Black militants into submission, the witch-hunt became another issue around which the students rallied.

One notable feature of the mass protests was the growing unity among the different sectors of the Black community. The apartheid regime has long tried to divide Indians and Coloureds from Africans by giving them a few more rights and by allowing them to hold more skilled jobs than Africans. But more and more young Coloureds and Indians have recognized that they too are part of the oppressed Black majority and have joined hands with Africans to fight against the common enemy.

In the Western Cape, where most Coloureds live, Coloured students staged boycotts of classes and held demonstrations in Cape Town itself. At the University of Durban-Westville, an all-Indian university in Natal Province, 1,500 stu-

dents staged a boycott of classes in solidarity with the Soweto uprisings.

### **Black Workers**

One of the most important developments during the protests was the massive participation of the Black working class.

The first general strike of August 23-25 was called by the Soweto Students Representative Council (SRC) to demand, among other things, the release of Black political prisoners. About 70-80 percent of Soweto's 320,000 workers joined the strike, crippling most economic activity in Johannesburg for three days.

The second general strike, staged September 13-15, was even more successful. The response of the Soweto workers was as enthusiastic as during the August strike.

The strike spread to the Black townships of Alexandra and Thembisa, also near Johannesburg, as well as to Cape Town, where Coloureds form the majority of the working class. According to the Cape Chamber of Industries, the strike in Cape Town was 50 percent effective, although in some parts of the city up to 90 percent of the workers stayed away.

The two general strikes called by the Soweto students showed that it is possible, given mass support, to organize open actions against the regime despite the constant repression. Although most of the known Black leaders were jailed, a new layer of young militants, many of them unknown to the police, were able to take the lead and strike a serious blow at the apartheid regime.

As a result of its role in organizing the protests, the SRC has become a powerful political force in Soweto. In a November 18 dispatch from Johannesburg, *New York Times* correspondent John F. Burns referred to the SRC as being "almost a shadow government."

The success of the general strikes and the ability of Black youths to continue organizing protests has heightened the confidence and militancy of the Black population as a whole. The strike, moreover, demonstrated the political power of the Black working class, now more than 7 million strong.

The Black protests that have rocked the country for months are a milestone in the South African freedom struggle. They mark the beginning of a new—and massive—stage in the long fight to overthrow the hated system of apartheid.

Given the social weight of the Black working class, the high level of industrialization, and the central role that national oppression plays in the capitalist economy, the prospects for this struggle flowing over into a socialist revolution are great.

### **'U.S. Out of Southern Africa!'**

The mass Black protests in South Africa and the likelihood of even greater ferment

in the future have American financiers and government strategists extremely worried. Washington has an important stake in the maintenance of white minority rule in South Africa.

More than 300 American companies have about \$1.6 billion directly invested in South African industries. Indirect American investments in South Africa, mostly in the form of bank loans to private and government-run companies, now surpass \$2 billion.

Nonmilitary exports to South Africa from the United States totaled \$1.3 billion in 1975, while imports stood at about half a billion dollars and are rapidly rising. The United States is now Pretoria's third largest trading partner.

South Africa, moreover, produces 60 percent of the capitalist world's gold supply and has many scarce minerals considered of strategic value by Washington. The country also occupies a key position overlooking the vital shipping route around the Cape of Good Hope.

To protect these interests and to prop up the Vorster regime, millions of dollars worth of American aircraft and other equipment suitable for military purposes was sold to Pretoria.

With the rise in the freedom struggle in southern Africa during the past year, Washington has stepped up its support to the Vorster regime on the political level as well.

Kissinger's "shuttle diplomacy" is designed to defuse the struggle in Namibia and Zimbabwe in order to buy time for white minority rule in South Africa itself. In addition, Kissinger's visit to South Africa in September was an immediate political boost for the Vorster regime, strengthening its diplomatic position internationally and allowing it to show South Africa's Black masses that it has powerful allies.

In response to the growing involvement of American imperialism in southern Africa, the National Student Coalition Against Racism sponsored a conference in Boston November 19-21. About 1,100 students and youth participated. They expressed their solidarity with the Black struggle in South Africa and their determination to get the "U.S. Out of Southern Africa."

The conference called for the holding of national actions on March 25 and 26 against American complicity with racist rule.

Tsietsi Mashinini, who addressed the conference, cited the American anti-Vietnam War movement as an example of how Americans can aid the Black struggle in South Africa. "When America pulled out of Vietnam," he said, "it was because inside America there were a lot of campaigns about what was happening in Vietnam. We appeal to the people of America to help us to get America out of our country." □



## China After Mao

By Les Evans

Nineteen seventy-six was a year of almost dizzying changes and convulsions in China. In twelve months' time, the three top leaders of the country disappeared from the scene: Premier Chou En-lai, Marshal Chu Te, and finally Mao Tsetung himself. Teng Hsiao-p'ing rose to new prominence and power, was cast back into the depths for a second time in a decade, but by year's end had the satisfaction of seeing those who had accused him purged in turn. Within weeks of Mao's death, the infallible chairman's closest associates were in jail and many of the policies that bore his name were under sweeping attack—all in the name of Mao Tsetung Thought.

These dramatic shifts at the top unfolded against a background of economic stagnation, mounting labor discontent, and the eruption of the first mass antigovernment demonstrations in the twenty-year history of the People's Republic of China.

### 'Dare to Scale the Heights'

The New Year's editorial, run jointly by the Peking *People's Daily*, *Red Flag*, and the *Liberation Army Daily*, summed up the Maoist line of the last decade. Its themes provide a useful yardstick to measure the extent of the policy changes after the tyrant's death.

The editorial asserted that "the principal contradiction in socialist society is the contradiction between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie." This was the slogan advanced by Mao during the Cultural Revolution of the 1960s to brand his opponents in the party leadership and dissenters among the masses as "class enemies."

The "revolution in literature and art" under the direction of Chiang Ch'ing, Mao's wife, was hailed as having "resulted in an efflorescence of creative work."

On economic construction, the editorial reaffirmed Mao's line that human will power, under tight party control, was the principal productive force and could substitute for technology or the extension of the revolution to the advanced capitalist countries. "The Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution is a powerful motive force for the development of the social productive forces in our country," it said, quoting Mao. It added that "socialism" should be built "independently and with the initiative in our own hands, through self-reliance." In support of this perspective of building "socialism in one country," a 1965

poem of Mao was cited, whose concluding lines declared: "Nothing is hard in this world if you dare to scale the heights."

The editorial also announced the beginning of the Fifth Five-Year Plan. After Mao's death, however, it was revealed that the plan drafted under Mao's auspices had been scrapped. Now, a year after the plan was to have begun, no targets have yet been announced.

### Chou En-lai Dies, Hua Kuo-feng Is Promoted, and Richard Nixon Returns to China

On January 8, Chou En-lai, the country's premier since the founding of the People's Republic, died of cancer in Peking at the age of seventy-eight. His eulogy was delivered by Teng Hsiao-p'ing, who had been acting premier during the last year of Chou's illness and was expected to succeed him as head of government. But on February 7, in the first public sign that Teng was in trouble with Mao, the government made the surprise announcement that Hua Kuo-feng and not Teng had been appointed premier.

At the beginning of the year, Hua was an obscure bureaucrat, only recently elevated to the post of head of the secret police after a career as a provincial administrator. His main qualification seemed to be his zeal in helping Mao root out Lin Piao's followers in the purge of 1971-72. Chosen for his loyalty to the chairman, his first act after Mao's death would be to jail Mao's widow and close associates.

On February 21, in one of the more bizarre episodes of a year filled with extraordinary twists and turns, a Chinese aircraft was permitted to land in California, where it picked up former President Richard Nixon and carried him to Peking. There the despised war criminal and chief of the Watergate burglars, who had been driven in disgrace from the White House, was accorded a triumphal welcome. At the time, there was much ironic comment in the press at the fact that Nixon's last friend in the world should prove to be Mao Tsetung.

### The Tien An Men Demonstration and the Fall of Teng Hsiao-p'ing

The death of Chou precipitated a new purge in the leadership of the Chinese CP. Chou had been instrumental in persuading Mao to "rehabilitate" many of the veteran party bureaucrats and administrators

disgraced in the Cultural Revolution and accused of seeking the "restoration of capitalism." Most prominent of these was Teng Hsiao-p'ing, former party general secretary and Liu Shao-ch'i's chief lieutenant, who had been labeled "China's Khrushchev Number Two" in 1966 and stripped of his party posts. Teng was returned to office in 1973. At the Fourth National People's Congress in January 1975, he was given the concurrent posts of vice-premier of the government, vice-chairman of the CCP, and chief of staff of the armed forces.

Declining economic growth in two consecutive years—1973-74—evidently led Chou and Teng to raise some criticisms of Mao's economic strategy in the inner councils of the party. At the Fourth National People's Congress in 1975 Chou had projected the slogan of the "Four Modernizations," in agriculture, industry, national defense, and science and technology. He claimed a growth rate of 10 percent a year for the decade 1964-74 and projected the building of a "relatively comprehensive industrial and economic system" by 1980. While raising the hope of future successes, Chou did not mention that growth had in fact fallen to 7.5 percent in 1973 and dropped to 7 percent in 1974, with some key sectors such as steel completely stagnant with no growth at all.

While Chou did not say whether his ambitious expansion plan was to be achieved by Mao's methods or by some other means, the "Four Modernizations" was widely taken by the Chinese masses as a promise of improvement in their living standards, frozen since the beginning of the Cultural Revolution a decade earlier.

The revolution of rising expectations among the working class exploded in a general strike in the industrial city of Hangchow in the summer of 1975, which was quelled by 10,000 troops of the People's Liberation Army.

After Chou's death, the slogan of modernization came under direct attack by Mao, and Teng was singled out as its surviving proponent. By March, Teng was under fire in the Maoist press for seeking to revive the Soviet-style industrial planning he had been associated with before the Cultural Revolution.

Specifically, he was accused of seeking large-scale imports of Western technology, criticizing the massive cutbacks in education, opposing the deportation of youth to the countryside, favoring wage raises and material incentives to revive the sluggish economy, proposing the technical modernization of the army, and disparaging the rigid censorship in art and literature by Chiang Ch'ing.

Teng was never permitted to state his own views, but the program attributed to him, and by implication to Chou, seemed to promise the masses some improvement over the state of affairs under Mao. As a

result, the campaign against Teng backfired.

The workers and students of Peking took the occasion of the annual Ching Ming festival at the beginning of April, the traditional period for honoring the dead, to gather in Tien An Men Square to bring wreaths and poems in memory of Chou En-lai. Thousands of people gathered in the square daily, beginning April 1. On April 4, in a crowd of tens of thousands, banners were raised attacking Chiang Ch'ing as a new "Dowager Empress" and a Chinese Indira Gandhi. Plainclothes cops were beaten when they tried to arrest impromptu orators who addressed the crowd.

On April 5, the government gave the order to remove the wreaths and posters. An angry crowd gathered that swelled at its height to more than 100,000. The demonstrators held the square throughout the day, battling police and militia, burning official vehicles, and even invading a militia barracks on the square and razing it to the ground.

After dark, tens of thousands of troops were assembled around Tien An Men and the last of the demonstrators—said to number 3,000—were assaulted with clubs and rifle butts and arrested. The Peking press reported that a "public trial" was held in mid-May at which two participants were sentenced to death and three received terms of thirty years at hard labor.

On April 7, Teng Hsiao-p'ing was summarily stripped of all his government and party posts and denounced as a "capitalist restorationist," although he was not accused of having organized the protests. In the weeks that followed, the regime mobilized the whole of its repressive forces for a house-to-house interrogation of the entire population of the city, in which hundreds of people were arrested for having participated in the demonstration.

Similar protests were reported, though on a smaller scale, in cities throughout China. The regime retaliated with arrests and with staged counterdemonstrations, though these were unusually small and dispirited events.

