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Introductory Note by Fred Feldman

For the past four years, Argentina has been the scene of a powerful working-class upsurge which has shaken the seven year old military regime in that country to its foundations. Following several localized nearinsurrections and nationwide strike waves, the dictatorship currently headed by Lanusse decided to make a sharp tactical shift in an effort to pacify the masses and "normalize" the political situation which had reached a prerevolutionary state. The rulers began to plan for general elections that were finally held on March 11, 1973. In order to lend credibility to their promises to restore constitutional rule, the military made important concessions to popular demands for political freedom by legalizing or tolerating all political organizations and publications except those directly identified with groups carrying out urban or rural guerrilla warfare. At the same time, the regime continued a policy of arresting, torturing, and frequently murdering guerrillaists and selective repression against working-class

As part of this maneuver, Lanusse allowed former President Juan Perón, the only bourgeois political figure with a sizable following in the working class, to return from exile in Spain at the end of 1972. During his four week visit to Argentina, Perón tried to persuade the masses of workers and students who viewed him as their leader, to look to the projected elections for a solution to Argentina's deep social ills, and to give up the independent struggles in the factories and streets that were threatening the foundations of capitalism in Argentina.

Although Perón himself was barred by the military regime from seeking office, he succeeded in bringing together a broad coalition including sections of the bourgeoisie, the labor bureaucrats, and many political figures, to support his handpicked candidate for president, Héctor Cámpora. This coalition ran under the name Frente Justicialista de Liberación (Social Justice Front for Liberation — FREJULI).

In addition, the Communist party also intervened in the elections to support a popular-front coalition called the Alianza Popular Revolucionaria (People's Revolutionary Alliance). Some left Peronists also entered the race under the title Frente Izquierda Popular (Left People's Front).

The Argentine Trotskyists organized in the Partido Revolucionario de los Trabajadores (La Verdad) [Revolutionary Workers Party] decided to take advantage of the opportunities to build a revolutionary Marxist party offered by the militarists' partial retreat and the ongoing workers' upsurge. They sought to win away a section of the advanced workers who had spearheaded the Cordobazos (semi-insurrections which took place in 1969 and 1971 in the auto production center of Córdoba) and other struggles from the Peronist variety of bourgeois reformism.

In order to make it possible for revolutionists to appear on the ballot in opposition to the bourgeois parties, the PRT (La Verdad) united with a left splitoff of the Partido Socialista Argentino (Argentine Socialist Party-PSA), the PSA (Secretaría Coral). This was a small organization which had moved far to the left under the influence of the Cuban revolution. The PSA had established its right to a place on the ballot in the period prior to the 1966 coup. It thus had the right to re-establish its ballot status, if it could sign up the required number of affiliates, when Lanusse undertook the electoral maneuver. The united grouping later changed its name to Partido Socialista de los Trabajadores (Socialist Workers Party) at its first convention and declared its political solidarity with the Fourth International.

The PST initiated the Frente Obrero (Workers' Front), offering 75% of its ballot positions to workers who had played leading roles in struggles against the regime, the bosses, and the labor bureaucrats. Through this tactic, the PST presented a socialist and working-class alternative counterposed to the Peronists who traditionally claimed the loyalty of Argentine workers.

Although no other major left tendency supported the PST's initiative, the proposal got an enthusiastic response from radical workers in the factories who had begun to see through the Peronist demagogy. Some like José Páez, a leader in both Cordobazos, ran as candidates of the Frente Obrero.

When a new wave of strikes began in January, the PST and the Frente Obrero used the campaign to build and spread the strikes. Their attitude contrasted sharply with the electoralist stand of the Peronists who denounced militant strikes as "provocations."

In opposition to the Peronist presidential ticket headed by Campora, and to all other bourgeois slates, the PST-Frente Obrero nominated Juan Carlos Coral for president and Nora Ciapponi for vice-president. Coral, a leader in the former PSA who was won to Trotskyism, has been active in socialist politics for nearly two decades. He was elected to parliament as a Socialist Party candidate in 1963 but was expelled when the military took power in 1966. He has played an important role in peasant and student struggles. As a supporter of the Cuban revolution and an opponent of the Stalinist-reformist line of "peaceful transition to socialism," he was a delegate to the 1967 conference of the Organization of Latin American Solidarity in Hayana.

Ciapponi was a member of the PRT (La Verdad) at the time of the fusion with the PSA(Secretaria Coral). She was a leader in workers' struggles in the Hidrofila, one of the worst sweatshops in Argentina's textile industry. After she and 200 other workers were fired for their activities, Ciapponi continued her socialist and trade-union activity in other plants. She became well

known in every factory in Northern Buenos Aires province and was arrested four times by the regime. The doubly oppressed position of women in Argentine society led her to take up the struggle for women's liberation as well.

The first round of balloting on March 11 resulted in the election of the Peronist candidate, Cámpora. The second-round balloting, held to determine the composition of the national assembly and other posts, resulted in further electoral victories for the Peronists.

This Education for Socialists bulletin brings together materials which provide a valuable record of the evolution, activities, results, and lessons of the PST-Frente Obrero campaign, which stands as one of the most successful initiatives undertaken in recent years by the Trotskyist movement. The articles in this volume have been drawn from the pages of La Verdad, the underground publication of the former PRT(La Verdad); Avanzada Socialista, a weekly newspaper reflecting the views of the PST; Intercontinental Press, a revolutionary Marxist international newsweekly and news service; and The Militant, a weekly that expresses the positions of U.S. Trotskyists. In addition, we have included a report given on March 21, 1973 to the Chicago branch

of the Socialist Workers party by Fred Halstead who spent several weeks in Argentina as a reporter for *The Militant*.

The articles and documents reprinted here have been divided into nine sections (generally in chronological order) in order to facilitate systematic study. The first section contains Halstead's report; second are major campaign statements published by the PST; next are materials dealing with the unification of the PRT(La Verdad) with the PSA(Secretaria Coral); fourth are articles and declarations in which the PST projected and called for the creation of a "workers' and socialist pole" (this section includes their responses to Perón's treacherous maneuvers during his brief return); a fifth section describes the founding of the Frente Obrero; the sixth section describes the initial campaign activities of the 2,200 candidates of the Frente Obrero; following that are detailed reports on the activities of the PST-Frente Obrero campaigners during the January-February strike wave; an eighth section contains interviews and reports on the outcome and significance of the first round of the balloting; and, ninth, articles and PST statements on the PST's views and activities in the struggle against the repression still being waged against radicals.

Report on the Argentine Elections

by Fred Halstead

(The following report was given by Fred Halstead to a meeting of the Chicago branch of the Socialist Workers Party on March 21, 1973, shortly after his return from Argentina. Halstead, who was the SWP's presidential candidate in 1968, went to Argentina as a reporter for *The Militant*, a revolutionary Marxist weekly published in New York City.

(The talk and the question and answer period which followed it have been edited for publication in this Education for Socialists bulletin.)

* * *

I was in Argentina for the last six weeks writing articles on the Argentine election campaign and particularly on the election campaign of the Partido Socialista de los Trabajadores (PST—Socialist Workers Party). Before I describe that, lct me give a little background about the Argentine situation.

Argentina is a country of about 24 million people. It is a semicolonial country which was mainly devoted to cattle raising until World War II. Since then, considerable industry has developed. A lot of it is only about 20 years old.

Argentina has a history of labor struggles that is quite unique. Like the United States, the country was populated mostly by European immigrants who came over in waves: Irish around 1848, Germans a little later, and so on. The labor movement had an anarchist tradition

brought by Italian and Spanish immigrants.

There was a Communist party (CP) tradition too. The Communist party played a big role in the labor upsurge that occurred there during the thirties. That upsurge resulted in the organization of a certain number of industrial unions, as did the upsurge of the thirties in the U.S. The CP was the leading radical group and dominated the labor movement at the beginning of World War II. Then a peculiarity set in which has dominated Argentine politics ever since.

The ruling class in Argentina divided over whether to enter World War II on the side of the United States and the Western Allies or whether to remain neutral. After the Nazi armies invaded the Soviet Union in 1941, the CP threw all of its energies into trying to get the country into World War II. For instance, there were a number of big strikes in the meatpacking industry. Since the market for meat was skyhigh during the war, there was every opportunity for the workers to win big concessions. But the CP leaderships of the unions called off the strikes and capitulated to the bosses on the grounds that they couldn't deprive the Allied armies of meat. This gave the CP a bad reputation among the workers, and a small section of the meatpacking union broke with the CP policy, struck, and won. It also had a neutralist policy on the war.

The capitalists were not able to settle their internal dispute over the war through the capitalist parties. The Argentine ruling class is not as united as here. There is no decisive section of the class that has economic dominance and can dictate a line to the rest of the bourgeoisie. This

crisis was resolved by a military coup led by some colonels, one of whom was Juan Domingo Perón. They settled the argument in favor of neutrality during the war.

So Argentina was neutral in World War II. The country sold its meat on the world market and raked in very high profits. This gave the ruling class considerable elbow room to make concessions to the workers.

Perón was appointed minister of labor by the military junta. Then as now the minister of labor in Argentina determines which union has jurisdiction in each workplace. Jurisdictional disputes are settled by the Ministry of Labor. Perón came down hard against the CP-dominated unions, and in favor of the unions that supported neutrality in the war. These so-called neutralist unions got the nod from the Ministry of Labor and the whole situation changed. From that time to this the CP has not had very heavy strength in the union movement. A trade-union bureaucracy developed in connection with Perón and his circle in the Ministry of Labor. At the same time, these unions included members of many revolutionary groups that were trying to organize the unorganized.

As long as the World War II boom lasted in Argentina—and it lasted beyond World War II because the European capitalists were preoccupied with rebuilding Europe—the labor movement got considerable concessions.

As the war drew to a close, sections of the ruling class and sections of the army decided to go back to a more conservative attitude towards the labor movement. They removed Perón from his position as minister of labor. The labor bureaucrats then called a mass demonstration on October 17, 1945. It was one of the most important protest gatherings in Argentine history. It ended only when the generals who had pushed Perón out introduced him to the crowd and promised elections. Perón ran in those elections and was elected president. He remained president for ten years.