#### The Death of Mao

Throughout the summer the Chinese press sought to prepare the country for the imminent death of Mao. The chairman stopped receiving foreign visitors, and photographs were published showing him more and more enfeebled. His death came on September 9. It became the occasion for an unprecedented outpouring of messages of condolence from world imperialism and from a host of military dictatorships around the globe. Foreign Maoists eulogized the dictator in the most extravagant terms. The American *Monthly Review* wrote: "Mao was undoubtedly the greatest Marxist and revolutionary since Lenin, and history may in time rate him even higher. . . . Mao's greatness . . . lay

precisely in his uncompromising commitment to revolution." Henry Kissinger made a more accurate assessment in praising Mao for having "created a dura-



MAO TSETUNG

ble relationship [with Washington] based on mutual confidence and perception of common interests."

The mourners, as reported by Peking, included the shah of Iran, Indira Gandhi, President Marcos of the Philippines, the king of fascist Spain, and the military dictatorships of Indonesia, Brazil, Argentina, and Chile. The Pinochet junta in Chile, in fact, declared three days of national mourning with flags at half mast. Chile was granted a loan upwards of \$50 million by Peking in 1975.

#### The Fall of Chiang Ch'ing and the Dismantling of 'Maoism'

Mao's body was hardly cold before the bureaucracy moved to smash his closest collaborators and repudiate as "fascist" policies previously associated with his name.

On October 6 or 7, four top party leaders, all Politburo members, were placed under house arrest. These included Chiang Ch'ing, Mao's widow; Wang Hung-wen, elevated by Mao to the post of second party vice-chairman at the Tenth Party Congress in 1973; Chang Ch'un-ch'iao, chief army political commissar and Mao's principal lieutenant in the key industrial city of Shanghai during the Cultural Revolution; and Yao Wen-yuan, the director of China's communications media and the country's leading journalistic exponent of Mao's thought since 1965 (Yao is believed to be Mao's son-in-law). Mao's nephew, Mao Yuan-hsin, was also arrested.

On October 12 it was announced that Hua Kuo-feng had been appointed chair-

man of the Chinese Communist party, though who appointed him remained a mystery as the Central Committee had not met, and after purges and deaths only twelve members remained of the twenty-one-member Politburo elected three years before.

Beginning October 15, before the press had reported the arrests or offered any explanation of them, party-organized demonstrations began in cities across the country to condemn the "gang of four" for their "towering crimes," which remained unspecified. In the week that followed, some 50 million people took part in these rallies, which were marked by a festive spirit and a general mood of jubilation at the fall of the "four dogs."

The official accusations were revealed in stages. The first step was to establish a lynch-mob atmosphere, under slogans such as "Crush the heads of the four dogs," and "Crush and strangle the gang of four." Next came character assassination, with repeated press references to the four as "maggots" and "dog turds." At the end of October the four were charged with seeking to usurp party and state power," but no details were offered. On October 24, the Peking papers declared a general anathema on Mao's colleagues:

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

But the four *had* been in power, as Mao's agents, for the last decade. Were these charges intended to be understood to apply to Mao also? The new regime has insisted that this is not the case, and that Hua is the loyal executor of Mao's legacy. But in the name of defending Mao from his wife and friends, Hua's government turned in mid-November to an indictment of the "gang of four" for the *policies* they have carried out since the beginning of the Cultural Revolution. Since almost without exception the prominent figures in Hua's camp were themselves either purged or attacked as "capitalist-roaders" in the Cultural Revolution, this can hardly be seen as anything short of a repudiation of the line of the last decade, if not yet of "Maoism."

In the campaign against Teng Hsiao-p'ing at the beginning of the year, he was accused by Mao and his coterie of "an attempt to induce the masses and cadres to busy themselves in production and in their professional work to the point of forgetting class struggle and the dictatorship of the proletariat" (*People's Daily*, February 18). The main slogan of the anti-Teng campaign was to prevent a "right-deviationist attempt to reverse the verdicts of the Cultural Revolution."

In mid-November the "gang of four" was accused of sabotaging the economy by substituting "empty revolutionary slogans"



for serious economic construction, of having for years persecuted and removed from office skilled administrators, of wasting workers' time with denunciation campaigns, of suppressing divergent views in literature and art, and of opposing large-scale importations of foreign technology in the name of "self-reliance." The November 14 *People's Daily* summed it up this way: "The 'gang of four' advocated metaphysics frantically. . . they opposed revolution to production, politics to economy, class struggle to the struggle for production, and the dictatorship of the proletariat to socialist construction. They were against promoting production and construction."

These were not accusations relating to the period of Mao's final illness, or to conspiratorial activities after his death. Behind the "gang of four," there stood the shadow of Mao Tsetung.

The key to this seemingly arcane dispute between bureaucratic factions over the relative priority to be given to "class struggle" and "production" is to be found in the performance of the Chinese economy and the growing challenge from the Chinese masses to the privileged status of their bureaucratic overlords.

At issue are two conflicting strategies for the utopian goal of building a self-sufficient industrial economy in backward China in isolation from the rest of the world. Both sides reject the prospect of worldwide revolution, including in the industrially advanced countries, as well as the perspective of an international socialist society. Their prime concern is to retain the power and privileges of the bureaucratic caste they represent.

Rejecting the prospect of revolution in the industrially advanced nations, which could provide the technological aid China needs to build its economy, the bureaucracy has evolved two equally nonmaterialist and unworkable "solutions" to the problem of development: Mao's, which goes back to the position of Chinese ruling-class traditionalists of the nineteenth century, is to shut out the world as Japan once did and rely entirely on China's own limited resources. And that of Teng Hsiao-p'ing, Hua, and formerly Liu Shao-ch'i, which aims at persuading the capitalist West to supply the technology to build "socialism" in China.

Domestically, the bureaucracy as a whole faces a continual threat from the Chinese working class. It needs by one means or another to defuse mass anger at the great disparity in living standards between ordinary workers and high government officials. In a rare admission before his fall, Teng Hsiao-p'ing revealed last year that he and some 100 other top government officials have salaries of 400 yuan a month (1 yuan equals US\$.52) plus expense accounts, while an average factory worker earns 60 yuan. An unskilled worker or a peasant earns only 30 yuan a month. The bureaucratic tops thus are paid thirteen times as much as the average

pay of the great majority of the population, not even counting their expense accounts, special stores, and fringe benefits.

This kind of inequality is explosive, particularly if in addition the masses see no improvement in their standard of living. Mao's strategy, developed in the Great Leap Forward of 1958-59 and in the Cultural Revolution of 1966-69, sought to meet this challenge by rejecting concessions to the masses and by subordinating industrial growth to firm party ideological and police controls over them. In this effort Mao drew heavily on the reactionary antiurban, anti-intellectual ideology of the old ruling class, which still found echoes among the more backward sectors of the peasantry.

After the Cultural Revolution, the veteran party bureaucrats did not overtly challenge Mao's peculiarly "Chinese" adaptation of Stalinism while he lived. Like Stalin he remained the dictatorial arbiter of the bureaucracy as a whole and its symbol of centralized power. But the economy he bequeathed to his heirs was in trouble, and these men, largely trained in the Soviet Union or by Soviet economic advisers in the 1950s, are now dismantling Mao's projects and turning back to an economic policy more closely modeled on that of the Soviet Union. This policy, of course, has been denounced by Mao and by Maoists around the world for a decade as "capitalism." But this was never a serious "theory" anyway, merely an epithet.

A few figures will give an indication of the gravity of the situation Hua now faces.\* Between 1949 and 1960, China's economy grew at a rate of some 22 percent a year. Chou's claim of a 10 percent annual growth rate for 1964-74 is probably true, but highly misleading. Much of this "growth" was merely recovery from the disastrous declines in production in the aftermath of the Great Leap. For example, steel production in 1960 reached 18.7 million tons, according to the official figures, which were scaled down from previous higher claims. This key economic indicator did not come close to this level again until 1970, a decade later, when steel production got back up to 17.8 million tons. It hit 25.5 million tons in 1973, but instead of growing in 1974, fell back to 23.8 million tons, a 7 percent decline. In 1975, steel output was still below the 1973 level.

\* The statistics used in this section come entirely from Chinese government sources. The figures for industrial output and growth for the period 1949-60 come from the State Statistical Bureau pamphlet *Ten Great Years: Statistics of the Economic and Cultural Achievements of the People's Republic of China* (Peking: Foreign Languages Press, 1960). No comprehensive statistics have been published in China since 1960. Selected output totals and growth rates have been revealed in occasional articles in *Hsinhua*, the government press service, since 1971.

Coal production, which reached 280 million tons in 1960, was 430 million tons in 1975, fifteen years later, about a 3 percent a year overall increase. In the meantime, population had grown from 650 million to 800 million, so that on a per capita basis growth has been minimal.

In agriculture, Chou En-lai at the 1975 People's Congress claimed a 4 percent a year growth for the whole period since liberation, compared to a 2 percent a year growth in population. This is a slim margin. But his figures use 1949 as a base figure, a year of civil war when farming was disrupted. A more accurate figure is to compare the 1957 harvest of 185 million tons of grain to the 1975 harvest, a record high of 280 million. The increase is only 3 percent a year, providing a margin only half of Chou's claim.

Two special sore points for the bureaucracy are Mao's wage freeze and his cutbacks in education, both highly unpopular measures. In the first decade of the People's Republic, according to a report by Chou En-lai in 1959, wages for factory workers more than doubled. But in China today, wages have been frozen since 1965, almost twelve years, the whole working lifetime of millions of young workers. And frozen with the wages is the inegalitarian wage structure. (Actually, the Cultural Revolution brought a wage cut in the form of eliminating bonuses that were a regular part of workers' income. The rough amount of the bonuses was restored as wage "raises" in 1971-73, bringing wages back up to the 1965 level.)

The second area is even more dramatic. According to official statistics, college enrollment in China in 1958-59 was 660,000. It rose to 900,000 in 1960-61. This is still a tiny number in China's vast population. But figures released by the Chinese press at the beginning of this year reveal that after a decade of Mao's Cultural Revolution, college enrollment today is only 500,000, the level of twenty years ago.

On top of this is the festering sore of the 12 million educated young people and intellectuals forcibly deported to the countryside. This is both a form of disguised unemployment and, for many, a form of punitive exile from the volatile cities.

As the year closed an uneasy regime sought to get the economy back on the rails, promising a long-suffering population an end to some of the worst features of Mao's rule. Undoubtedly Hua will have a certain period of grace. But a return to the Soviet government's pattern of "material incentives" and priority on production quotas instead of agitational speeches will neither meet the expectations of the Chinese masses nor miraculously permit the construction of "socialism in one country" within the borders of backward China. Hua's hope that Washington will come to his aid in exchange for help in opposing revolutions in the colonial world is equally unfounded. □



## Workers' Rights, Living Standards Hit Hard

By Tony Thomas

Despite the reputations of Australia and New Zealand as "lucky countries," the lot of workers and oppressed people over the past year was similar to that of their sisters and brothers in the other imperialist countries hit by the world capitalist crisis. The year was marked by cutbacks in social services, attacks on the standard of living and democratic rights of working people, and the utilization of racist policies against nonwhites and immigrant workers.

Both countries began the year with governments led by capitalist parties that had defeated Labor party governments in elections held at the end of 1975.

In Australia there was a nationwide swing of votes—including in working-class districts—from the Labor party to the Liberal party, in face of the Labor party's inability to protect the workers from rising prices and growing unemployment.

Despite promises of full employment and protection against inflation, the reformist Labor party's refusal to go beyond the bounds imposed by the capitalist system meant that Australian workers faced double-digit inflation and unemployment that reached 300,000 before the elections.

While the capitalist Liberal party took advantage of discontent with the Labor party, in office its policy was to intensify attacks on the working class and to cut back social services that had been provided under the Labor regime.

Soon after Prime Minister Malcolm Fraser's Liberal government took office, he and his party became the target of growing working-class opposition. A campaign statement of the Trotskyist Socialist Workers party (SWP) in the May 1 state elections in New South Wales pointed to growing opposition to the Liberals' "conscious, planned campaign to cut wages, slash welfare, eliminate many forms of public services and maintain high rates of unemployment. . . ."

Labor won the New South Wales elections, establishing their first government in that state in eleven years. An indication of the ferment in the working class was the vote—between 2.3 and 3.2 percent—received by three SWP candidates in these elections. The SWP supported a Labor victory, while calling for socialist policies to solve the workers' problems.

The first nationwide general strike in Australian history took place July 12. More than half of the country's workers participated in the strike called by the Australian Council of Trade Unions



FRASER

(ACTU) to protest the Liberal government's moves to dismantle Medibank—the national health-care plan established by the previous Labor government. Workers were protesting not only the elimination of Medibank, but the Fraser government's projection of a "horror budget" to slash other social programs.

As in other countries of the capitalist world, the struggle for democratic rights against government spying and persecution of working-class organizations continued in Australia.

On April 20, Lisa Walter announced that she had resigned from the Australian Security Intelligence Organisation (ASIO), which had placed her as an agent in the SWP, and was cooperating with the SWP in exposing the secret police outfit. The SWP's actions in the women's, labor and anti-imperialist movements had convinced her that the Trotskyist program represented the interests of Australia's working people.

The Socialist Labor League, Australian followers of British sectarian Gerry Healy, carried Healy's campaign of slander against the world Trotskyist movement a step further by launching physical attacks against the SWP and other groups on the left.

The most serious incident was an as-

sault on members of the SWP and the Spartacist League outside an SLL rally on October 17. Members of both the SWP and the Spartacist League were seriously beaten by SLL goons because they tried to sell their literature outside the meeting. A wide range of student, left, labor, and Black activists condemned the Healyites' thuggery.

### Racist Offensive in New Zealand

New Zealand also saw attacks on the working masses. The hardest hit were the thousands of Pacific Island workers who form a reserve labor supply for New Zealand imperialism.

Immediately after he came into office, National party Prime Minister Robert D. Muldoon cut off immigration for two weeks, and announced that his aim was to restrict the influx of nonwhite immigrants and cut total immigration to 5,000 a year.

Muldoon aimed his attack on Pacific Islander immigrants who had "overstayed" their initial permits. In October, *Socialist Action* (newspaper of the Socialist Action League, the New Zealand Trotskyists) reported that more than half of the 4,647 "overstayers" who registered for permanent residence in New Zealand would be deported under Muldoon's program.

Police raids in hotels and homes, round-ups in the streets, illegal jailings, and general persecution of the Islanders marked the campaign. *Socialist Action* noted that this was "part of the government's efforts to turn the Island community into New Zealand's untouchables, so as to better heap the burdens of the economic crisis upon them and scapegoat them for the shortcomings of the system." They pointed out the racist character of the raids that "were directed only against non-Europeans, although there are also thousands of Europeans in New Zealand illegally."

Organizations opposing the crackdown included the Federation of Labour, the Auckland and Wellington Trades Councils, the main organizations of the Maoris (New Zealand's original inhabitants), and a number of regional organizations of the Labour party.

A sign of the strong opposition to the government's racist policies by workers and youth was the May 28 demonstration of 10,000 against the visit of New Zealand's football team to South Africa. □

## Crisis of Stalinism Sharpens in East Europe

By Gerry Foley

In 1976, the world capitalist crisis gave an additional push to the deepening crisis of the Stalinist regimes in Eastern Europe. In Poland, it played an important role in touching off a new mass workers' rebellion against the bureaucracy.

The most advanced model of reform in the context of bureaucratic rule, the Tito regime in Yugoslavia, continued to lose luster rapidly. The fading of hopes that the regime can solve the country's problems is reflected by steadily hardening bureaucratic repression. The year opened with the trial of a lawyer accused of spreading false information about the country (in his defense of a man accused of disparaging its economic development), and with the trial of a number of ethnic Albanians accused of seeking to break from the Yugoslav federation to join Albania.

Since Yugoslavia has the most extensive relations with capitalism, it threatens to suffer most from the deepening capitalist economic crisis. This crisis has a direct impact on Yugoslavia since it exports a considerable proportion of its work force to capitalist countries, where unemployment is on the rise.

The Yugoslav Stalinist regime has been unable even to narrow the economic gap between the different republics in the federation, which are on very disparate levels of development. Despite heavy federal investment in the more backward republics, this gap is growing. So, too, are national antagonisms among the various nationalities of the federation. The Albanian minority represents perhaps the most explosive problem.

In 1976, Albania itself showed signs of becoming an active factor of instability in the Balkans. The Hoxha regime, which claims to be building socialism in isolation in a tiny mountain country of less than three million people, is an extreme example of bureaucratic narrow nationalism. At the Albanian CP congress in November, Hoxha announced that he had foiled a coup by an opposing faction. Shifts have been taking place in the leadership. There are persistent reports of a developing rift with Peking that would leave the country totally isolated.

However, the greatest factor of instability in the Balkans at the moment is uncertainty about what will happen after Tito dies. With his latest illnesses, the dictatorship has entered a crisis of mortality similar to the last months before Franco's death in Spain.

Ironically, the most powerful revolutionary explosion that the world capitalist

crisis and the resulting cutbacks in living standards helped to touch off came in a Stalinized workers state, Poland, and not in a capitalist country.

Among other things, rising prices on the world market and sharpening competition in international trade played an important role in convincing the Polish bureaucracy to risk imposing higher prices for food. This decision provoked a spontaneous general strike throughout the country that brought Poland to the verge of insurrection. The Gierk government headed off a full-scale confrontation only by surrendering to the demands of the strikers.

Although the regime's retreat restored the appearance of stability, the Stalinist system has been shaken to its roots. Following the Baltic port rebellions in 1970 the bureaucracy was never able to regain full totalitarian control over the workers in the plants. The June general strike further weakened the bureaucratic grip. For the first time since the establishment of the Stalinist dictatorship, the bureaucrats have had to accept open public opposition.

The Committee to Support Worker Victims of the Repression functions openly. Its leaders are known. It has collected money for the families of workers fired for their participation in the strike. A fourth of the work force at the giant Ursus factory outside Warsaw has signed a public protest against the victimization of their jobmates. Defiance of the dictatorship, which remained diffuse and confined to immediate economic issues after 1970, has taken on political expression.

The most prominent intellectuals and writers in Poland, who head the Committee to Support Worker Victims of the Repression, have given expression to the aspirations of the workers, and they speak in the name of revolutionary principles. For example, in an open letter addressed to the workers jailed and fired, Jerzy Andrzejewski, leading Polish novelist in the postwar period, said: "I want you to know that there are people in Poland who have become immune to the lies, who can still tell truth from falsehood. I want you to know that there are people in this country who see you persecuted workers not only as the defenders of a just cause, but above all as fighters for genuine socialist democracy."

The formation of the Committee to Support Worker Victims of the Repression appears to mark the beginning of the end of the separation between anti-Stalinist intellectuals and the masses of workers. This gap had been widened by the fact

that the government succeeded in smashing the opposition movement of students and intellectuals in 1968 before active opposition developed among the workers.

For a long period, the antibureaucratic feelings of the workers developed under the surface. Their seeming quiescence caused bitterness among the intellectuals and students who found themselves almost alone in 1968 facing Stalinist pogroms. But the rebellions of the 1970s have shown the process that was at work.

The Polish working class has gone through a longer experience of reformist illusions than any other working class in a Stalinized country except in Yugoslavia. The sparkle of the 1956 reforms faded slowly and did not dissipate until after the mid-1960s. Then it took several years for the pressure to build up to an explosion. The glow of the Gierk reforms instituted after the Baltic port rebellions faded much more rapidly than the illusions in Gomulka's liberalism and his "workers councils."

But in this succession of reformist thaws, the Polish workers have had a better chance to gain confidence than their counterparts elsewhere in Eastern Europe. Unlike the workers in other countries where mass antibureaucratic movements developed, the Poles have never been decisively defeated. Now the Polish bureaucracy and its Soviet backers face a confident, battle-hardened proletariat with two decades of continuous experience in struggle. This situation was illustrated graphically in an August 12 dispatch by *New York Times* correspondent Malcolm Browne from the Baltic port of Gdansk. He quoted a shop foreman as saying: "They [the government] can't do anything big without our say-so anymore. They try and we stop work, it's that simple. So we are getting more democracy."

If the workers revolution against the bureaucracy is the most advanced in Poland, the Soviet Union seems to stand at the other end of the spectrum. The fact that the Soviet bureaucracy remains in a relatively strong position in its own country and is able to intervene to prop up the weaker bureaucracies is the biggest obstacle to antibureaucratic revolution in Eastern Europe.

However, the international contradictions of Stalinism have given a lift to the opposition in the Stalinist center. These are expressed today in the attempts of the West European CPs to gain a more democratic image—the development of "Euro-Communism."



This turn on the part of the West European CPs is partially a result of the world economic crisis. The masses that are being radicalized by the capitalist decline are turning toward the traditional working-class parties, including the CP. This process opens the possibility of official or unofficial participation in the government in a number of major European countries for the first time since the post-World War II period.

However, in order to collect the spoils, the CPs have to meet the competition of Social Democratic parties that offer essentially the same program but without the spectre of the totalitarian dictatorship. They also have to reassure new layers historically antagonistic to them.

The lure of new opportunities has led many Stalinist parties in West Europe to criticize some of the violations of democratic rights in East Europe that they covered up for previously.

At the same time, the Kremlin is prepared to allow the West European CPs more leeway for criticism than before. It has hoped that the détente and easing of the Cold War would enable the European CPs to gain influence that would in turn reinforce the détente itself.

The shift in the Kremlin's attitude is particularly noticeable in the case of the Spanish CP. In an article in the February 1974 *Partiinaiia Zhizn*, the Soviet leaders launched a violent attack on the Spanish leadership, which had criticized Moscow for sacrificing the needs of the world working class to its own interests as a great power. A superloyal Stalinist group was even encouraged to split. However, during the preparation of the East Berlin summit of CPs in June 1976, the rift was smoothed over. The Spanish and Italian CP leaders in particular were allowed to be the stars of the affair, upstaging even Brezhnev, despite the fact that in accordance with Stalinist protocol his report was substantially longer.

The Soviet leaders hailed the electoral gains of the Italian CP in the June elections. These gains followed a campaign in which the Italian pro-Moscow Stalinists went so far as to say that the possibilities for building democratic socialism in Italy were safeguarded by membership in NATO.

The tendency for the various national bureaucracies to be pulled apart by different national interests has also weakened the Soviet bureaucracy's grip on the parties and regimes historically dependent on it. For example, the Yugoslav and Romanian regimes have protected parties that go beyond what the Kremlin is prepared to allow in the way of independence, as in the case of the "interior" faction of the Greek CP. They have helped to prevent meetings of European CPs from condemning Peking, even though it openly allies itself with imperialism against the USSR.

The West European CPs' attempts to disassociate themselves from Stalinist repression has resulted in wider recruitment and electoral gains. But it has also



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undermined the dogmatic defenses of Stalinism, including in the USSR.

The French CP's criticism of the persecution of the left-wing Ukrainian dissident Leonid Plyushch was clearly a major factor in winning his release from a psychiatric prison. His exile was a much less grave form of victimization and involved serious problems for the Kremlin. This is the first well-known case since the expulsion of Trotsky in which the Kremlin has allowed a Marxist antibureaucratic fighter to go abroad and make his views known. It is also one of the first cases since the great purges of active collaboration between antibureaucratic fighters in the Stalinist countries and revolutionists in the capitalist world.

Trotskyists played a key role in building the campaign for Plyushch's release. And he in turn, since his ouster, has helped to clarify the nature of the dissident movement and draw left forces into the campaign against bureaucratic repression.

The political defeat for the Kremlin represented by Plyushch's release and the publicizing of his views in the West was followed up by a real shock to the Soviet bureaucracy. In Paris on October 21, Soviet press correspondents could see representatives of the French CP share a public platform with Plyushch and former members of the Dubcek government who were driven into exile by Soviet tanks. They all spoke in support of political prisoners in the Stalinized workers states, including Vladimir Bukovsky in the USSR.

After failing to report this incident in the

USSR for a week, the Soviet authorities finally published a long article by the first deputy minister of justice, responding to the charges of political repression in the USSR. Even then, they did so only in *Literaturnaia Gazeta*, a weekly with a relatively restricted circulation. The tone was extremely violent, but in their arguments the bureaucrats only got themselves further entangled. (See *IP*, November 22, p. 1658.)