By 1955, the boom was long since over. The ruling class stopped making major concessions to the workers, the class struggle became bitter and the government was in crisis. Perón yielded to another military coup in 1955. But the period between the early forties and 1955 became known as the period of Peronism. To this day, the working class and sections of the middle class look back on those days with something of the same kind of nostalgia that many unionists in the U.S. look back on the New Deal. But this feeling is much, much stronger in Argentina. That period saw major concessions to the labor movement; the passage of all kinds of social welfare measures; and a period of economic boom in which raises were relatively easy to get. In addition, the workers' standard of living has been cut about in half since the epoch when Peronism was in power. The nostalgia for that epoch is so strong in Argentina that it has become part of the language. When people get up on a bright, clear, lovely morning, many will say, "Ah! Un día Peronista!", even if they are political opponents of Perón.

The Peronist party is a bourgeois political party called the Frente Justicialista de Liberación, or FREJULI. This bourgeois party is the largest political party in the country. Although its main power base is the trade-union bureaucracy, it is also supported by significant sections of the capitalist class. It is a little bit like the Democratic party used to be when it was composed of two apparently

opposite parts: big city machines resting on sections of the labor movement and the petty bourgeoisie coupled with the Southern agricultural bourbons. Peronism was backed by the labor bureaucracy, a section of the military, and some of the big cattle ranchers in the interior. The latter didn't mind if urban workers got a little bit of a break as far as wages were concerned as long as nobody bothered the agricultural workers with that kind of nonsense.

In other western capitalist countries like France and Italy, and even in Latin American countries like Uruguay and Chile, the problem for revolutionaries is to break the grip of the Stalinist trade-union bureaucrats, or the Social Democratic trade-union bureaucrats or their political parties. In Argentina, it is the grip of the Peronist trade-union bureaucracy that must be broken. But the Peronist party is a bourgeois party, not a working-class party.

Now, after the fall of Perón, a military regime with very close ties to U.S. imperialist interests came to power. This regime first tried to destroy the trade unions. It virtually outlawed the unions, put all of the funds of the trade unions in receivership, and even the bureaucrats had to go underground. The Peronists launched armed guerrilla warfare against the regime. It was perhaps the most intensive period of urban guerrilla warfare that the world has known, aside from Ireland. The guerrillas were crushed, but within the factories the unions were not destroyed.

The structure of the Argentine union movement is very different from the structure of the American union movement. In Argentina today, 90 percent of the workers in the country are members of unions. This includes all kinds of workers. Bank clerks and maids in private houses as well as steelworkers belong to unions. Almost all of the unions are industrial-type unions, organizing everybody in a particular industry. The only exceptions are small organizations of artisans. The only craft unions you'll find in Argentina will be made up of self-employed plumbers who work in people's houses, or owner-drivers of taxis, or especially skilled artisans who own their tools. But these are very small craft unions. All of the other unions are industrial-type unions. These big, industrywide unions are affiliated to the General Confederation of Labor (Confederación General de Trabajo - CGT). The CGT, unlike the AFL-CIO, participates in contract negotiations and has the power to call strikes.

In this country, the AFL-CIO does not do that. It is a federation and each national union is separate. Each particular union makes its own rules. Only the individual unions can call strikes. There has never been, in the history of the United States, a nationwide general strike or a general strike in a state. There have only been general strikes in cities. And when a general strike occurs in an American city, it is not because there is a structure set up to call one. It is called usually by the Central Labor Council which does not have the power to call strikes, which is a voluntary association of all the AFL-CIO locals in the city. If it calls a strike, and the strike comes about, it is only because the heat of the class struggle is so great that the workers overcome the lack of structure and the isolation of the American unions from one another. You can count the number of times it has happened on your fingers. Therefore, a general strike in an American city has particularly serious implications for the class struggle, and a nationwide general strike could easily come close to insurrection. In Argentina general strikes are much more common. Not only citywide and provincewide but even nationwide general strikes are called fairly often. They have considerable significance but they are not rare. There is one big union which is centralized and can call strikes for all its affiliates. Ninety percent of the workers in the country are affiliated to it.

This is what the military government faced after 1955. This is not what the bosses face in Brazil, for example. This is important to keep in mind, because the level of the class struggle can vary quite widely under different military dictatorships. In Argentina, the military was never able to completely suppress the workers movement or the revolutionary movement, despite periods of savage repression and the frequent use of torture. After the working class took the offensive again in 1969, the military had to retreat step by step. The ruling class there still carries out repression, when they find an opening. But they've been forced to give a lot of ground on questions of political rights. I don't plan to discuss the repression at great length at this time, although it's still an important issue in Argentine politics.

This union movement has one other feature which doesn't exist in most American unions, a kind of rank-and-file democracy. The CGT structure is very top-heavy, centralized and totally controlled by the Peronist union bureaucracy. But there's another structure which is not—the internal commissions. In every plant the workers in each section elect a delegate. A section may have 100 or 200 workers, but they average 25 or 30. That means that about every 25 workers elect a delegate. In the UAW, by contrast, every 1,000 or so workers elect one. The delegates from all the sections meet. If that body is large enough to require an executive committee, it elects what is called the internal commission. If not—that is, in a small plant—the body of delegates themselves serves as the internal commission.

The internal commissions in the Argentine plants or workplaces, unlike shop stewards in this country, can call strikes. They have the power to negotiate directly with the employers on all local questions: local grievances, work rules, speedups, and sometimes even salaries.

When the military government outlawed the top structure of the unions by such devices as freezing funds, these delegated commissions remained in existence and kept the union movement alive. They hit the government with strike after strike after strike. The ruling class found that it needed a mediator, a buffer between it and those inplant structures. So they re-legalized the Peronist union bureaucracy and made a kind of peace with it—peaceful coexistence. Off and on, that has been the situation ever since. The Peronist bureaucracy reaches understandings with the military and puts the damper on the class struggle of the ranks, but it still has the aura of being a persecuted and outlawed revolutionary group itself.

That's the kind of situation that existed when the current upsurge began in 1969. After allowing an elected government to hold office from 1963 to 1966, a new military coup took place. In the 1966 elections, the Peronists had obtained one-third of the votes and elected some

local provincial officials. All the elected officials were thrown out when General Onganía, a right-wing military dictator of the Brazilian type, took power.

Onganía tried to crack down on the labor movement again. In 1969, sections of the Peronist movement were semilegal and the radical groups were totally illegal. At that point, in Córdoba, a city of about 800,000, the situation broke open. Cordoba is the auto production center of Argentina. Among the many factories there are two Fiat plants, Fiat Concord and Fiat Materfer, just outside Córdoba. A fence separates them. One has 5,000 workers and the other has 3,000 workers.

In Córdoba there is a tradition called the "London Saturday." The workweek is longer in Argentina than in the U.S. In most places it is 48 hours. In Córdoba they had a 44 hour workweek and got paid for 48. In other words, they took Saturday afternoon off. The government decided to take away the London Saturday.

The CGT in Córdoba called a general strike and a mass meeting in the center of Córdoba. Everybody walked out and the meeting took place. At the edges of the meeting, police began to attack the crowd and the crowd fought back. They defeated the police. The workers took over the city for one night until the army was brought in. This has gone down in history as the "Cordobazo." A strike over an economic issue turned in a political direction against the government, with the masses demanding the removal of the junta. The workers and students created a semi-insurrection in the city, defeating the local repressive forces, but being in turn defeated by the federal ones.

Now, in Córdoba there were a number of people who worked in the Materfer and Concord Fiat factories who had been trying to take over their union from some very self-serving union bureaucrats. Incidentally, these dissidents were not Peronists. The Peronist bureaucracy is weak in Córdoba, which wasn't an industrial center during the period of Peronism. All of the major factories that have been built there were opened or began to be built after 1955. The workers in these factories have no traditional Peronist leadership. The workers had been through some very bad experiences. They had repeatedly put up slates to run for election for the factory-wide offices, only to have the whole slate fired. Now here is another peculiarity. The workers in the Materfer and Concord plants of the Fiat Corporation did not belong to national unions. There was a separate local union for those plants, called SITRAC (Sindical de los Trabajadores de Concord) and SITRAM (Sindical de los Trabajadores de Materfer).

The company had tried to install a company union in those two places. They got away with it until after the Cordobazo, when the militant workers who had been trying to take over that union all that time said: "Now look at the Cordobazo. Look what we did there. Now let's do it here." The militants carefully waited. They knew that if they ran for office they would be fired. That's what had happened to the last opposition group that ran for office. They waited until a general meeting was called by this company union leadership to endorse the latest contract, that give them only a 4 percent wage increase. This amounted to less than four cents an hour. When they got all the workers together in that meeting, the radicals who had organized themselves beforehand took the floor and said, "Now, in this meeting with all

of us here, we are going to elect the new union leadership." They threw out the old leadership and elected a new one. Then they had to ask the Ministry of Labor for recognition. But they were the actual union in the plant. They kept asking for recognition and couldn't get it. So they decided to make their move.

(This has a lot of analogies with the great Flint, Michigan, sitdown strike in 1936-37, but the Córdoba sitdown strike will have a much bigger place in Argentine history than the Flint strike did in American history.)

They kept negotiating although they knew they weren't going to get recognition, and they threatened to strike. The company sent its top management from Buenos Aires to negotiate with the union leaders. When the company men arrived, the union took over the plant, captured the company negotiators, and put them in a room. They took barrels of gasoline and placed them around the room. Then they announced to the world, to the dictatorship, and the company, that they wanted the duly elected leadership of their union to be recognized. I talked to some people who were there at the time, particularly José Páez, who was elected the workers' representative who handles all grievances in the plant.

Well, there was no smoking allowed that day in Fiat-Concord. The company was forced to yield. The workers got lawyers they knew to write up the agreement and it was announced on television. They forced a general from the regime to come there and announce it with the union leaders before they gave the plant back. All this was totally backed by the workers who occupied the plant. So they finally won their own union leadership.

One reason this has such significance in Argentine history is because it was the first big breakthrough in the battle against the union bureaucracy. In this case the breakthrough was made not directly against the Peronist bureaucracy, but against a very weak section of the labor bureaucracy. That is typical of what happens in real life. Things always seem to break at the peculiar places, never right in the center at first. Changes begin to break into the open in the exceptional places.

Shortly thereafter, every other major factory in Córdoba was occupied by its workers, and they got significant concessions. The example began to spread to factories in other parts of the country. The workers in the Fiat-Materfer plant next door to Fiat-Concord did the same thing and took over SITRAM.

This wave of struggles, sitdowns, sparked another military coup. Onganía was ousted by a more moderate military dictator named Levingston, who gave more legality to the opposition. The upsurge continued, however. On top of the Cordobazo, now there occurred Mendozazos, Rosariozazos, Mar del Platazos, in all the big cities—except Buenos Aires. Buenos Aires is the big one, the size of Paris. There was no Buenos-Airesazo. If one had occurred there, it might have been the Argentinazo.

This was the upsurge that created the prerevolutionary situation through which Argentina is now going.

A second Cordobazo occurred in 1971. All the union contracts, all across Argentina — another difference between the U.S. and Argentine labor movements — expire on the same day and the working class and the ruling class go at it until new contracts are signed. Under the military dictatorship, the dictator would usually just move in and

say this is the settlement, and that's it. They couldn't do it this time.

The officers of the local Córdoba CGT had quit. The heat from the government was too much. The officers of SITRAC-SITRAM called a general strike for Córdoba. They called a plenary meeting of the members of the CGT, who endorsed the strike and set a date. They decided it would be an active strike. They would go to work at six in the morning; at ten, they would come out of the factory to a certain barrio (neighborhood) and take it over. They did that. It was a directly political strike, with much more than wages involved. The governor of Córdoba at that time was a very reactionary military man, standing to the right of Levingston. He had announced that they weren't going to tolerate these strikes any more, and they were going to "cut off the head of the viper of communism," which was the unions. He announced that he was going to outlaw the leadership of all the militant unions in Córdoba. That was what the strike was about, in addition to wages. It became known as the Viborazo, vibor being viper. They cut off the head, allright, the head of the government. The workers struck. It was completely successful. They occupied the barrio and barricaded it. The cops came out but were beaten back. Right in the middle of the fight, the army decided to opt for another change. They didn't move into the second Cordobazo the way they moved into the first. They let it go until it petered out. They removed the governor. There were a couple of workers killed and a policeman killed - local fights. The army surrounded the town but stayed out.

Eight days after the viborazo, there was another coup. Levingston was thrown out and Lanusse, the present military ruler, came in. He decided to relax the situation, announced that the military would plan elections in the future, legalized opposition parties, and announced the Gran Acuerdo Nacional (the Great National Accord). The military negotiated with Perón and the bourgeois parties over this question and got an understanding from to proceed to an election and reintroduce an elected constitutional government in Argentina. That's how the new period opened.

Later that year the government moved militarily to crush SITRAC-SITRAM. They couldn't crush the whole union movement. One of the reasons they had made this move to loosen things up was to dampen the fires so they could get at the vanguard. They simply moved in the army one day in October 1971, without notice. The army occupied the two Fiat plants in Córdoba, fired 800 workers, including the entire union leadership, and put the leaders they could find in prison. Some of them spent as much as a year and six months in prison. The others, like Páez, had to go underground. They just hid out until the heat was off. That was the end, for the time being, of those two unions, SITRAC-SITRAM.

I have described to you the most dramatic and important struggles; but similar, though less spectacular struggles have occurred in factories and workplaces and neighborhoods in a number of cities including Buenos Aires and Greater Buenos Aires, very often involving struggles against the Peronist union bureaucracy. The Peronist bureaucrats nationally cooperated totally with the government in crushing SITRAC-SITRAM. The government gave

the Peronist bureaucrats the franchise for this plant and tried to make it part of the metallurgical union headed by Rucci. This is the largest union in the country. Rucci is also the head of the CGT and takes airplane trips to Spain to talk to Perón on occasion.

Shortly after the army's destruction of SITRAC-SITRAM, one of the armed guerrilla groups in Argentina, the Fuerzas Armadas de Liberación (FAL), tried to capture a manager of one of these plants in the streets of Córdoba. They failed and five guerrillas were killed by the police, who had set up a trap for them.

At this point let me describe the armed groups. There are four main armed groups and a few other smaller ones. One is called the Montoneros; this is the big Peronist guerrilla group, which originated in the fighting immediately after Perón's overthrow. Next is the FAL; this was originally linked to Guevara's group in Bolivia. Guevara fought in Bolivia but a similar group was set up in Argentina which was supposed to spread the fighting there. After Guevara's death this group decided to work with the Peronists. There is a smaller Peronist armed force called the FAP (Fuerzas Armadas Peronistas), and there is also the ERP (Ejército Revolucionario del Pueblo) which is the armed wing of the PRT-Combatiente, the official section of the Fourth International in Argentina.

About six months after the takeover of SITRAC-SITRAM, and after the death of the five guerrillas in the unsuccessful attempt to kidnap one of the managers, the top personnel manager of FIAT Concord, Oberdan Sallustro, was kidnapped. Sallustro was a paternalist. He used to come to the workers' picnics and make speeches about workers and employers being in one big happy family, while all this struggle was going on. The workers didn't like him.

The ERP kidnapped him and demanded that all the workers who had been fired be reinstated, that \$1 million be paid to the ERP, \$1 million to be used to buy and distribute school supplies to the children of Córdoba, and that the leadership of SITRAC-SITRAM be recognized again by the government. The military regime announced that the company would not be allowed to meet any of these terms or to negotiate with the kidnappers. They hunted down the kidnappers, found their hiding place, and opened fire on it. Sallustro was killed.

This kidnapping backfired, of course. A lot of repression came down in Córdoba. The workers districts were occupied by the authorities and every house was searched. Once again people like Páez had to go underground although they had nothing to do with the kidnapping. I asked Páez whether the union leadership had known about the kidnapping. He said no, not until it happened. What was their attitude toward it? He said they had nothing to do with it. They didn't like Sallustro. He said the workers were sympathetic in general to the armed groups; but this kidnapping was just not part of the union struggle, it was something separate, and its results, as a matter of fact, were to make things a little harder on them.

I asked him also about the role of the armed groups during the two Cordobazos. He said that in the first Cordobazo they were no more in evidence than anybody else, and that in both Cordobazos all sorts of radical groups were present. In the second Cordobazo (the Viborazo), the ERP was definitely present. Páez told me, "The

ERP was there as were all the groups, and all the revolutionary groups active at the university. They all put their flags and placards on the barricades. There were pictures of Lenin and Trotsky and Mao and lots of other stuff on the barricades. Any group that had something to put up did so. The ERP had people on motorcycles going around from barricade to barricade putting up banners. As far as I know there was one action carried out by the ERP itself. They took over a supermarket and invited the people to sack it. They also fought in the streets as did all the other groups."

Córdoba is a university town. It has 35,000 university students. A lot of these university students are fairly close to the workers, and live in the same neighborhoods. Probably it was the only place in the world where the great student upsurge of the mid-sixties actually succeeded in unifying with the workers. The results, however, were mixed because the students tended to be very much on the ultraleft side. But in a street fight everybody was welcome, and Páez had only praise for all the people who came out with the 8,000 workers that day of the Viborazo, including the members of the ERP. He was more cautious about the kidnapping, which was not connected with a mass upsurge. It had not been carried out under the orders of the union or in consultation with it as the street fighting was. The union had put up the barricades and invited people to come and help. The second Cordobazo was at a high point of the workers upsurge. The Sallustro kidnapping was at an ebb.

In the elections, the various armed groups developed different approaches. At the beginning almost all of them said the elections would be phony, the dictatorship probably would not go through with them, and that they had to maintain their armed activity. Within a few days before the elections, all but one of the armed groups had advocated voting for the Peronists—all but the ERP. The ERP suggested abstention.

Two days before the election, the publisher of a major daily newspaper in Buenos Aires was kidnapped and told by his kidnappers that they would kill him unless his newspaper published a statement from their group. He called the newspaper and they published the statement under the headline, "ERP August 22 Supports FREJULI in the Elections." The next day, a leaflet was distributed to a group of workers at a plant in Rosario, a leaflet signed by the ERP without the designation "August 22."

August 22 was the date of the massacre in Trelew of 16 guerrillas held in Rawson prison. Some were ERP people and some were Peronists. The leaflet signed by the ERP disassociated itself from the statement printed in the paper a few days earlier under the auspices of "ERP August 22," but it did not say that the other statement was a phony or that it had been done to embarrass them or the Peronists. It simply disassociated from this other group.

There were nine parties that qualified as national parties in the elections. There are dozens and dozens, maybe fifty parties or more in Argentina. Some are quite large. Most of them are regional or local parties. Only nine qualified to run a nationwide presidential slate and the others backed one of those nine in order to be backing a presidential slate. There is a tradition in Argentina of setting up electoral fronts involving more than one

party. One party gets on the ballot and sets up an electoral front. Anybody who wants to join can put their candidates on the ballot for other offices besides the president and vice-president according to some mathematical formula. FREJULI and the Peronists offered the other parties 25 percent of the posts on its ballot line, while taking 75 percent for itself. There are 8,000 posts at stake in those elections. Once again, it is not a federated structure as in the U.S. When there is an election, every elected office in the country is up for election.

The PRT (Verdad) was recognized by the last world congress as a sympathizing section of the Fourth International. There had been a split in the PRT in 1968, before the Cordobazo. One group, the PRT (Combatiente), went in a guerrillaist direction with a paper called Combatiente and the other, the PRT (Verdad), had a paper called Verdad. In the course of the last year, the Verdad group, in order to get ballot status and legality, took over an old socialist party called the Partido Socialista Argentino (PSA), which had ballot status from the previous election, but which had only about fifty or sixty members. The PRT simply took it over. The Trotskyist leadership of the PRT became the leadership of the PSA. They later changed its name to the Partido Socialista de los Trabajadores (PST). In essence the PRT (Verdad) became the Partido Socialista de los Trabajadores (PST) with ballot status nationally.