Despite the angry reaction of the Soviet bureaucracy, apparently intended as a warning, the French CP's leading intellectual, Jean Elleinstein, went further. He said in a public debate November 24 that the Kremlin had invaded Czechoslovakia because it was afraid of the impact an experiment in democratic socialism would have on its own people.

Nonetheless, the December 3 *Pravda* carried an article pointing with pride to the electoral gains of the French CP.

One of the consequences of the Euro-Communist maneuver is that the pressure of the aspirations of the West European workers for a democratic socialist system is being transmitted into the heart of Stalinism itself.

Since the emergence of Euro-Communism has brought an assist to the hard-pressed antibureaucratic fighters, it would not be surprising if there were a tendency among them to have illusions about how far this "democratic" turn will go. Such illusions are most clearly expressed by the East German poet Wolf Biermann.

Nonetheless, in his first interview in *Der Spiegel* after being deprived of his citizenship in mid-November, Biermann put Euro-Communism in a broader perspective: "This change has had a profound impact on the reality in the German Democratic Republic and on the people there. It also represents the dialectic of a historical process. The Stalinist faction in the GDR both builds socialism and obstructs it—both at the same time. It inspires socialist hopes it does not fulfill."

Biermann was allowed to go on a concert tour of West Germany following a mass campaign that won broad support in the West German labor movement. The formal invitation came from I.G. Metall, the country's biggest union. This campaign started at Bochum University in the Rhineland at a rally against political blacklisting. A CP singer refused to support Biermann's right to perform. In response, socialist students started a campaign to bring Biermann to the university as a symbol of opposition to all political repression.

Once Biermann was in the West, the bureaucracy deprived him of his citizenship. He was a very poor choice of target for such a measure. He is an outspoken defender of Marxism and his views are well-known. It cannot be maintained that the bourgeois forces in West Germany are



friendly to him.

By choosing this way to get rid of Biermann, the East German bureaucracy only highlighted him more as the symbol of the socialist traditions and aspirations of the German working class as a whole. The action also provoked public dissent in

East Germany on a scale unknown since the spontaneous workers rebellion in 1953.

Thus, in 1976, the manifold contradictions of the Stalinist bureaucracy took more acute forms. At the same time, the international struggle for socialism is

beginning more and more to leap over the various walls set up by the bureaucrats. There was clear progress toward developing direct links between the socialist and workers movement in the capitalist countries and the antibureaucratic movement for workers democracy in East Europe. □

## Stalinists and Social Democrats Come to Capitalists' Rescue

# Radicalization Continues to Advance in West Europe

By Gerry Foley

In 1976, the reformist workers parties and reformist-led unions in West Europe succeeded generally in containing or diverting the radicalization of the masses hit by rising unemployment and rising prices.

However, there were indications that in most countries the pressure was continuing to build up, despite the efforts of the Stalinists and Social Democrats. Among the most spectacular of these were two mass mobilizations of up to a million persons each in Athens. The first was for the funeral May 5 of Alekos Panagoulis, hero of the antidictatorial resistance, killed in a suspicious automobile accident. The second was on November 17 to commemorate the 1973 student uprising that dealt a mortal blow to the dictatorship of the colonels.

In Spain, within a few months after the death of Franco in November 1975, the spreading mass upsurge against the dictatorship began to threaten more and more to wash over the Generalissimo's successors. Protests against continued repression and demands for amnesty for political prisoners combined with strikes against the government's attempts to make the workers pay the costs of the international economic crisis. The oppressed Basque workers continued to set the pace in the struggle, and mass mobilizations developed around demands for national rights by the other oppressed nationalities in the Spanish state.

By the latter part of 1976, authoritative voices of American imperialism, such as the *New York Times*, were beginning to express fears that the "transition" regime had lost control of the situation. It was clear that the authorities had been forced to concede a considerable number of de facto democratic rights and that mass mobilizations were developing rapidly on all sorts of fundamental social and political questions, including equal rights for women. But the authorities continued to carry out big repressive operations, and the regime remained basically intact.

The fact that a national general strike could be held November 12 was an

indication of how far the mass mobilization had advanced. But in its limitations it also showed that the reformists were still able to contain the movement.

In 1974, the fall of the Greek and Portuguese dictatorships and the opening up of explosive mass upsurges in these countries prompted capitalist commentators to talk about the danger of "dominoes" falling from one end of the Mediterranean to the other.

In 1976, Portugal and Greece continued to set the tone for the Mediterranean tier. But what they exemplified most strikingly in the past year was the success of the reformist parties in diverting mass upsurges away from socialist revolution.

In Greece, the two Communist parties called on the workers to join in a national union with the bourgeoisie against the threat of "Turkish chauvinism." Thus, they allowed the "de Gaulle of Greece," Premier Constantine Caramanlis, to consolidate his position.

In Portugal, both the CP and SP suffered losses in the April elections, but the two continued to hold a small overall majority.

Soares then made a deal with the MFA, backing a military strongman, General Ramalho Eanes, in the June presidential elections. This decision aroused indignation among the rank and file of the SP, and whole units openly defied the leadership by refusing to campaign for Eanes.

The CP had an opportunity to appeal to the SP ranks to unite around a candidate that would represent the working class. Instead, it tried to make its own deal with Eanes, and only after being publicly rebuffed did it decide to put up its own candidate, Octavio Pato.

But Pato did not really oppose Eanes. The CP continued fundamentally to apply for the position of junior partner to the MFA. Its only objective was to make a show of strength in the elections to gain a stronger hand in the bargain. This did not inspire enthusiasm among the workers. Pato polled under 8%, less than half of what the party got in the legislative elections.

The CP's "direct democracy" demagogy,

followed by its retreats, prepared the way for the bourgeois demagogue Otelo Saraiva de Carvalho, who gained about 16% of the vote, mostly from supporters of the CP and the radicalized petty-bourgeois groups taken in by the "people's power" rhetoric.

The workers showed in every possible way that they did not want to vote for Eanes. Despite the support of all the big parties, given openly or underhandedly, he got only 61% of the vote, with one-quarter of the electorate abstaining. In the industrial center of Setúbal, he failed even to get a majority. The bulk of his vote must have come from the bourgeois parties.

Eanes did support an all-SP government. But he intended this government to function as his instrument. Well-informed capitalist papers explained that the general had forced Soares to take a tougher line on austerity than his cabinet would accept. They began to talk about left-wingers in the SP cabinet being an obstacle to "effective" policy.

Soares was obliged to move to smash the left wing of the SP. The campaign opened before the party congress at the end of October with a series of expulsions. At the congress itself, the left wing was removed from the effective party leadership. In the weeks afterward, the SP labor bodies controlled by the left were dissolved. American officials in Lisbon let it be known that new loans were conditional on Soares bringing his party to heel.

The CP congress in November made it clear that the party had not changed its fundamental line. Speakers at the gathering attacked the SP cabinet, but their attacks were put in a context that showed that as far as they were concerned, all the vices of the government could be cured by including a few CP ministers.

Despite continual setbacks suffered as a result of the policies of the reformist parties, the radicalization in Portugal continues to recede very slowly. In the December 12 municipal elections, the workers parties once again got a majority of the popular vote. The CP, which is not as much identified with the government as

its rival, topped its previous high of April 1975.

In Italy also, the reformists have come to the rescue of a hard pressed bourgeoisie. Here, the CP has gained almost unchallenged leadership of the working class. The SP, compromised by long association with bourgeois governments, has been reduced to a minor role.

In 1976, the bourgeoisie's only viable political instrument, the Christian Democratic party, which has ruled throughout the postwar period, went into crisis. As a Catholic party, it was hit hard by the rise of the women's liberation movement, which challenged the Catholic moral code. Its credibility was eroded by exposures of bribes by Lockheed to high governmental officials. The deepening of the economic crisis showed that the successive Christian Democrat governments had not achieved stable economic development.

The onset of the crisis of the Christian Democrats was marked by the victory of the prodivorce forces in the May 1974 referendum. In 1976, the weekly magazine *Expresso* and the Radical party, a small activist formation, conducted a campaign for a referendum on the right of abortion.

The CP, which has been seeking to improve its relations with the Church, tried to avoid a confrontation on these questions. In an attempt to outflank the CP to the left, the SP took a more aggressive stance. Opinion polls showed the SP gaining as a result, so party leaders decided to use this issue to force a new election, which was held June 20.

The SP failed, in fact, to make any gains. Its objective was too obviously just to gain a better bargaining position for itself in governmental negotiations.

The Stalinists' problem was different. They sought to minimize their gains in the elections, so as not to frighten the bourgeoisie. They achieved this objective. However, the bourgeois parties could not achieve an effective majority without the tacit support of the CP. This relationship came to be known as the "popular front in the corridors."

Before announcing austerity measures on October 1, Premier Giulio Andreotti consulted with top CP economists. The CP, however, was unable to prevent a wave of spontaneous strikes against these steps.

Opposition developed in CP ranks and became so extensive that it was voiced in a muted way by Luigi Longo, the traditional loyal left face of the party leadership.

The Italian and international press began to note that it was becoming possible to see discussions develop in the CP. It began to look as if the "democratic" turn of the CP, its so-called Euro-Communism, was beginning to weaken the Stalinist regime in the party itself.

In nearly all the Mediterranean countries where the bourgeoisie has long been

politically weak, the old reformist workers parties have experienced rapid growth. In 1976, the French CP increased its numbers by more than 100,000. It also carried out a very rapid facelifting.

The French CP, previously considered the most hidebound of the mass CPs,



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abruptly took a turn to making criticisms of the violation of democratic rights in the Soviet bloc.

In one major area, however, the CP remained inflexible. In 1976, the question of the oppressed nationalities in France emerged with considerable force. This was exemplified, above all, by island-wide general strikes in Corsica. But the CP remained resolutely a French patriotic party, devoted to the unity of France.

Throughout this year, an attitude of waiting has dominated the mass movement in France. The workers are hoping for an electoral victory of the popular-front-type coalition of the SP, the CP, and bourgeois liberals to offer better conditions for their struggles. This coalition, the Union of the Left, has shown that it intends to come to the rescue of capitalism in France, like the reformist parties in other Mediterranean countries.

In Northern Europe, the reformist parties have played their role in a different way. At the onset of the economic crisis, SPs controlled most governments. The fact that these parties failed to protect the workers from the effects of the crisis, or even carried out austerity policies on behalf of the bourgeoisie, has led to disillusion among the masses. The result has been a series of gains for the bourgeois parties.

This is particularly true in the case of Great Britain, where the Labour party has carried out a massive attack on workers' living standards by cutting social spending to the bone and refusing to allow wage increases sufficient to compensate for

inflation. The erosion of support for the Labour party has been compounded by the growth of nationalist movements in the smaller nationalities incorporated into the English state, with the result that the party has continued to lose ground to both the Conservative party and the Welsh and Scottish nationalists.

In Sweden, the Social Democratic party lost control of the government for the first time in forty-four years. It lost by a narrow margin. But its defeat had an international impact, since Sweden is the country where the workers have made the greatest social welfare gains.

In West Germany, the SP-liberal government of Helmut Schmidt suffered serious losses, although not enough to force its resignation. But the bourgeoisie Christian Democrats, unlike the right-wing SP leadership, set their sights beyond this election. They ran a violently reactionary campaign against all forms of "collectivism," including extensive social welfare programs. This was coupled with furious red-baiting not only against the CP and new left groups but against the left wing of the Social Democracy itself. The thrust of this campaign was to strengthen repression against the left.

The SP did not combat this offensive, but responded by trying to prove how conservative it was. Schmidt went so far as to present himself as the protégé of President Ford.

In most countries in 1976, attacks on democratic rights increased. These included an agreement by the Council of Europe to abolish the right of asylum in some cases, extensive political blacklisting in Germany, and passage of laws in Greece restricting the rights of trade-union organization and permitting the government to exile political offenders to remote areas of the country.

However, one of the features of the radicalization in the old capitalist centers of Europe is that in none of the hotspots that erupted in the late 1960s and early 1970s has the bourgeoisie decisively reversed the radicalization.