The PST set up an electoral front in the Argentine tradition; but theirs was different from the others. It was set up as a workers' front. They said that the PST would take 25% of the posts and offered 75% to workers and neighborhood leaders who had been in the struggles against the bosses and bureaucrats in the past period. That's how Páez became the candidate for governor of Córdoba. He was not a member of the PST. He accepted this offer, as did two other leaders of SITRAC-SITRAM (another one, a Maoist, refused the offer). They made the same offer throughout the country and they ended up with 2,300 candidates, about 400 of whom had been members of the PRT before they joined the new PST. The rest were militant workers. Hundreds of them were delegates or members of the internal commissions which I have described to you. This was a small step toward breaking some of the militant workers away from Peronism, on the class-struggle level in the plants.

The Communist party backed a bourgeois center-left party called the Alianza Revolucionaria del Pueblo (People's Revolutionary Alliance), which ran Alende and Sueldo for president and vice-president. It is made up of socalled anti-imperialist national capitalists, allied with Christian Democrats (left Catholics) who have a policy of general social reform very similar to Frei's Christian Democrats in Chile in an earlier period. But of course they are opposed to divorce—it's illegal in Argentina—opposed to abortion, etc. That is the party which the CP backed. The CP threw its cadres into that campaign and the CP, I am told, has a cadre of several thousand. Technically, the CP is illegal. There is a law proscribing the CP, decreed by the military government. It's a very peculiar law. I have been told it's never used against the CP, which operates fairly openly, puts out leaflets in its own name, and so on. Some Trotskyists have been arrested under that law, as have other trade-union militants. It is used as a pretext for arresting radicals or tradeunion militants in the midst of a fight and keeping them in jail until the trial comes up, at which point they are usually declared innocent. Of course the PST campaigned to get rid of that law.

The only other so-called left party to run in these elections was called the Frente Izquierda Popular (Left People's Front). It doesn't amount to much. It looks to a section of the military to take the Peruvian road and it describes itself as left-Peronist. It declared it would support the Peronists in the second round as did Alende-Sueldo. Incidentally, about the second round: The Peronists are the biggest party. The next biggest party is the Radicals, an ordinary bourgeois party without much connection with trade-union bureaucrats. The base of the Radicals is the cattle ranchers and meatpackers in Buenos Aires, the biggest province, the province of what we would call the prairies. Meat is still a big production and export item in Argentina. These are the only two parties that had a chance of winning. If one or another did not get an absolute majority the first time, there would be a runoff. In that run-off, deals would be made as to which of the other parties would support which of those two. Alende-Sueldo made such an announcement regarding the Peron-

The other parties range from center-right to far-right. I won't describe them except to mention that one of those that's considered on the right is the Social Democratic party, Partido Socialista Democratica, which had its origins in the Second International but has long since lost any connection with the labor movement. It is now considered a moderate right-wing party based entirely on the bureaucracy of some cooperative insurance, housing, and merchandizing enterprises.

The strategy of the PST in the campaign was to make as many points as it could against Peronism and to win a section of the rank and file of the Peronist movement to class politics. Hence, the Frente Obrero (Workers' Front), their electoral front. By coincidence the convenio, the national contract, expired during this campaign and most of the campaign took place during a strike wave.

In this strike wave, the Frente Obrero and the PST went to every factory they could and offered their campaign for the workers to use in their strike. I described some of this in articles that I wrote. It was moderately successful. That is, they did make a lot of contact with workers, their name became a household word, they did draw votes, and they were attacked repeatedly by the Peronist trade union bureaucracy. Rucci himself finally ended up sending a telegram to Coral denouncing the fact that Coral was getting on TV and calling him a labor bureaucrat.

Probably the most dramatic development in the campaign was when the candidate for mayor on the Frente Obrero ticket in a little town called San Nicolas ended up leading an occupation of the biggest factory in the country, the SOMISA steel plant. This got national publicity. Perón sent a letter published in the papers denouncing the strike-occupation as a provocation, accusing its organizers of trying to make it hard for the Peronists to win the election. I was in San Nicolas. It's a little town, and the PST had no supporters there six months ago. But, by the time they held the windup campaign rally

in San Nicolas, 1,000 people were present. I don't mean that they now have 1,000 members. Maybe they have forty members in the town now. I saw forty when I was there. But it indicates the kind of interest they were able to generate. Most of those who came to the rally probably voted for the Peronists. But they were open to what the PST is saying, especially when it criticizes Perón and the Peronist bureaucracy.

The PST leaders expected about 100,000 votes, and on the night after the election the newspapers reported that the PST had 95,000 votes. Two hours later, they reported only 76,000. The military government had announced a computer error. So the PST ended up with around 76-77,000 votes, about .75% of the national vote. Not bad in a country of 24 million.

What's even more interesting is that for the local offices, such as provincial delegate or delegate to the national assembly, the PST percentage ran between 2% and 5%. So it is clear that there were many thousands of workers who voted for the Peronists for president and for the PST for lower offices.

The results as far as building the Trotskyist party is concerned from this election were more or less as follows. A year ago they had some 500 members. They grew, and in the course of this campaign the PST took in 1,500 candidate members. They also got a little more into the youth, but the campaign took place during the summer when all the schools were out of session. They had claimed in December, when I was there earlier, a youth group of 2,500. I did not see it, but of course I was there during their summer. When I went to locals it looked as though the average size would be around 70 party members and 15 youth. I saw a few hundred youth at the various rallies. But if they've got 2,500, they're going to have to get them into shape when school's back. They've got the others, though. I saw them.

They started out with ten locals, they now have seventy all over the country, and these locals have headquarters. I visited at least twenty-five or thirty of them in various parts of the country. Each is as large as this headquarters, and quite well setup. They tend to be in neighborhoods and not in the dead center of someplace where nothing is going on.

They now have a real problem of integrating and consolidating these new forces. I met people who were activists in the party who could not read. They recruited workers directly out of strike struggles, good militants, who don't know much about Marxism or a world view. Several times when I was showing around a copy of *The Militant* with a picture of Engels, there would always be somebody in the hall who would say, "Who's that?" So they have a problem of educating those new people. But it's a very good problem. It shows they've gotten to newly radicalizing sections of the working class.

There's a very highly charged political atmosphere in Argentina, much more so than here. Even the daily bourgeois press has a much higher political level than here. It is generally a good situation for party building right now.

The comrades expect that the military will allow the Peronists to take power, that for a short period of time the Peronists may be able to make enough concessions to keep the workers quiet, but not for any extended period. The upsurge will continue and the Peronists will then be

more and more exposed, since they will be the government and will intervene directly against these strikes and struggles.

The day after the election, for example, a strike was taking place in the Citroen plant in Buenos Aires. The workers had shut down the plant and gone on strike the week before to get twelve of the delegates hired back (the company had fired them). The day after the election the Peronist union bureaucrats came into the general assembly of the striking workers and proposed that the strike be ended now that the Peronists had won the election. Wait for the new government to settle it, they said. At the same time, the union bureaucrats bitterly attacked one of the delegates who was a member of the PST. They said that the PST were troublemakers who have been hanging around the plants and passing out their election literature and urging workers to take advantage of the election campaign to go on strike for higher wages during the convenio period, and they had been repudiated by the voters. You shouldn't have anything more to do with the PST, the Peronists urged, because the Peronists had 50% and the PST got less than 1%.

A Peronist worker who was also one of the twelve who had been fired took the floor. He said, "Well, I voted the way you did and I think we won a victory; but we know, and you know, that we never get anything that way. We have to get it by continuing to strike." The workers voted to continue the strike.

So the fat's in the fire.

Question Period

Question: Why did Lanusse agree to give the Peronists the election on the first round, rather than have a runoff?

Answer: Because the Peronists won about 50% of the vote. You only have the second round if no one gets 50%, and the Peronists got 50%. That 50% figure was announced before the computer broke down. But even later, when the claim was 49%, a runoff would have been a waste of time because the Alende-Sueldo group had already announced that they would throw their votes to the Peronists, and they had nine percent.

Alende-Sueldo might have gotten a few more crumbs out of negotiations for a second round. They probably got a few as it was for making the announcement of support to the Peronists. But it was no contest, that's the reason. The exact percentage figure never did come out. Every newspaper announced a different percentage.

Question: USLA work centered on exposing the repression that existed under Lanusse. Now you didn't go into that. Was it as much of a major factor in Argentine life as the information that USLA was putting out might have led people to think? Did the Trelew massacre climax and more or less signal the end of the repression in Argentina?

Answer: No, it is not true that the Trelew massacre marked the climax and end of the repression. The repression still exists. But let me describe it to you. Argentina is and has been a military dictatorship. I won't describe to you what it was like before the recent events because I wasn't there. But all political opposition was banned and the generals kept a very tight rein on things.

Since Lanusse came in - after the Cordoba uprising and

the general boiling over of the class struggle that followed—the dictatorship has taken another tack. It has retreated, although there are still no constitutional guarantees such as you will find in a typical bourgeois democracy. But rather than risk further enraging the masses of workers who wanted more freedom, the government has made some very big concessions.

For instance, political groups have been legalized and are able to publish papers—with two exceptions. One is the CP; but the CP publishes a paper anyway. The other exception is the armed guerrilla groups.

This has two sides to it. There is no government in the world that will tolerate armed groups robbing banks, and doing other things like that. That's against the law under any government in the world. Anyone who does this is immediately subject to severe repression.

But when people who do it in Argentina are caught, they are tortured. They don't generally torture other types of prisoners. They torture the members of the armed groups, and they do it because they want them to tell where their hideouts are, who the other members of their group are, and so on, so they can make further roundups. Even if they are merely suspected of being members or associated with members of armed groups, they may be tortured. They are kept in jail for indefinite periods of time, sometimes without even having charges brought against them. They are kept in prison under very severe conditions. They can't read what they want, they can't visit with their relatives, etc. When they are allowed visits, they have to visit across a fifteen-foot barrier - there's wire keeping the prisoners fifteen feet from the relatives. They let a dozen or so relatives and a dozen or so prisoners in at the same time. They have to shout across this barrier, so the visit consists of seeing that the other person is still alive, period.

These are the kinds of conditions that exist in the prisons today for members of the armed groups or those suspected of being members. There are no constitutional guarantees so they are not assured of a trial. Their lawyers do not automatically get a writ of habeas corpus to bring them before a judge or anything like that which would happen here.

Not only the armed groups but other people occasionally are picked up off the street and arrested. You don't hear about them for awhile and you finally figure it out. You get a lawyer to verify whether they are in prison. He tells you there are no charges. "We'll have to wait and see." This happens to members of the PST on occasion, and to militant unionists. Páez was picked up and held for twelve days just before this campaign. The head of the CGT in Cordoba was picked up and held for a year. This happens with militant unionists occasionally.

That still exists. It still existed during the election campaign. What doesn't exist is a situation of civil war in that country, and any claim that it does is ridiculous to anyone who walks down the street and sees the situation.

There are political freedoms in Argentina except for the things that I have described. Anybody can put out any paper. Even the views of the ERP can be published in newspaper articles, and there is a newspaper which does so. But they never mention the ERP in the articles, because if they did, whoever was selling the paper would imme-

diately be arrested. So in these articles, which everybody knows represents the ERP line, they don't talk about armed actions, simply political line. That paper comes out irregularly. There is also, in general, freedom of assembly in Argentina right now.

In some ways, the political atmosphere is less repressive than in the United States. There is no thought control in the sense we know it here. There's no witch-hunt. The cops don't stand outside of your hall with the opposition's buttons on, insulting you as you come in the door, as they do in Chicago sometimes. There's a much fuller, freer political atmosphere in general. This is because of the high political level of the working class, and the upsurge in the class struggle. On the other hand, there are no guarantees, no constitutional guarantees, as in the United States. The police could pick you up any time.

That's the kind of a situation it is. I talked to members of the prisoners' families and they were very appreciative of what the USLA had done. Nobody should get the idea that USLA work is not important.

Campora, the Peronist president-elect, has promised, (at least in an interview with the Chilean press) to release all political prisoners, and his statement was categorical. They said, "What do you mean? What about those charged with crimes like kidnapping and so on?" In response to that, he replied that anyone who has been put in jail under any charge who did what he did as a political act, will be released.

That remains to be seen. The maximum pressure that can be put on him to do that, the better. That of course will be one of the first campaigns that the PST will undertake and is undertaking now after the campaign. It also campaigned for release of all political prisoners during the campaign. But now, the workers expect that to happen and will be disappointed if it doesn't.

As far as the attitude of the workers toward these armed groups is concerned, they have sympathy for them. It is like the attitude of Black people in this country who sympathized with the Black Panther party during the period when they were being murdered by the police. I think you would have had to look pretty far to find a Black person who didn't sympathize with the Panthers. You would also have had to look pretty far to find one who would associate with them. That's the sort of atmosphere.

Question: Would you comment on the role that women played in this situation in Argentina, and what the attitude to the development of the women's liberation movement was.

Answer: It's contradictory. It has its good and bad sides from a feminist point of view. In general, Argentine women are not very liberated. The attitude toward the women's liberation movement as such, the words "women's liberation," and the movement in the United States, is one of total misunderstanding. Their concept is that it's a fad (I'm not talking about the people who read The Militant, but most of the other people including most of the political people). Some people think it has something to do with style, because that's what they hear about through the American advertising firms—"Virginia Slims" and things like that. The women in the PST know better, of course, and they're pushing rather hard. They're very

curious about it. The PST has a lot of very active women comrades; many are very good speakers, and they talk about women's liberation when they make speeches. However, they don't talk about abortion and they don't talk about divorce. They talk about equal pay, family allowances, women not being considered decorations of an office, the problems of women on the job and in the neighborhood. That's the way it is, that's the present stage.

In the party, they probably have a higher percentage of women than in the SWP. I would say perhaps half, maybe a little less, of the party members are women. In the leading committees, that is not the case. There, the tendency is for women to take a back seat and let the men do the talking. There is a conscious attempt by the party to change this and there are many PST women spokespersons and very good ones. That's about where it stands right now. The general atmosphere in the country on this question is much further behind what it is in the States. In this sense the PST is in the vanguard—I should say the PST women; I didn't hear the PST men talk about this at all.

Question: Do you have any information on the relative increase in workers the ERP has recruited versus that of the PST?

Answer: As far as how many people the ERP has recruited, that's very hard to tell because they're totally underground. I couldn't even talk to any of them. They have to be exceedingly careful. The only people I could talk to were members of the families of people who were in prison. The ERP engages in no open political work at all. A paper is published reflecting their views which comes out very irregularly. I saw two copies while I was there and it didn't have much in it except articles on their position on the election. It had an article denouncing Silvio Frondizi who had been the editor of the paper and went over to become a candidate of the FIP, the "Popular Left Front." It is just a guess, but I would say they're probably not recruiting many. Recruitment has to be on the basis of joining a band of underground armed people. That's very hard to do.

Many of their leaders have been killed, many of them have split, and many others are in jail. The families told me that of the original Trotskyists that were in the PRT-Combatiente at the time of the original split in the PRT, only a handful are left. It's almost an entirely new group now.

Hugo Blanco was in Argentina. He was picked up by the cops, arrested, and kept in jail for two months before he was expelled to Chile. He was put in the same prison with the ERP-Combatiente people and he talked with them. I asked him what his impression was. I'll simply tell you what he told me. He had nothing but praise for them on a moral level. He said they were fine, wonderful people, that they overcame all of the dehumanizing aspects of prison life, and acted as human beings to save one another as well as other people. But, he also said that he didn't think they were Trotskyists. They were guerrillistas, Castroists, and they knew very little about Trotskyism. They had no concept of building a Trotskyist party. That was what he said.

Question: You mentioned that of the approximately 2,000 PST candidates, 75% were not necessarily PST members, but came out of groups in the unions. I was wondering

if you knew if many of them joined. Also, what are some of the PST's plans of activity now that the campaign is over?

Answer: Most of the people who ran for office joined the PST. That's where most of the 1,500 new, candidate members came from.

As far as future activities go, the PST anticipates a continued upsurge of working-class struggles against the bosses and struggles against the bureaucracy. For example the rate of inflation last year was 65%. The wage increase that was offered by the employers was 15%. The workers succeeded in getting wage increases of between 25% and 40% in the last month. That gives them an increase in the standard of living relative to a couple of months ago, but it will last for only a couple of months. About the time the new government takes power these gains will have been eaten up by inflation. The workers will be back where they were when they started the contract negotiations. If no new increases are gained within another six months, the workers will have taken a 30% cut in their standard of living. PST leaders anticipate that sometime in that period strike struggles and conflicts will begin again - and not only over the wage issue, but over many other issues. In all periods of industrial working class upsurge, such as the one here in the 1930s, the issues that are often the meanest and the hottest involve working conditions in the plants. That's a big, hot question there, so they expect that to continue as well.

The PST comrades also say they are going to pay much closer attention to student work now that the students have come back from vacation and the election campaign is over. Almost all their students right now are high-school students, called secondary students. In Argentina, many high-school students also work. So even among students, what the PST basically has is a working-class cadre. This has a very good side but the PST also knows that it must work on the universities. If they don't, the CP will make gains there. That, together with some very intensive educational work, and trying to extend the contacts in the working class that were made during this campaign is what they outlined to me as their immediate tasks.

Question: I'd like to know more about the fusion of the Verdad group with the Socialist party. Coral was leader of the old Socialist party, and now he is a leader of the PST, and was its presidential candidate. Does he consider himself a Trotskyist?

Answer: He does. I asked very careful questions about that of people who had been in the PRT and of Coral himself. They said yes, he has simply been recruited to Trotskyism. I wish we could recruit some people like him into the SWP. He's probably the best orator in Argentina, the best single platform speaker in the country. Of course, that is just one talent and does not vouch for Bolshevik qualities. But Coral has joined the party, says he is a Trotskyist, and the speeches that he makes are Trotskyist speeches.

As for the rest of the PSA, it was a shell. There were only about fifty or sixty members in the fusion. Coral was the most prominent and authoritative of them. When the fusion was made with the PRT (Verdad), all the leading committees of the party were taken over by PRT (Verdad)

members, with the single exception of Coral. The PST is the Trotskyist party, that's all. In addition, there are some fifty or so old Debs-type socialists around. Some of them understand what has happened and accept it, and some of them don't. Those who don't will probably just drift away.

Coral is an intellectual. He was a journalist. But he was also a leader of peasant struggles in certain areas of the interior. There is only a small peasantry in Argentina. But these peasants occupied—took over—some of the latifundias next to the smaller lots. Coral was jailed several times in the course of these occupations.

He was prominent because he became secretary to Ignacio Palacio, an old socialist leader in Argentina who was as prominent as Debs was here. Palacio supported the Russian revolution, although he stayed in the Social Democracy. He was a member of parliament and he introduced a lot of social legislation and so on, and died in the 1960s. Palacio, however, was a reformist, unlike Debs who was a revolutionary.

Coral was the most prominent person in Argentina to begin a public defense of the Cuban revolution just after the Cuban revolution. He formed the Argentine equivalent of the Fair Play for Cuba Committee, visited Cuba, and was a delegate to the OLAS conference. That is his background. Originally a reformist socialist, became pro-Cuba, later recruited to Trotskyism.

Question: You mentioned that a majority of the candidates of the PST were workers who wanted to express their ideas and take part in the electoral process, and were not actual members of the PST. Could you tell me what kind of program they ran on?

Answer: They ran on the PST program which was also the Workers Front program. In local areas, they would campaign mainly on the main class struggle issue that the workers were faced with. Now I talked with many of these candidates. They understood the immediate issues facing the workers pretty well, but not necessarily the entire PST program. I remember one fish worker, a filet-slicer, who was a delegate of her union and a candidate of the PST. She kept referring to herself as a Peronist. I said, "But you are running on the PST ticket." She said, "Yes, because they are the only ones here that aren't bosses. The Peronists here have all bosses and fakers running for office." Her husband had joined the PST but she had not. Maybe she never will, I don't know.