Relatively, the worst setbacks have come in Ireland, because of the weakness of the country vis-à-vis imperialism and the political weaknesses of the traditional nationalist organizations. In 1972, the mass movement in Ireland went into decline. By 1976, it had reached rock bottom. Disillusion with a continuing guerrilla war without perspectives enabled bourgeois figures to create a movement for peace at any cost.

However, the economic decline has begun to undermine the antinationalist coalition government in Dublin. Broad opposition has developed for the first time to new repressive legislation. The attempt to introduce the death penalty for political crimes has been beaten back by the international campaign in defense of the Murrays, the young couple the bourgeoisie selected as a test case. □



## A Year of Repression and Ferment in Asia

By Ernest Harsch

One of the most important chapters of recent history came to a symbolic end this year. On July 2, Vietnam, forcibly divided and barbarically ravaged by French and American imperialism for more than a century, was officially reunited.

In the wake of the withdrawal of American imperialism's army and the collapse of the U.S.-backed Thieu regime in 1975, this measure formalized the extension of political control to the South by the deformed workers state that has existed in the North for two decades.

The political unification of the country, however, presented the Stalinist rulers with a major contradiction. While capitalism was abolished in the North, the economy of the South was still capitalist in nature, although an extremely feeble capitalism.

In keeping with their schema of a two-stage revolution, the Vietnamese Stalinists initially rejected a swift reunification of the country and projected the development of a "prosperous national democratic economy" in the South over a long period. But the maintenance of capitalism did not prove possible. They have now been forced to move toward the completion of the social revolution in the South.

One of the main reasons for the Stalinists' hesitancy and the bureaucratic manner in which the economic measures are being carried out is their fear of an unfettered mobilization of the urban masses and the development of struggles toward workers democracy.

In Cambodia, another country in Indochina that has been successful in driving out imperialism, the new rulers have likewise shown a strong antipathy toward the urban masses. Reports from Cambodian refugees earlier this year said that the forced migration from the cities to the countryside that began in 1975 was continuing. It is believed that about three million city dwellers throughout Cambodia were sent against their will to work in the rural areas.

### Gandhi Sets the Pace

In those countries of Asia still under imperialist domination, repression was the most common feature of political life.

Since the state of emergency that was declared in June 1975, India has become the largest of these countries to come under authoritarian rule. With one sudden blow, Prime Minister Indira Gandhi abolished virtually all democratic rights and imposed dictatorial rule on India's 600

million inhabitants—one-seventh of humanity.

Since the Gandhi regime does not disclose the names or whereabouts of those arrested, it is not known how many persons have been detained since the coup. But even conservative estimates place the number of political prisoners in the tens of thousands. According to the London-based Committee for Justice for Indian Political Prisoners, there are about 200,000.

Even before the state of emergency, the conditions in the jails and prison camps were wretched, and brutality against prisoners was common. In a document submitted to the United Nations in June 1976, the International League for Human Rights charged that the Gandhi regime followed an "official policy" of "torture, brutality, starvation and other mistreatment of prisoners."

Few of the political prisoners have been brought to trial, or even charged. But on October 4, Gandhi began the show trial of George Fernandes, the chairman of the Socialist party of India and a leader of the May 1974 railway strike. Together with twenty-one other defendants, he is accused of having taken part in a "deep-rooted criminal conspiracy" to overthrow the Gandhi regime.

Despite the scale of the repression, there have been signs of rising discontent against Gandhi's rule.

In October, more than 75,000 textile workers in Bombay struck work to protest the slashing of bonus payments by the government and the employers.

There has also been mass resistance in some areas to the regime's policies of forced sterilization and "slum clearance," which have been adopted as means of terrorizing the poorest sectors of the Indian population. An Indian Trotskyist described these revolts in an interview in the November 1 *Intercontinental Press* (p. 1565):

"There was a revolt in Delhi, and some in Maharashtra and in Uttar Pradesh also. . . . In Delhi, when the slum dwellers rebelled against the forced sterilization, the regime kept quiet so that nobody would know of it. But even after they issued a curfew for a number of days, it kept spreading. It was a very big struggle."

In mid-October, police also fired into a crowd of Muslims protesting in Muzaffarnagar against the forced sterilization policy, reportedly killing between 50 and 150 persons.

Sri Lanka, Pakistan, and Bangladesh—three other countries of the Indian

subcontinent—are also ruled by increasingly repressive regimes.

### India's Neighbors

In Sri Lanka, about 2,000 members and sympathizers of the Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna (JVP—People's Liberation Front) remain in the jails of Prime Minister Sirimavo Bandaranaike. They were originally arrested in 1971 after the Bandaranaike regime brutally crushed an uprising led by JVP members and killed thousands of youths.

In November, police fired into a crowd of protesting students in Peradeniya, killing at least one student. The murder ignited a wave of student protests and labor strikes throughout the country, some of which demanded an end to the state of emergency that has been in effect since 1971. Nearly 500,000 workers participated in one of the strike actions. Bandaranaike threatened to take even sterner measures to bring the "indiscipline" under control.

Between 150 and 180 Pakistani tribespeople were reportedly killed by government troops during an uprising in that country's North-West Frontier Province (NWFP) in September. The Bhutto regime has faced considerable unrest in both Baluchistan and the NWFP for several years.

According to Amnesty International, there are about 38,000 political prisoners in Pakistan; in October, a rightist general charged that there were 50,000.

Bangladesh, which won its independence from Pakistan in 1971 after a long and costly liberation struggle, has likewise had its jails filled with political prisoners. In August, the ruling military junta executed Col. Abu Taher, a prominent figure in the independence struggle and a sympathizer of the main opposition party, the Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal (JSD—National Socialist party). Two central leaders of the JSD were sentenced to life imprisonment.

In late November, the Bangladesh regime indefinitely "postponed" the general elections that had been scheduled for February 1977.

### Massacre at Thammasat University

More than three years ago, in October 1973, the students of Thailand demonstrated the political power of the student movement when they led a mass upsurge that toppled the military dictatorship of Thanon Kittikachorn. When the Thai



military moved to regain direct control in October 1976, the student movement was its first target.

Early on the morning of October 6, thousands of police and rightist goons surrounded Thammasat University in Bangkok, where several thousand students were staging protests. In a hail of automatic weapons fire that lasted for four hours, more than 100 students were massacred. Some were beaten to death or lynched by rightist thugs; at least one was burned alive.

During the immediate aftermath of the coup, more than 3,000 persons, mostly students, were arrested. In the weeks that followed, the total number of political arrests climbed to about 5,500, as the junta began rounding up those it deemed "detrimental to national security." Five new detention centers were being built in the Bangkok area alone. Political prisoners have been tortured and beaten and at least eighteen student leaders are thought to have been killed in prison.

A heavy press censorship was imposed. Some newspapers and magazines were shut down. The central labor federation, the Labor Council of Thailand, was abolished and key leaders of the council were arrested. Strikes were banned. When the universities were reopened in November, the teaching of all political theory, "including democratic concepts," was barred. Millions of books and magazines have been burned.

The new military junta, which calls itself the National Administrative Reform Council, made no secret of its support for the American imperialists. Two days after the coup, Thanat Khoman, a civilian adviser to the junta, declared that "Thailand still offers some advantages to the United States. For example, temporary use of our air bases."

The links between the Thai generals and Washington are particularly close. During the Vietnam War, Thailand served as a base for many American bombing raids over Vietnam, Cambodia, and Laos. Many of the Thai officers who staged the coup were American-trained. Since the October 1973 upsurge, the sale of U.S. arms to the Thai military was stepped up, reaching \$89.6 million worth in fiscal 1976, more than the total orders from Thailand in the preceding twenty-five years combined.

#### From Seoul to Jakarta

The dictatorship of Park Chung Hee in South Korea is also heavily armed and financed by Washington.

Under an emergency decree issued in 1975, almost all expression of dissent is banned. It is illegal to criticize Park or his undemocratic constitution. In August, eighteen prominent dissidents, including former President Yun Po Sun and former presidential candidate Kim Dae Jung, were sentenced to severe prison terms for doing just that. One of the most well-

known jailed dissidents is Kim Chi Ha, a poet.

In face of this harsh repression, about 300 students at Seoul National University defied the regime by staging a demonstra-



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tion December 8 to protest Park's bribery of American congressmen and to demand the lifting of the emergency decree.

Park's compatriot in Manila, Philippine dictator Ferdinand Marcos, has also faced resistance to his repressive regime. In one of the largest protests in the Philippines since martial law was declared in 1972, about 3,000 workers and students demonstrated May 1 for an increased minimum wage and the return of the right to strike.

The Marcos regime has admitted holding 4,000 persons without charges. In June, Amnesty International condemned the widespread use of torture against political prisoners in the Philippines.

The situation in other Asian countries was little different:

- Acting in concert, the regimes of Singapore and Malaysia arrested four Malay journalists in June, accusing them of participation in a "communist scheme." A month earlier, the Singapore regime announced that it had arrested seventeen "subversives."

- Amnesty International charged in October that the regime in Taiwan was holding several hundred political prisoners, including Hsieh Ts'ung-min, a prominent editor.

- All universities in Burma were shut down in March after 7,000 students marched through Rangoon, demanding an

end to military rule. Student activist Tin Maung was sentenced to death.

- The Indonesian regime announced December 1 that it had released 2,650 political prisoners who had been in jail since 1965. Many of them are being sent into forced exile on some of Indonesia's outer islands, however. The Jakarta regime admits still holding 29,000 political prisoners, although the real number is thought to be much higher.

#### Japan's 'Watergate'

In partnership with Washington, Japanese imperialism is one of the major props for many of these repressive regimes. In addition, according to a report released by the Bank of Japan in October, Tokyo's share of foreign investments in Asia now exceeds that of the U.S. imperialists. The utilization of Tokyo's growing strength is an important factor in Washington's plans to maintain imperialist economic and political domination of the region.

One sordid aspect of this alliance came to light in February, when officials of the American Lockheed Aircraft Corporation testified that they had paid out a total of \$12.6 million in bribes to Japanese business and political figures between 1958 and 1975 in order to consummate sales of Lockheed planes to Japanese airlines and to the Japanese military.

It was later revealed that some of the bribes were channeled through a New York-based firm of international money dealers that was linked to the Central Intelligence Agency. The CIA, moreover, had had a "working relationship" with rightist gangster Yoshio Kodama, one of Lockheed's agents, since the late 1940s, and had funded a number of Japanese ultrarightist groups as well as the ruling Liberal Democratic party (LDP).

The bribery scandal produced a political uproar throughout Japan. Mass demonstrations, rallies, and strikes were staged to demand full disclosure of everyone connected with the affair. The LDP, which is the only significant bourgeois party in Japan, saw its popular support slip to an all-time low.

As the country entered a general election in December, the Japan Revolutionary Communist League, Japanese section of the Fourth International, called for a vote for the Socialist and Communist parties as a working-class alternative to the bourgeoisie's corrupt LDP regime.

Although the LDP managed to hang on to power after the elections, it was badly shaken. It retained a bare majority of seats in the lower house of parliament only with the support of eight independents. The results were an important indicator of the mass mood.

The American imperialists are keeping a close eye on the situation in Japan, since a downfall of the LDP regime could have profound repercussions not only within Japan, but throughout Asia. □

## Palestinian Masses Knifed in Back by Arab Regimes

By David Frankel

Two big events dominated the Middle East in 1976: the upsurge of the Palestinian masses living under Israeli rule, and the defeat of the Palestinian-Muslim-leftist coalition in Lebanon.

Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin opened up the new year on January 4, 1976, with a threat of war. Warning that "serious developments might result" from the January 12-26 United Nations Security Council debate on the Arab-Israel conflict, Rabin pointedly added that Israel had "sufficient military strength to provide it with room for political maneuver, but possibly we will have to give expression to this [military strength] sooner than many think."

Rabin was responding to the 11-to-1 vote in the Security Council in favor of seating a representative of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) during the Middle East debate. The vote, taken at the insistence of the Syrian regime, was one more step in a diplomatic offensive by the Arab regimes that had left the Israeli state more isolated than at any time in its previous history.

Although the Rabin government reacted by boycotting the debate, the general feeling in Israel was voiced by one journalist who said, "It can already be seen that within a short period Israel will turn from a boycotting state into a boycotted state."

The purpose of the Arab regimes was merely to apply diplomatic pressure for a deal with the Zionist state. But their limited initiative in the United Nations helped to inspire a wholly different type of initiative in the Israeli-occupied West Bank. Barely had the debate in the Security Council ended January 26, when protests against the Israeli occupation broke out in Jerusalem, Nablus, Ramallah, Hebron, Jericho, and other towns.

It soon became apparent that the upsurge on the West Bank was the biggest popular mobilization since the area had been conquered by Israel in 1967. The occupation forces answered the protests with arrests, beatings, curfews, travel restrictions, heavy collective fines, and increased censorship aimed at stopping news of the actions from getting out.

Still, the demonstrations continued. Increasingly heavy-handed repression succeeded only in pushing more Palestinians into the struggle. Israeli troops, who regularly fired machine guns into the air to terrorize the Arab population, began to shoot to hit.

Ten-year-old Ali Hassan Afana, who

was shot down for throwing stones at a vehicle filled with soldiers, was the first Palestinian to die. His death on March 22 was followed by two more on March 23 and 24. This time, the victims were beaten to death by Israeli troops.

But the Palestinian masses refused to be intimidated. Instead, the struggle against the occupation inspired the Palestinian population inside Israel's pre-1967 borders to stand up as well. On March 30 a general strike by Israeli Arabs paralyzed the Galilee region. At least one-quarter of the Arab workers in Israel stayed away from their jobs despite threats that they would be fired.

*New York Times* correspondent Terence Smith commented that "the dimension of the day's disturbances clearly startled Israeli officials."

*Christian Science Monitor* columnist Joseph C. Harsch concluded that the protests "shatter any theory that the half million Arabs inside Israel and the million Arabs on the West Bank and in Gaza are satisfied with their lot."

The response of the Zionist regime to the March 30 general strike was savage. Police throughout Israel were ordered to "keep the peace everywhere and in any way possible." Before the day was over, six Palestinians had been killed and dozens wounded.

Zionist racists in Tel Aviv began to make jokes about flying Arab children being hit by "warning shots" supposedly fired into the air, but the reaction of supporters of Israel around the world was more somber. "Israel was once largely perceived as a haven for oppressed Jews. Will it now begin to be seen by many as a country which itself oppresses a million and a half Arabs?" Harsch asked in the *Christian Science Monitor*.

*Washington Post* columnist Joseph Kraft noted that "the suppression of these protests by force has given the Israelis another black eye all around the world."

Rabin, however, was just beginning. On April 9, with the blood still fresh on his hands, he greeted South African Prime Minister John Vorster in Jerusalem. Vorster's four-day visit included tours of Israeli warships, arms factories, and military installations.

"White South Africa has reacted with a mixture of astonishment and delight to the announcement that Prime Minister John Vorster has negotiated an economic, scientific, and industrial pact with Israel," Humphrey Tyler reported in the April 14

*Christian Science Monitor*. "Even opposition parties acknowledge it is a triumph for Mr. Vorster and a significant breakthrough for his government."

Vorster, of course, was soon to have his own problems in South Africa. But even before the upsurge by the Black masses there, Rabin's decision to welcome him was a telling indication of how isolated the Zionist state was.

Meanwhile, the protests on the West Bank, along with the "accidental" killings by Israeli troops, continued. It was Syrian President Hafez al-Assad, whose maneuvers in the United Nations had been responsible for pushing the issue of Palestine before the Security Council at the beginning of the year, who now took the Israeli regime off the hook, at least for the moment.

On June 1, Assad's army marched into Lebanon. Three more Palestinian youths had been gunned down on the West Bank less than two weeks before Assad's move, but with his invasion world attention shifted to the events in Lebanon.

For months, Assad had been openly pushing for a settlement in Lebanon that would leave basically intact the discriminatory political structure through which the Christian minority dominated the country. Such an outcome, achieved under his direction, would maximize Syrian influence in Lebanon. But bigger stakes were also involved: Assad was attempting to gain both control over the Palestinian liberation movement and closer relations with Washington in preparation for negotiations with Israel.

The editors of the *Washington Post* concluded June 15 that Assad's "determination to trim the Palestinians to size will have to be taken as serious evidence of his desire to move toward a general settlement with Israel."

Rabin had nothing to say about any "general settlement," but on the issue at hand—the Syrian invasion—he declared June 2, ". . . I will not stand in the way of anyone who wants to subdue [PLO leader Yassir] Arafat's terrorists."

Henry Kissinger also praised Assad's "constructive role" in Lebanon. As for the other Arab regimes, they withheld open endorsement of the invasion until most of the dirty work—such as the slaughter at Tel Zaatar—was over. But as Arafat told the foreign ministers of the Arab League countries June 30:

"You, the 20 members of the League, are sitting here either in silence or paying lip-service to the Palestinian cause while the



Palestinians are being slaughtered. Palestinian blood is cheap to you."

In a December 9 dispatch from Beirut, *New York Times* correspondent Henry Tanner reported, "Fatah and the guerrilla organizations fighting at its side have lost as many as 20 percent of their leaders and 3,000 of their best fighters as well as more than 20,000 civilians in Lebanon, according to an unofficial Palestinian estimate, and the real figure may be higher."

With the Syrian army in control of Lebanon and Syrian tanks dug in around the refugee camps there, the Palestinians are under heavy pressure to fall in with the Arab regimes intent on opening new negotiations with Israel. Pressure is also being exerted by the Stalinist regimes in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe. They are as eager as the Arab capitalists for a deal with imperialism in the Middle East.

*Al Hurriya*, the newspaper of the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine, published an article by Amer Jasem December 13 reporting on some of the advice given to Arafat during a visit to Belgrade and Bucharest earlier in December.

According to a report on Jasem's article in the December 14 *New York Times*, Arafat was told both in Yugoslavia and Romania that "what is needed is a major political shift in favor of moderation so the P.L.O. may become acceptable to the Americans."

The Stalinists promised Arafat: "The Americans are ready to recognize you on condition you become moderate. The Americans are ready to accept a Palestinian state provided you are moderate, and the Americans are ready to exercise pressure on Israel only if you are moderate."

This is precisely the strategy of the Arab governments—to rely on the goodwill of American imperialism. According to this delusion, if the Arab regimes can only prove their helpfulness to Washington the American imperialists will reciprocate by pressuring Israel to withdraw from the occupied territories and acquiesce in the establishment of a Palestinian entity on the West Bank and in the Gaza Strip.

But the first prerequisite for this strategy is the recognition of the Israeli colonial-settler state. So far, the PLO as a whole has resisted the pressure to give up, in the name of the Palestinian people, their rightful claim to repatriation in Palestine and the establishment of a unitary Palestinian state there. It is clear, however, that a sharp struggle is raging within the PLO over this question.

If the PLO, bled white from its losses in Lebanon and facing a united front of its supposed allies, is forced to either explicitly or implicitly recognize the legitimacy of the Israeli state, it would be a serious blow to the Palestinian liberation struggle. There is no reason to believe, though, that such a retreat would result in the establishment of a Palestinian state, or even in the withdrawal of Israel from the occupied

territories. A look at the real factors involved in the Middle East conflict shows why.

To begin with, the Israeli regime does not want a settlement. While Rabin would gladly accept the political gift of recogni-



ASSAD

tion of Israel by the PLO, his government continues to spend millions on new settlements in the occupied territories. It rules out returning Jerusalem, the Golan Heights, the Gaza Strip, and large areas of the Sinai Peninsula. It insists on perpetual military control of the West Bank, as well as annexation of a large part of its territory.

Although the Zionists talk about their need for recognized borders, their whole history has been to expand the borders of Israel. The latest example is Lebanon, where the Israelis have built a dependent right-wing militia force among the Christian population and declared the area south of the Litani River off limits to any force they do not approve of. They have established a virtual protectorate there.

Rabin's attitude was summed up December 2 when he said in Tel Aviv that Israel, with American help, had acquired sufficient military strength to afford it "maximum freedom of political maneuverability" in any negotiations. He added that American aid commitments have guaranteed Israel qualitative military superiority in the Middle East for the next five to ten years. In other words, Rabin was saying that Israel can afford to sit in the occupied territories for another five or ten years without fear of being forced out. And that is exactly what he intends to do.

Only American pressure could change

this intransigent Israeli stand. But what it would take is not merely diplomatic notes and statements of regret, but a cutoff of American aid. This is hardly likely to happen.

Because of its colonial-settler character, the Israeli state is abjectly dependent on the support of American imperialism. This ensures its reliability as an agent regardless of what government is in control at any given time.

The same guarantee does not hold in the case of the Arab states. The regimes in these countries are subject to mass anti-imperialist pressure by their own people, and a government friendly to American interests one day may turn into a hostile one the next. Thus, while the American imperialists welcome the services performed by the Arab regimes for them—such as Assad's intervention in Lebanon—they will continue to favor Israel as their main instrument in the Middle East.

Within this context, while Washington is not willing to tolerate an Israeli military defeat, or even a serious weakening of Israel, it is willing to throw its Arab clients a bone now and then by voting against Israel in the United Nations on one or another question, or by saying that the Israelis are not being flexible enough. That is the ABC of diplomacy.

Even if the Israelis were to agree to withdraw from sections of the occupied territories in return for political concessions from the Arab states, this would be a far cry from the establishment of a Palestinian state.

Some Israeli "doves"—arguing from the standpoint of how best to hold onto the bulk of the land stolen by the Zionist state while maintaining a progressive and democratic facade—insist that the categorical rejection of any Palestinian entity by the Rabin government is a mistake. In the December 6 issue of *Newsweek*, retired Gen. Matityahu Peled, a prominent Israeli advocate of this view, pointed out:

"... I would expect the Palestinian state to be *de facto*, if not *de jure*, demilitarized, with no air force or significant anti-aircraft capability. Moreover, the Palestinian state would consist of Gaza and the West Bank, and daily communications between the two halves would depend on Israel. The security border of Israel would be the Jordan River, because we would insist that no Arab army be allowed to ever cross it."

Such a state, then, would not be allowed to pursue an independent foreign policy lest it make military alliances with the wrong countries; it would not be allowed to have its own army; its economy and communications would be in the hands of Israel; in short, it would not be an independent state. It would be a reservation, a Bantustan for the Palestinian people, controlled by their enemies.

Rabin and his advisers are well aware of this. But they have no intention of with-

drawing from anywhere near enough territory for even the pretense of an independent state to be workable, and they oppose any formulation that tends to legitimize the idea of sizable withdrawals.

Rabin is also aware of the power of the Palestinian national liberation movement, and the danger that this movement would begin to break through the restrictions and forms imposed on even a nominally independent Palestinian entity. The upsurge on the West Bank, including new demonstrations there in December, was a

pointed reminder of this possibility.

The issue of principle involved in the debate within the Palestinian movement is not whether or not to oppose the establishment of a Palestinian government of some type on any land vacated by Israel. The real question that is being posed is whether to surrender the claim of the Palestinian people to all of their homeland in the hopes of being granted such a Palestinian entity.

In the current situation, all the talk about a West Bank state is really only bait

to get the PLO to recognize Israel and give its stamp of approval to the negotiations desired by the Arab regimes. Those who think that the establishment of some type of Palestinian entity as a result of the coming negotiations is already decided are mistaken. Far more likely is a stalemate in the negotiations and another Middle East war.

The expectations of the Israeli regime were made clear December 13 when it formally requested delivery of 250 F-16 fighter planes from the U.S. government.

## Escalating Repression and Impoverishment

# Heavy Blows Against Latin American Masses

By Judy White

Escalation of police terror and "unofficial violence against even their mildest critics, and efforts to get out from under the devastating effects of the world economic crisis were salient features of the actions of Latin American governments in 1976.

With the exception of the big upsurge in Bolivia in the early months of the year, most of the battles fought by the Latin American working class were defensive ones that went down in defeat.