The PST intends to use the workers front now to continue working-class activity in the factories and neighborhoods. They urge people who are not members of the PST, or may not agree with the PST on everything but who agree on the class struggle issue in that area, to join them. That's the nature of the front. The principled nature of it was that it was against all the capitalist candidates who were running in this election and for a class line in this election. On that they all agreed.

Question: At the time of Perón's return to Argentina, when there was a mass upsurge in favor of Perón, the paper of the PST demanded that the FREJULI, the Justicialist party, a bourgeois party as you explained, run 80% of its candidates as workers. How does this jibe with the orientation of breaking workers away from the Peronist bureaucracy, or breaking them from the bour-

geois parties? I assume that the paper asked the workers to run as workers, not necessarily as workers with working-class politics, since they would be running on the Justicialist party ticket. Wasn't the same type of mistake made in Uruguay, where the comrades participated in the Frente Amplio?

Was there any PST propaganda during the elections concerning the role of the elections in the class struggle? The period in Argentina is characterized since 1969 as a prerevolutionary situation and there have been several more semi-insurrections since the Cordobazo. The elections are obviously a maneuver by the ruling class to try to draw the people away from mass struggle in the streets and the factories while they retain complete power in the state apparatus, with the army ready to intervene any time, as in Bolivia, as we have warned might happen in Chile. So what kind of propaganda was developed around the fact that the elections were really a maneuver, and that real power lay in the army, and that preparations had to be made for confronting the army?

Finally, what is the exact nature of the PST? Is it a democratic centralist party? Does the PST want to be a part of the Fourth International? Is that the official position?

Answer: When Perón came back, there was one issue of Avanzada Socialista that carried a headline stating something like, "80% of the candidates should be workers." This particular article, like the PST campaign as a whole, was directed against Peronism. What was meant was asking a question to expose the Peronists, such as "If the Peronists are really for the workers, why don't they run 80% workers?" Unfortunately, in my opinion, the wording of that particular headline did not make this point clear. However, that is a faulty formulation in one article in the paper. The PST, before, during, and after Perón's visit ran against the Peronist campaign, attacked Peronism, and attempted to win workers away from Peronism. That is the essential thing.

The Uruguayan comrades did enter the Frente Amplio, which was an electoral front of the CP, SP, a number of other workers groups, but which included a bourgeois party. It was very similar to the Unidad Popular in Chile. We disagreed with that. The Uruguayan comrades said that the reason they did it is that by entering that front, it became possible to use the front's ballot status to run their own candidates, and that their campaign attacked the bourgeois candidates. They showed me some copies of their newspaper. It attacked the presidential candidate of the Frente Amplio of which they were formally a part. They said that this policy was principled. I said it was unprincipled. We didn't come to any meeting of the minds on this. That's all I can say about it.

On what the PST said about the role of the Argentine elections in the class struggle. I heard it discussed at every meeting I went to—over and over again. They were crystal clear on this suestion. They very carefully explained it to the people they recruited. They said, "We are not running in this election to get votes. No election ever solves the kind of problems that face this country, the problems of workers coming to power. The military will move in any time they want to. The problem is to extend the Cordobazo into an Argentinazo, and to take power in the streets." This was the kind of thing they said at every

single election meeting I went to. They're very clear and very good at explaining this point.

Is the PST democratic centralist? Yes, the PST is a Trotskyist, Bolshevik, democratic-centralist party. They took over the PSA, totally and completely. The PST has all the statutes that a Trotskyist party has. The PST has announced its political solidarity with the Fourth International. It did that at its founding congress.

They have the same problem there that we have here. It is illegal to belong to an international political group. But they make their sympathy with the Fourth International clear, as we do.

Question: What's the role of Politica Obrera in Argentine politics?

Answer: I did see this Lambertist paper. I don't think they've got much. There are at least half a dozen smaller groups of people who call themselves Trotskyists. Some of them supported the PST campaign and some of them didn't. I noticed that all of them sold their literature at the PST rally because it was a good place to find a lot of revolutionary-minded people.

Question: Do you have any copies of the issue of the paper that had the PRT(C) position on the Czechoslovakia invasion and the Albanians?

Answer: That was in a pamphlet entitled The Only Road to Workers Power and Socialism, which they announced as their programmatic document.

Question: Does the ERP put out material in public?

Answer: They don't put anything out in public in their own name, except by military operations. If they want to put out a leaflet, it's a military operation, because you cannot risk being caught standing on the streetcorner handing it out. If it says ERP on it, you are subject to torture if you are caught distributing it. No question about it, they are going to torture you and ask you where you got that leaflet, what the building was where you got it, and then they're going to go arrest that person. So the ERP supporters have to take considerable risk to put out a leaflet. So they don't put anything out except what they consider to be extremely important statements. In the time I was there only two appeared in the name of the ERP that I know of. One statement disassociated the ERP from the statement made by the ERP-August 22, and the other was an announcement that the ERP had given a large sum of money to the strikers in a particular strike.

The police immediately showed up at the strike headquarters with warrants to arrest the strike committee for receiving stolen property. Fortunately, there was no money there. The strikers simply said, "We don't know any more about it than you do. We read the same thing you did." Now, that leaflet could have been just a company provocation.

The Partido Socialista de los Trabajadores (Socialist Workers Party) on the Elections

1. Our Electoral Campaign

[The following document was unanimously approved by a special congress of the Partido Socialista de los Trabajadores on December 17, 1972.]

Our party is preparing to intervene in the elections. During the past year our principal political efforts have been directed to establishing the legal groundwork necessary for this. All of the compañeros know even better than the leadership what sacrifices we have had to make to be able to intervene in the elections and to gain legal recognition for the party. The time has come to make use of this strong political tool—a legal party—for educating the working class and organizing the workers and student vanguard on a political level. This document is intended to clearly lay out the character of our election campaign.

I. Why Does a Revolutionary Party Engage in an Election Campaign?

Many years ago the great revolutionist Rosa Luxemburg explained why revolutionists participate in elections: "The real purpose of the Reichstag elections is to enable us to spread Socialist education. . . . " [J. P. Nettle, Rosa Luxemburg, abridged ed., p. 296]. In another of her works she stressed that both the parliamentary and trade union activity are very important to convince the workers that they don't suffice by themselves: " . . . as a result of its trade-union and parliamentary struggles, the proletariat becomes convinced of the impossibility of accomplishing a fundamental social change through such activity and arrives at the understanding that the conquest of power is unavoidable." ["Reform or Revolution," in Rosa Luxemburg Speaks, Pathfinder Press, 1970, p. 58]. And once again she emphasized: "trade-union and parliamentary activity are important for the socialist movement, because such activity prepares the proletariat, that is to say, creates the subjective factor for the socialist transformation, for the task of realizing socialism." [Ibid., p. 58].

Lenin demonstrated that this was not merely a Lux-emburgian concept when he took up the same question: "The principal question for Social-Democrats who value the elections primarily as a means for the political enlightenment of the people, is, of course, the ideological and political content of all the propaganda and agitation to be carried on in connection with them." [Lenin, Collected Works, vol. 17, Foreign Languages Publishing House, 1963, pg. 279]. And during the early 1930s Trotsky commented on the situation in Spain which was rather similar to the period we are presently going through in our coun-

try: "The communists need the forum of the Cortes as a bond with the masses; and from this bond will develop actions that will submerge the Cortes. This is the essence of the revolutionary dialectic with regard to parliament." [Leon Trotsky, "The Spanish Revolution and the Dangers Threatening It," *The Spanish Revolution*, Pathfinder Press, N. Y., 1973, pg. 118].

A revolutionary party's election propaganda has three aims that can be condensed into a single aim: to build and strengthen the party.

The first aim is to expose and denounce the regime. In this case, it is the semicolonial and capitalist regime that oppresses the country and exploits the workers. The second aim is to show the working class that the solution to its problems lies in its mobilizations and not in the possible parliamentary or electoral activity. We should show the falsity of bourgeois democracy and how only the activity and unity of the exploited can free the workers. The third aim is to show that a working class and socialist revolution is necessary, that the only way to overcome the country's crisis and the situation of the workers is for the working class to take power.

These three aims can be condensed into one: the elections should be used to strengthen the party, opening up a much broader contact with the mass movement and its vanguard. Everything that leads to strengthening the party by reaching out and winning over the best fighters from the working class and oppressed sectors constitutes a step forward for the development of the working class revolution in the country, since the lack of a strong revolutionary socialist party is the greatest hindrance to be overcome before the Argentine masses take power.

This highest aim, strengthening the party for the elections, opening a much broader channel of contact with the mass movement, should not be forgotten for one moment. This means that our main objective is not to win a high number of votes, but rather to educate the masses and the vanguard, and in this way strengthen the party. Hence, although various tactics and organizational measures might enable us to win a few thousand more votes they could prove to be inadequate unless they contributed to broadening and strengthening the party's influence, which will be measured by the recruitment of members and sympathizers, newspaper sales, etc.

The process of strengthening the party takes place through a contradictory combination of agitation, organization, and propaganda. Agitation, utilized to educate the masses during an election campaign, consists of advancing a small number of ideas or slogans so that the broadest sectors of workers possible understand them. The aim

is to popularize the party as a vanguard organizing tool for applying these democratic, anti-imperialist, and revolutionary slogans. But this activity in itself does not suffice, since once the elections are over the activity fades and what remains is a very generalized, abstract sympathy for the party. For this sympathy to endure it must be organized during the elections so that it will continue afterwards, that is, by strengthening the party's organic sphere of influence. To do this it is essential that we link up with the workers vanguard, principally the vanguard in the basic industries. It will be necessary to use the elections to do this so that we can reach this vanguard with our propaganda and organize on the basis of it. Our position of running worker candidates enables us to bring together, organize, and reach the working-class vanguard. If we restricted ourselves to propagandizing around the working-class vanguard without organizing it, we would isolate ourselves from the broader masses. If we instead organize it, beginning around support for our slates and engagement in electoral activity, we could win it over not only through propaganda, but through joint activity, in this case electoral. In this way we repeat on a much higher level what we usually do when we jointly intervene in a working class or democratic conflict: we try to bring the vanguard together around a conflict so that it can in an organized form respond to the needs of the struggle as a first step toward joining the party and gaining a revolutionary Marxist outlook.