The March 24 military coup in Argentina marked the fall of the last bourgeois-democratic regime in the Southern Cone and a setback for the most highly organized sector of the Latin American working class. Argentine dictator Jorge Videla's crusade to "annihilate subversion" gave encouragement to the repressive plans of bourgeois governments throughout the area.

On the economic front, austerity measures, "denationalizations," and an "open door" to imperialist investment more and more replaced the timid nationalist policies of previous years.

Washington provided succor to even the most brutal and bankrupt regimes. It used its domination of the Organization of American States to get that body to whitewash the Chilean dictatorship's ongoing use of torture. The U.S. government and the international organizations it "strongly influences" provided Pinochet with \$1.8 billion in aid.

At a time when rising opposition to Brazilian President Ernesto Geisel's torture and murder of dissidents was getting international publicity, Secretary of State Kissinger, during a February tour of Latin American capitals, described the Brazilian regime as one of the two governments in the world with the most profound "concern for human dignity and for the basic values of man."



PINOCHET

The other government Kissinger was referring to was the United States, which ignored the growing demands for the release of the longest-held political prisoners in the Western Hemisphere—the five Puerto Rican nationalists being held in U.S. jails.

Washington did not allow its concern for human dignity to stand in the way of seeking to hold onto the Canal Zone and its military bases in Panama.

Washington also continued its campaign of sabotage of the Castro government. Nine terrorist actions were carried out against Cuba between April 6 and October 6, the date the Cubana Airlines plane was blown up off Barbados killing seventy-three persons.

In an October 15 speech in Havana

describing these carefully orchestrated attacks, Prime Minister Fidel Castro asked, "Who, if not the CIA, under the protection of the conditions of domination and impunity which the imperialists have established in this hemisphere, could do such things?"

Nonetheless, international protests had an effect in Latin America.

- On April 3 they won a stay of execution for Desmond Trotter, a Black power leader from the Caribbean island of Dominica.

- Hernán Cuentas, a leader of the Peruvian miners union and the Partido Obrero Marxista Revolucionario (Revolutionary Marxist Workers party), was freed at the end of April along with another miner leader and four labor attorneys.

- In Chile, more than 300 political prisoners were released in the course of the year.

- In mid-December, Argentine President Jorge Videla announced he would release 198 persons being held under the state of siege.

The Argentine coup took place as the regime of Isabel Perón was about to default on \$1.1 billion in foreign debts. Attempts to impose an austerity program had been beaten back once again by the workers. As a result of the Peronist regime's inability to resolve the crisis, there was a fragmentation of the Peronist movement and decay of the regime. The military moved in to prepare an assault on the workers movement.

Videla quickly consolidated his control. Within a matter of days he outlawed all political and trade-union organizations and activity, placed all public services and work places under military control, reinstated the death penalty for acts of "sabotage," ordered "saboteurs" shot on sight, and imposed a tight censorship on the press.



The junta whipped up a campaign of xenophobia to facilitate the victimization of the tens of thousands of political exiles who were living in Argentina as one of the last refuges from bloody tyrants in other parts of the continent. Repressive forces of other countries were allowed to get their hands on these refugees. At least fourteen Uruguayan exiles who had been kidnapped and disappeared in Argentina, for example, were reported by authorities in Montevideo to be under detention in their native land on October 28.

Added to the hate-mongering against foreigners is a campaign of anti-Semitism directed against Argentina's 500,000 Jews.

The number of political prisoners swelled from the 5,000 at the time of the coup to an estimated 20,000 by early September. Among them are more than 100 Trotskyists of the Partido Socialista de los Trabajadores (PST—Socialist Workers party), the most prominent of whom is José Francisco Páez—a leader of the auto workers union and the PST's vice-presidential candidate in the 1973 elections. Several Trotskyists of the Liga Comunista Revolucionaria (LCR—Revolutionary Communist League) and the *Política Obrera* and *Manifiesto Obrero* groups are also being held.

Many of the arrest victims were picked up in the massive raids the junta has been carrying out in working-class districts. In one such raid in September, 574 persons were detained.

The number of persons murdered outright as part of the "official" repression is escalating. The bourgeois press reported November 17 that so far *that month* 101 "subversives" had been gunned down.

Extralegal terrorist gangs like the Alianza Anticomunista Argentina (AAA—Argentine Anticommunist Alliance), which had been functioning under government auspices since the 1973 return of Juan Perón, stepped up their activities in the months prior to the coup. Their kidnappings and murders of trade-union and political activists have become more blatant since March 24. On August 20, for example, they removed forty-seven political prisoners from Buenos Aires jails, drove them to the suburbs, and gunned them down.

The main goal of this repression has been to help the Argentine bourgeoisie counteract the effects of the world crisis of capitalism by driving down the standard of living of the country's masses. Official statistics showed that in terms of real wages, almost twice as much was required to fill the family food basket in November as January.

Working-class resistance to this brutal drive began to get sizable in early September. Twenty thousand auto workers struck for three days to protest an insufficient wage increase granted by the junta September 1. They were forced back to work by threats of government repression.

However, one month later, light and

power workers paralyzed the Greater Buenos Aires area for more than two weeks in protest against the layoff of 208 of their union leaders. Videla had to use redbaiting in conjunction with a military



VIDELA

occupation of light and power companies to break this strike.

As 1976 draws to a close, new reports of strikes among auto workers and longshoremen over economic issues show that the junta still has a long way to go to smash the Argentine workers movement.

Resistance and repression accompanied attempts to impose austerity programs in other parts of Latin America too.

On July 1 a strike paralyzed Lima's public transportation system. Bus drivers were demanding immediate cancellation of gasoline price increases that were part of an austerity package presented the day before by Peruvian President Francisco Morales Bermúdez.

Morales Bermúdez declared a state of emergency and arrested 300 students, workers, and "criminals." Among those arrested was Hugo Blanco, the well-known Peruvian revolutionist and leader of a mass peasant movement in the 1960s. One week later Blanco was deported to Sweden, although he was clearly not directly involved in the mass demonstrations that swept Peru's cities protesting the austerity plan.

On September 10 mass demonstrations began in the secondary schools of Panama City to protest government-decreed price increases for milk and rice. The protests, which lasted for eleven days, quickly spread to other sectors of the population. Panamanian President Omar Torrijos called out the National Guard, which used

tear gas, rubber truncheons, dogs, and antiriot pellets fired from shotguns to attack the demonstrators. As many as 500 persons were arrested and dozens wounded.

Torrijos also uses the tactic of deportation to get his opponents out of the way. Among a group of eleven critics of his regime who were deported in February was Miguel Antonio Bernal, a revolutionary-socialist professor of law and political science at the University of Panama.

Austerity plans were also forced on the masses of Colombia and Puerto Rico, who had hitherto not experienced them. And the new Mexican President, José López Portillo, has announced that his government will be one of austerity.

Even Venezuela, the country least affected by the crisis because of its oil resources, imposed an austerity program in 1976—the Fifth Plan of the Nation.

Throughout Latin America, there were other repercussions of the world economic crisis.

After twenty-two years of stability, the Mexican peso began to plummet downwards on August 31, bringing that country to "its worst financial panic since the revolution of 1910," commented *New York Times* economics analyst Leonard Silk November 25.

At the same time, land hunger drove thousands of peasants in the north of Mexico to occupy plantations.

In September the "revolutionary" regime of Francisco Morales Bermúdez agreed to pay the San Francisco-based Marcona Corporation \$61.4 million for Peru's expropriation of the large mining company. Marcona had been taken over in July 1975 with much fanfare about the "immoral conduct" typical of "the great multinational consortiums." Fourteen months later, faced with economic problems that included a \$1 billion trade deficit for 1976, the military agreed to pay up in exchange for a loan package totaling \$550 million.

New "open door" policies are being advanced by several Latin American governments. Their results can be most clearly seen in Chile.

Following the 1973 coup that overthrew the Allende government, the junta turned back nationalized sectors of the economy to their former imperialist and Chilean owners and instituted "free-enterprise capitalism." Three years later, reported Jonathan Kandell in the December 8 issue of the *New York Times*, "Chile is mired in industrial stagnation and runaway inflation."

"The economy has not regained the production levels of the late 1960's," Kandell said, "and living standards for most of the 10 million Chileans continue to drop."

What a worker making the legal minimum wage in 1969 could buy of essential foodstuffs with slightly more than half his income, he cannot buy today even with his entire earnings. □

## 'Sour National Mood' Has American Rulers Worried

By David Frankel

The American capitalist class celebrated the two-hundredth anniversary of its rule in 1976 by stepping up its assault on the standard of living of the masses of working people and by reinstating the barbarous death penalty. These, however, were not the issues that were discussed by Carter and Ford in the bicentennial presidential election campaign.

While the candidates double-talked their way through the "Great Debates," and the media discussed Carter's views on lust, the evidence of deep questioning and dissatisfaction among the American people mounted. The American ruling class hoped that the election contest would complete the post-Vietnam, post-Watergate reconstruction begun with their decision to dump Nixon. But the longed-for restoration of trust and confidence in the government fell far short of those hopes.

*Wall Street Journal* correspondent Alan L. Otten complained in an October 21 column about "the emptiness and dreariness of the campaign. . . .

"Everywhere one goes, the reaction is much the same. Rather than merely expressing disinterest or apathy, people are speaking with active distaste of the choice before them. . . . In 25 years of covering presidential campaigns, this reporter has never encountered such a sour national mood."

With the exception of the 1948 election, when the masses of Blacks in the South were effectively disenfranchised, the voter turnout was the lowest in the past fifty years.

The fact is that the 1976 election solved nothing for the ruling class. The capitalist rulers face a continuing problem, one that was examined in some detail by analysts after the election. Michael Barone, an executive in the Hart polling firm, stressed the "strong underlying desire for change" among the American people in an article in the November 28 *New York Times Magazine*.

Barone, who had access to the Hart organization's polls over the whole election period, pointed out: "The overwhelming majority of nonvoters believe that their vote will never make any difference and that all politicians say one thing and do another; they believe that things are headed in the wrong direction, and will continue that way no matter who wins elections. Their nonvoting is an actual vote of no confidence in our politicians and political system."

This view was backed up by a *New York Times*-CBS News study conducted after

the election. The study found that "nonvoters were much more likely [than voters] to say that one person's vote makes no difference, that there is no difference between the major parties, or that it makes no difference who is president. These feelings are especially prevalent among those in the lower socio-economic classes. . . ."

While the decline in voter turnout is one indication of the growing disillusionment with the two-party system, doubts and dissatisfaction are almost as prevalent among those who did vote. The Times-CBS poll found that both voters and nonvoters agreed by a majority of 55% that "public officials don't care much about what people like me think." Fifty-eight percent of voters and 59% of nonvoters agreed that "the government is pretty much run for a few big interests. . . ." Finally, 41% of voters and 58% of nonvoters agreed that "the country needs more radical change than is possible through the ballot box."

The big question, of course, is whether such discontent will remain passive. In this regard, the most important objective factor at work in the United States over the past year was the continuing economic uncertainty and insecurity facing the American people.

At the beginning of 1976, capitalist economists were confident that the worst economic slump since World War II was finally over, at least in the United States. "The economic recovery is still moving as 1976 opens," *Business Week* announced in its first issue of the year, adding that, "The advance has slowed considerably from last summer's upsurge, but it is now more solid, and hence more sustainable."

*Wall Street* celebrated in typical fashion—the stock market soared forty-six points in the first four trading days of 1976.

As the year drew to a close, however, American industrial production was stalled once again, and factory layoffs were increasing. Capital appropriations by the 1,000 largest American manufacturers fell 9% in the third quarter, and new investment is expected to remain weak in 1977.

Even at the height of the capitalist recovery, unemployment never fell below 7.3%, and on December 3 the U.S. Department of Labor announced that unemployment in November had gone up to 8.1% from 7.9% the month before. The weakness of the economic upturn has become apparent to all.

Anxiety over the prospects for the economy was the dominant factor in Jimmy Carter's victory in the presidential election. But the illusion that a Carter victory would help reduce the level of unemployment and help stop government cutbacks, while necessary for his election, will prove to be a problem for Carter as president.