II. The National Perspective and the Elections

Many sympathizers of guerrilla warfare wonder: How long will the scraps of democratic rights last? Is there any possibility of a more or less prolonged stage of bourgeois democracy? Won't we be turning into election campaigners and parliamentarians by turning away from preparing the armed struggle of the masses?

We believe that our country, the same as other Latin American countries, will go through a bourgeois democratic stage that will last only as long as the unstable equilibrium between the classes. If no class wins a decisive victory and if a revolutionary situation or one close to it does not face the working class as happened in Bolivia under Torres or as is the case currently in Chile, the present stage will be prolonged. That is, the duration will depend on the situation in the class struggle. That situation could set us back with a government of the Onganía or Brazilian type. The bureaucratic leaderships of the workers movement and Peronism, which are attempting to stabilize the situation, could maintain the unstable balance; or things could evolve toward a situation similar to that in Chile or to Bolivia under Torres. We believe that the latter is the most likely although it will be dragged out and undergo many turns. This means a slow process toward weak, Kerensky-type governments, like those of Allende and Torres, with insurrectional situations. If this probable future situation is to end in victory for the working class, a strong revolutionary party is needed that can only be built if it fully participates in the mass movement, taking advantage of every opening.

To hold that the most important task today is to "prepare for armed struggle" means playing with the perspectives of a different stage and not with the present situation, since the tasks of revolutionists always flow from the current reality. Only by penetrating the mass movement today with a program for the current period will we be able to carry out the tasks of future stages. And what we face now are elections that the masses will engage in and will not boycott, with the exception of a few ultraleft sects who will call for a boycott.

In addition, to make arming of the workers part of an electoral program when the workers themselves are not posing it is as ridiculous as the same call made by the Stalinists in Spain in 1931 during the "third period." We reply in the same words Trotsky used against the ultralefts of that time: "To counterpose the slogan of arming the workers to the reality of the political processes that grip the masses at their vitals means to isolate oneself from the masses—and the masses from arms." [Ibid., p. 117. Emphasis in original.]

III. Utilize the Elections to Explain the Need for an Argentinazo

The elections are being held for two reasons. The first and principal one is the upsurge in the workers and mass movements which has brought about a clearly prerevolutionary situation of general instability. The Cordobazos, Rosariazos and Rocazos, like the labor conflicts that have occurred without letup, have led to a number of semi-insurrectional situations in the country. The fear that these semi-insurrections will end in a general semi-insurrection or insurrection, an Argentinazo, has led the Argentine bourgeoisie to try to divert the mass movement, to try to lead it into a blind alley—the elections, granting Peronism a conditional right to take part in them.

If after seventeen years the Argentine bourgeoisie has decided to call on Perón and Peronism to rescue it, it is because the situation is desperate. But this appeal to Peronism is two-sided: one, it mitigates the upsurge and sows confusion; two, it speeds up the crisis by dispelling the illusions of the mass movement and in this way helping to clear the way for a rapid new upsurge.

The combination of an upsurge in the mass movement on the one hand, and a bourgeois maneuver to divert it on the other, explains the current widening of democratic rights and the holding of elections coupled with the worst type of repressive measures and legislation.

This prerevolutionary stage has been characterized and will continue to be characterized by one fact: the questioning of bourgeois power through semi-insurrectional situations. The bourgeoisie's electoral maneuver, to its own good fortune, is being carried out at a moment when the labor movement has subsided to its lowest point since the Cordobazo. But this momentary lull should not cause us to lose sight of the general dynamics of the class struggle after the elections are over. For either economic or democratic reasons big new workers and popular mobilizations will break out within a few months—or at the most two years - questioning the newly installed government and the bourgeois order. Whether it is over wage questions, or repressive measures, or the struggle against imperialism, the toiling masses will again be on the march. The meager democratic concessions, such as making Peronism legal,

will only help these struggles, which will show up as clear as day.

Any conjunctural improvement in the bourgeois economy in the context of its structural crisis and the current prerevolutionary situation, in which the main element is the fact that the masses have not been defeated, will only revitalize the workers movement. In this way an upturn in the economic cycle will be added to the democratic concessions, facilitating a rise in the class struggle that will open the way to new Cordobazos.

This is why our main objective in participating in the elections is to help educate the workers to draw the fundamental experience of their own action from the Cordobazo to the present.

There are several fundamental conclusions that we want them to draw. First, that the struggle began on the basis of minimal or democratic demands. Second, that all the semi-insurrections were in actuality directed against the government. It is more than ever necessary for us to popularize this conclusion, because with the Peronist movement participating in the elections the masses will be under the illusion that now in some way the bourgeois government will fulfill the needs of the working class or belongs to it. In order to expose this maneuver we must take this illusion into account, making sure that the masses demand that the Peronist government meet their most pressing needs.

We must voice this policy in our own language, spoken as well as written, trying to avoid a collision between our way of putting things and the illusions in Peronism. We expose the illusions, denounce them, but without resorting to insults, instead patiently explaining the role of Peronism, of Perón himself, taking these illusions into account when they point in a revolutionary direction, so as to encourage actions and measures that will expose Perón himself.

At the same time we must popularize the fact that what was gained with regard to democratic freedoms resulted from the mass struggle in the streets and that we should have no trust in Peronism or the government broadening these democratic rights, repealing the repressive legislation or freeing the political prisoners, the guerrillas.

This is why the major slogans in our electoral campaign must be: Free the political and social prisoners! For democratic rights, for the repeal of all repressive laws! Down with the present military government! Down with the new bourgeois government! Let's make an Argentinazo to definitively free us from imperialism and capitalism!

These slogans have a clear objective—to make the workers understand the present stage of the revolution and become conscious of the meaning of their struggles. The slogan for an Argentinazo should be explained in the following way: We would like a peaceful transformation of society, but we don't believe that this is possible, since the national and foreign exploiters will not allow the masses to peacefully take away their privileges without a civil war. Did Spain freely grant us independence? Did Onganía or the Junta of the General Staff freely grant a bit of democratic freedom and promise elections, or on the contrary, did these have to be won through the Cordobazos and Rosariazos?

We do not want the dead or wounded that the Cordo-

bazos cost us, but we must be prepared for this since it is inevitable—the exploiters will see to that.

IV. The Election Campaign, the Struggle for Good Labor Contracts, and the Victory of the Workers Struggles

Insistence on the need to propagandize for the Argentinazo should not make us forget that the campaign is occurring at a special time for the working class—while new contract negotiations are underway. We have said that the elections are occurring during a certain dip in the workers struggles, a dip that will soon be over. Our participation in the elections should deepen and enrich the party's usual work and not weaken it. This activity is characterized by our participation in the forefront of every concrete problem and conflict confronting the workers. The election campaign should not divert us from this.

We should work out a line nationally as well as for each trade-union faced with contract negotiations. This line will determine the axis of our militant activity in the working class. The election campaign should enable us to intensify the application of this line. Our position that the workers will be able to solve their problems only through their own activity and not through the elections, must be applied immediately. The immense problem of poverty, of starvation wages, must be taken up in an immediate way by our party and our fractions and activists, utilizing the contract negotiations. We must be the champions and the vanguard in the struggle for fair labor contracts to cut down hunger.

What we say about the union contracts likewise applies to the labor conflicts. We have always been outstanding in linking up with and advancing ourselves as an alternative leadership in any conflict we encounter or hear about. The elections should broaden and heighten this key task of the party. This is decisive precisely because we believe that the contract negotiations, as well as the terribly high cost of living, will begin to spark defensive conflicts by the working class, conflicts that we should link up with and in which we should advance ourselves as the leadership. The elections enable us to step up our activities ten times over compared with what we have been doing since we became an organization. These activities, more than anything else, will enable us to have an impact on activists and the working class during our election campaign.

V. The Electoral Strategy of Forming a Workers and Socialist Pole

While we can define the overall situation as prerevolutionary, it is reflected in specific ways within the ranks of the workers movement and the trade-union organizations, the only mass organizations that exist in the country. This particular reflection is seen in the outbreak of workers and popular conflicts or struggles, led by a new vanguard that does not follow Peronism and that is intransigently opposed to the union bureaucracy. The Cordobazos and workers strikes not only put the government in question but also the completely bureaucratized union leaderships. Tied in with the state, and, in an indirect way, Peronism. The revolutionary crisis shows itself at the level of the mass movement as a crisis of the Peronist union and

political leaderships.

This crisis has an uneven rate—it appears as contempt for the bureaucratized union leaderships and support for the new working-class union leaderships where workers struggles are occurring, without this contempt having yet affected Perón himself politically. This uneven development, the break with the union leadership, is on a much broader and qualitatively higher level than the break with Perón, it is the fundamental contradiction that we as revolutionists have to deal with so as to go beyond it. The most negative aspect of this contradiction is seen in a fact that is tragic for the Argentine workers movement—in spite of its struggles, which have put the regime under question, it continues to be politically dominated by a bourgeois current, Peronism.

Our strategy of forming a workers and socialist pole meets the imperative need to go beyond this contradiction, raising the new workers vanguard—which has until now essentially struggled on a trade-union level against the lackeys of the bourgeoisie, the bureaucracy—to a political level so as to directly fight against the influence and ideology of Peronism and Perón.

We do not believe for one minute that the masses can win the struggle at this time. The weight of inertia, the lack of unity or organization of the workers vanguard, as well as the absence of a revolutionary party to raise it to an overall level of political activity in the mass movement, indicates that on the level on which the majority of workers are found this battle would be impossible to win through these elections. But the fact that we cannot win it at this time does not mean that the battle should not begin to be waged with full audacity and determination. The battle begins by trying to organize and raise the level of this new workers vanguard so that it can begin to give this battle a political content. Hence the most important aspect of our election campaign is our call to the workers vanguard to organize and raise its struggle against the bureaucracy from the trade union to the political level, so that it can later resume on the trade union level but with a full range of activity, and not mere syndicalism. This is why our campaign in support of workers candidates has an immediate objective: to organize the vanguard against the union bureaucracy's bourgeois candidates. We should focus this campaign on the working class hatred for the bureaucracy, pointing out that workers who hate it should not vote for the bourgeois candidates presented to them by the bureaucracy.