Having won the election, Carter lost no time in telling the American people that they should not expect his administration to cut unemployment below the level of 6.4 or 6.5% by the end of 1977. Even this modest goal was disavowed December 5 by Bert Lance, Carter's choice for the director of the Office of Management and Budget, a key economic post.

Lance, a Georgia banker, told reporters, "I rather doubt that anybody could say we're going to be able to reduce unemployment by one-and-one-half percent next year."

An even more graphic indication of what type of policies Carter will pursue was given when his aides let it be known that high on Carter's list for the post of secretary of the treasury were A.W. Clausen, president of the Bank of America, and Irving Shapiro, chairman of the Du Pont Company. Although these two captains of American finance and industry later indicated that they would not be available for the post, Carter's point had already been made.

Equally revealing was Carter's appointment of Cyrus Vance as secretary of state. Vance, who sits on the board of directors of IBM, Pan American World Airways, and the *New York Times*, among other corporations, was a key architect of American policy in Vietnam. From 1964 to 1967 he served as President Lyndon Johnson's number-two man in the Pentagon, a post that was followed up by a stint as the deputy chief of the American team in the Paris negotiations on Vietnam.

Like Kissinger, Rusk, and Dulles before him, Vance has close ties with the Rockefeller family. He was appointed chairman of the board of the Rockefeller Foundation in September 1975. His record also includes a number of "special assignments" under Johnson. In May 1965 he went to Santo Domingo to help oversee the invasion of the Dominican Republic by 20,000 U.S. Marines. In July 1967 he took charge of the military force sent to crush the Black rebellion in Detroit. And in 1968 Vance headed the 9,000 U.S. troops Johnson sent into Washington, D.C., to put



down the rebellion there that followed the assassination of Martin Luther King.

Carter's appointments are clearly intended to reassure any who fear that his rhetoric about change is meant seriously. His most audacious move so far was to announce that he would wear a business suit rather than formal attire at his inauguration.

Meanwhile, the economic and social problems facing the American people continue unresolved. The New York City financial crisis, which has become a symbol for the plight of cities around the United States, is an indicator of the real issues that will confront Carter.

City officials reminded the public in October that they plan to cut an additional \$500 million from New York's budget in the coming year. And on December 6, New York State Governor Hugh Carey announced that the state budget would have to be balanced by cutting another \$1 billion in aid to local areas.

The American labor movement has remained paralyzed in the face of the capitalist economic offensive. The class-collaborationist bureaucracy has so far managed to keep the unions tied to the Democratic party, but 1976 saw new indications of the pressures for change in the trade-union movement. The rank and file of the unions is feeling the economic squeeze and it is beginning to react.

From this point of view, one of the most important events on the American political scene in 1976 was the opening of the campaign of Ed Sadlowski, the head of the Steelworkers Fight Back movement, for the presidency of the United Steelworkers of America (USWA).

With 1.4 million members, the USWA is one of the three largest trade unions in the United States, along with the Teamsters and the Auto Workers. The entrenched bureaucracy that has controlled the USWA since its formation in 1942 is being challenged by an insurgent slate calling for a militant defense of workers' interests.

The Steelworkers Fight Back movement has been built around the right of the union membership to vote on basic steel contracts, opposition to the no-strike deal worked out between the companies and the current union leadership, and the need for democracy within the union. However, it has not been limited to such issues. For instance, Sadlowski says:

Anyone that doesn't realize that racism exists in the steel industry has got their head in the sand. Anyone that doesn't realize that racism exists in the steelworkers union equally has their head in the sand.

You can't be a unionist and be a racist. That's a divide and conquer game. It's not compatible [with unionism]. It never was and it never will be.

Segregation should not exist in any society, and you've got to put every ounce of muscle to see to it that it doesn't exist. It's something the trade-union movement has to be in the forefront on. [Quoted in the *Militant*, December 10.]

At a rally in Chicago October 25, Sadlowski took up the issue of immigrant workers, who have been blamed for unemployment by some figures inside the unions. The employers, Sadlowski noted,



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"throw open the doors to this country to the humble and poor when they need their railroads built, swamps drained, and blast furnaces tended, and they throw them out when they can't give them jobs.

"I don't believe we should have fences around this country. We should be looking at ourselves as citizens of the world."

Sadlowski has also stressed the need for the trade unions to once again become a social movement. "I think that's what the American labor movement has got to develop into, a cause, a cause that was prevalent in the 1930s, in 1937," Sadlowski commented at a recent rally. "More than just a union it was a cause."

The only reply that the USWA bureaucracy has been able to come up with has been a massive red-baiting campaign against the Steelworkers Fight Back movement. But the insurgents have stood up to the charges that their movement is being manipulated by "outside radical organizers." They have followed a policy of welcoming everyone willing to work for the victory of the Sadlowski slate, whatever their political views.

Regardless of whether Sadlowski wins the current election in the USWA, the movement that he is building shows the

road forward for the American labor movement, and its example will be followed by others. Peter Camejo, the Socialist Workers party candidate for president in the 1976 election, pointed out in his final speech of the campaign:

"The logic of the Sadlowski campaign points toward the transformation of the labor movement into a social and political movement fighting for the interests of all workers and all the oppressed. That is why it is the most important political event taking place in this country at this time."

If the Steelworkers Fight Back campaign was an indication in 1976 of the great progressive role that the American working class is capable of playing, and of the speed with which this sleeping giant can be transformed, the reimposition of the death penalty was a sharp reminder that the fate of America—and of the whole world—is still in the hands of the most ruthless ruling class in history.

But the political battle over the barbaric death penalty is just beginning. This is an explosive issue that can polarize the country, and the tacking and veering of the courts and the delays in carrying out the first executions is an indication that the ruling class is aware that it is playing with fire.

For Blacks, the death penalty is an especially acute issue. Just like the burden of government cutbacks, inflation, and unemployment, this attempt to terrorize any who attempt to fight back against their victimization will fall heaviest, and with special vindictiveness, on the racially oppressed.

Among those clamoring the loudest for the death penalty as a guarantee of "law and order" are the same racist forces that have supported and led the murderous rampages of anti-Black mobs in cities like Boston, Chicago, and Louisville—all of which were the scenes of racist violence in 1976.

At the same time that it is cheering on a government-sponsored bloodbath for the victims of class justice, the right wing is busy chopping away at the right of women to abortion in the name of the "right to life."

The brazen hypocrisy of the capitalist rulers and their reactionary supporters has already fanned widespread opposition to their plans. If the ruling class disregards the growing revulsion of the American people and goes ahead with the one-by-one slaughter of the hundreds of inmates on death row in prisons across the country, it may get a bigger reaction than it bargained for.

Finally, it should be noted that 1976 was a year of "peace." It began with the drive for U.S. military intervention in Angola and continued with threats against Cuba and Panama. U.S. military forces were mobilized off the coast of Lebanon in March, threatening intervention in the civil war there, and in August a massive show of military force was made in Korea

after U.S. occupation forces were involved in a clash with North Korean troops.

All in all, 1976 really was a quiet year on the international front when one keeps in mind that American capitalism cannot

maintain its empire without war. It is only a matter of time until the next Vietnam—or worse.

But in view of their situation at home, another war would threaten disaster for

the American imperialists. It would accelerate the whole process of the radicalization of the American working class and place intolerable strains on the two-party system. □

## General Strike, PQ Victory

# Canada—Class and National Struggles Mount

By Tony Thomas

The October 14 general strike and the victory of the Parti Québécois (PQ—Québec party) in the Québec elections testified to the sharpening of the class and national struggles in Canada and Québec in 1976.

The trade-union movement took important steps forward in opposition to the wage controls imposed by the Liberal party government of Pierre Elliott Trudeau in October 1975.

More than 30,000 unionists rallied in front of the parliament in Ottawa in sub-zero weather on March 22. The anticon-trols demonstration called by the Canadian Labor Congress (CLC) was the largest in the capital's history, and the first to unite large numbers of English-Canadian and Québécois workers. Moreover, with 120,000 public employees in Québec in the forefront, many workers in Québec and Ontario walked off their jobs as part of the protest.

On March 25 and April 5 there were strikes by public workers in Québec around wage demands and for recognition of their right to strike. When the Québec government passed a law taking away the teachers' right to strike, more than 145,000 public employees, including 90,000 teachers, struck on April 13. This was followed by a similar walkout on April 30 involving 160,000 to 200,000 of Québec's 250,000 public employees.

On May 17 the CLC convention nearly unanimously authorized the leadership to call a "general work stoppage, or stoppages, if and when necessary" in order to back the campaign against wage controls. After some wavering by the CLC brass, October 14 was set as the strike date.

Over one million workers took part in the strike.

The October 14 action was strongest in British Columbia where almost 190,000 workers walked off their jobs. In the major cities in that province, even daily newspapers were halted. The strike was also strong in basic industries such as the auto assembly plants in southern Ontario, which were almost completely shut down. About 230,000 Québec workers struck—more than any previous strike in Québec, which had seen province-wide general strikes in the past. The CLC announced

that 140,000 persons took part in rallies and demonstrations it sponsored on October 14.

This series of actions indicated a growing militancy on the part of Canadian workers that was reflected in the New Democratic party (NDP), the reformist labor party of English Canada. When the October 14 strike was first suggested, the NDP leadership was, at best, hesitant to associate themselves with the action. However, as the strike date neared, the NDP supported the strike and went on a campaign to build it. This was a reflection of the pressure of the many workers who are turning to the NDP as an alternative to the capitalist Liberal and Conservative parties.

One problem for the workers movement is chauvinism against the Québécois, blatantly evident in the reactionary strike by English-speaking pilots and air traffic controllers over the summer of 1976. The strike—supported by the Trudeau government and English-Canadian union bureaucrats—opposed the use of French in control-tower broadcasts at the big international airports serving Montréal. Its aim was to preserve the privileged position of the English language against the rights of the French-speaking oppressed majority in Québec.

The pilots' strike was part of a rising polarization on the language question. The French pilots had massive support among the Québécois. Even the Liberal party-dominated provincial government was forced to come out in support of the French pilots.

The nationalist aspirations of the Québécois led to the crushing defeat of the Liberals in the November 15 elections to the Québec National Assembly. The Parti Québécois won sixty-nine seats compared with the Liberal's twenty-eight. In 1973 the Liberals had won 102 of the 110 seats in the assembly.

French-speaking Montrealers danced in the streets of the city's working-class neighborhoods after the PQ victory. They saw the election of the PQ as a blow against the high unemployment, inflation, strikebreaking, and corruption that had marked the Liberal government. They

hoped the PQ would take major steps against the oppression of the Québec people, in view of its stand favoring eventual independence for Québec.

However, the PQ is a capitalist political party committed to collaborating with the English-Canadian and American imperialists who control Québec's economy. It has supported antilabor measures proposed by former Prime Minister Bourassa and opposes the mobilization of the Québécois for their national liberation. Even though the PQ is committed to independence, it defers to the distant future achieving that goal, after the PQ has proven it can "responsibly" govern Québec within the context of Canadian domination.

Given the continued need of Canadian imperialism to roll back the rights and living standards of the working people, the PQ will have little margin to grant major concessions that would continue to feed illusions in it.

As Art Young explained in *Labor Challenge*, a twice-monthly Trotskyist newspaper published in Toronto, "Larger numbers of Québécois will come to understand that a PQ government cannot advance their interests, and that they need a workers government to lead the struggle for an independent and socialist Québec. Pressure will grow on the unions to break from the PQ in this direction by launching their own mass labor party."

Young explained that even the PQ claim that it favors a referendum on independence for Québec "will bring into sharp focus all aspects of the national oppression of Québec, as the debate grows on how to overcome that oppression."

All in all, the advent of a PQ government in Québec actually opens up a period in which the need for the masses to break from this party becomes clearer and clearer.

With a working class increasingly inclined to mass actions against wage controls, a government in Québec City that is formally pledged to take Québec out of the Canadian federation, and the continued effects of the worldwide economic crisis, the Canadian imperialist bourgeoisie is hardly facing a rosy situation at the close of 1976. □



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