This essential axis of our campaign in favor of political independence for the workers movement, in favor of the workers vanguard organizing independent political action, coincides, on the other hand, with a profound objective need of this vanguard. By merely limiting themselves to the trade union struggle, sooner or later the best activists become isolated from their working class base following any setback, since government and boss repression reduces them to pariahs. By means of the election campaign we can take steps to assure that this vanguard is organized on a much higher level, a political level, in its struggle against the bureaucracy and the bosses, and on a much broader level, on the level of the whole working class, without being restricted to its factory or trade union. The hundreds of Páez', Fotes' and Rodríguez',

who are presently isolated from their rank-and-file as a result of the repression and partial setbacks, can in this way organize themselves on a national or provincial level and thus establish a much more fruitful channel of communication with the workers movement.

This fundamental activity and organization is combined with another of a less important character, the unification of the vanguard or of old leaders who claim to be socialists; naturally we are not referring to the members of our party, young or old. The revolutionary upsurge results in the appearance of tendencies and individuals from the student movement, as well as from the old leftist movements, who believe that conditions are beginning to ripen for spreading socialist ideas. We feel that these sectors, regardless of their past, are playing a positive role in aligning themselves with propaganda in support of socialism and of the political independence of the workers movement. It is necessary to prevent these sectors from running on their own and confusing the clarity of political solutions or options that are offered to the working class and workers vanguard. It is necessary to do everything possible so that the working class and its vanguard are faced with clear options: on the one hand, the clearly bourgeois parties or fronts: Radicalism, Peronism, Left Popular Front - Alende, Sueldo, Sandler - supported by the Communist party, who are against an immediate workers' and socialist Argentina, who are lost on the twisting path of a revolution by stages and on the parliamentary road; on the other hand, the workers and socialist variant.

In order to make it easier to form this clear workers and socialist pole, we should make sure that no sector that claims to represent socialism or is for the political independence of the working class is left out of it.

This combination must remain subordinated to what the compañeros in the current vanguard say, to their level of understanding of this need, since the main objective of our strategy is to organize and encourage the political activity of the new workers vanguard and not to recruit old socialist leaders to the front. This means that agreements with old reformist socialist figures remain subordinate, as a tactic, to our electoral strategy of incorporating the new workers vanguard into the workers and socialist pole. Discussion with this vanguard will enable us to verify the possibilities of this tactic of incorporation.

VI. The Electoral Platform

Since during an electoral campaign agitation is the essence of the campaign, the slogans, more than the platform, give the campaign its character. In line with the two previous points, the fundamental slogans are the following:

- Freedom for those imprisoned for political and related reasons.
 - For democratic rights; repeal the repressive legislation.
 - Down with the military government.
 - Out with the next capitalist government.
- Oppose imperialist and capitalist repression with an Argentinazo that puts a workers and popular government in power.
 - Don't vote for the military, the trade-union bureau-

crats, professional people, or bosses, vote for your own compañeros, Vote for Workers Candidates.

• Don't vote for the bosses' candidates Coria or Miguel. Around these basic axes we must develop our electoral agitational platform, as distinct from simply our electoral platform, which is the up-to-date embodiment, for the elections, of our Transitional Program at the present time. The elections allow us to reach the broad masses and they are reached through agitation, that is, with a few slogans, the fewer the better, not worse, since the masses don't understand omnibus programs.

Its essential axes should be:

- a. Question of wages: For an immediate 40 percent wage increase and a minimum salary of 120,000 pesos [old pesos \$120 US]. A sliding scale of wages applied by a workers committee or by a committee with a workers majority which we must link up to our struggle for labor contracts.
- b. Protection against shutdowns and for the immediate nationalization of every factory or plant that closes down, so that it continues production under workers control.
- c. Housing: Immediate expropriation for public use of any summer homes in order to put them in the hands of workers and laborers who have no roof overhead. For loans to build housing amortized at a rate of 10 percent of family income.
- d. Nationalized and free medical care and medicine for the country's entire population.
- e. Equality between women and men in wages, opportunities, and rights. Free, twenty-four-hour child-care centers. Allowances to unmarried or separated mothers equivalent to half of their wages for each child.
- f. For control of the university by teachers, students, and nonteaching workers with a majority for the students.
- g. For control over pension funds by the retired and not by the state, authorizing the expropriation and nationalization, under workers control, of those establishments that do not pay into the retirement funds.
- h. For the nationalization of imperialist and national monopolies; for nationalization of foreign trade under workers control; for repudiation of the foreign debt.
- i. For the immediate recognition of Cuba, withdrawal from OAS [Organization of American States] and all international bodies that tie us to the imperialist yoke. Repudiation of all colonizing agreements.
- j. For diplomatic and material support to peoples struggling against imperialism—beginning with aid to the heroic people of Vietnam, monstrously attacked by Yankee imperialism. Demand that the U.S. army and armed forces immediately withdraw from Vietnam, in this way ending the attack on the Vietnamese people so that they can determine their own future.
- k. Critical support for any measure of national independence that is adopted by any Latin American people or government. At the present time especially for those adopted by the Chilean people and government, without succumbing to support for the capitalist state or government of that country.
- l. For an economic plan drawn up by a rank-and-file convention of the CGT [Confederación General del Trabajo General Confederation of Labor] that develops the na-

tional economy in the interests of the workers and the country.

- m. Expropriate the big rural landholdings and have the state distribute them, thereby implementing a new rural settlement program for individual or collective smallholdings, in accordance with the wishes of the future settlers or those who are presently working the land.
- n. For the central slogans mentioned above; and above all, for a Socialist Argentina.

VII. The Election Campaign

We can divide the election campaign into several stages: the first has been what we are just completing, drafting slates and choosing the candidates; the second is the election campaign itself which the party will begin around January 7; the third is the voting; the fourth, the balance sheet and perspectives derived from the election campaign.

With respect to drafting the slates, these are being drawn up on the basis of factory, trade union, and working-class community leaders and activists who essentially concur with a plank in our electoral program: for workers candidates against the bourgeois candidates in all parties. To these candidates will be added companeros from other leftist tendencies who agree with our electoral program. Finally, the candidates of our own party who include superb activist socialist working class cadres.

The most important task is to draft as many slates as possible in as many districts as possible, making a call when necessary, to rank-and-file leftist workers and militants when there are no real leaders. In our eagerness to draw up slates, there is the danger of falling into the demagoguery of promising the moon, or even worse, of not having a choice in the candidate selection, letting political adventurists seep in. The best way to control this process is to hold broad meetings with as many candidates as possible, as well as to very carefully learn their background. The party should make an effort to make sure that compañeros who are candidates for offices where there is a possibility of winning are serious and disciplined, trying to get compañeros who are tried and tested in the party or the class struggle elected to these offices: But the key lies in the trade union activists, the genuine leaders of the rank-and-file, being aware of their right to form Workers Front committees that, democratically and on a principled basis with the party, can draw up slates of candidates.

The party's central organizing slogan in the election campaign, which is now taking form with the drafting of slates, is for Workers Front committees. We extend to these committees the unconditional right to use our legality to participate in the elections, providing we have agreement on the central plank in our electoral program: the political independence of the workers movement. This means that we will be working hard to see that Workers Fron. campaign committees are set up on every level to elect their own candidates.

The party will only assign one delegate to coordinate its activities and will participate in Workers Front meetings on the basis of its union activities, with the same rights and obligations as every other member of the Front. In addition, each of our members and sympathizers will act, with the party's authority, in an independent and non-factional way, in order to prevent the Workers Front committees from being turned into an auxiliary of the party. We prefer the initiative and independence of these committees to their transformation into an appendage of the party. Every activist in a committee should feel as if it is their committee and not as if it were being used by the party.

With respect to a presidential ticket, we should adopt a tactic in line with our principles, drafting it with the National Committee of the Workers Front campaign, once it has been elected. It is on the basis of our discussion with this Committee that we will end up adopting a definite line on this sensitive tactical problem. As an initial choice we see the following possibilities: Fote, Páez or any other working class leader from Córdoba, for its symbolic meaning, Nora, Coral, Ernesto González. The ideal situation would be a working class ticket consisting of a well-known leader from Córdoba and a woman, naturally a worker.

The essential part of the election campaign will be the period of activity between January 7 and the elections. This will be two months of intense activity. We should carefully distinguish the campaign from the election day itself. The campaign can be a very good one, having reached broad layers with our education and organization, while the voting returns could be low. This is the most likely probability, since the bourgeois electoral machine inclines workers to vote out of tradition, or for the favored candidate so that they do not waste their vote, even though they may sympathize with us. This is why we should not worry about the returns, which we believe with great enthusiasm will total around 100,000 votes in the entire country, which we feel would be a great victory. The important thing is that these 100,000 voters would be consciously voting for a program and a revolutionary working class party. This will mean that we have had an impact on the vanguard, that we are already beginning to politically organize and lead.

Therefore the main thing will be the election campaign. This will have distinct levels. One will be the use of the means of mass communication: radio, television, and the bourgeois press. Another will be public meetings. Local, provincial, factory, trade union, general, and national leaflets, as well as making the newspaper available for election propaganda, will form a part of this aspect of the campaign.

This should be carried out on a general propagandistic level from above, using the means of mass communication as much as possible, and equally importantly, from below, be leafleting at factory gates and canvassing working class communities.

The national leadership should make an estimate of the cost of the election campaign so as to determine what funds can be allocated for using the means of mass communication, without worrying about these means, since, given the fact that we are a proletarian party, our use of them will be minimal in comparison to the bourgeois parties. One variant that combines both methods is the possibility of producing one or two films to show at public meetings.

On a rank-and-file level, which is where the essential work will be done, the zones will have to very carefully

decide what factories and working class communities they will concentrate on during the week of vacations. Before or during the election campaign they will have to determine the character of every workplace to the extent possible, so that an audacious campaign consisting of public meetings and leaflet distributions can be waged. We should reach every community and every factory. We should organize groups of agitational compañeros, teams from the party, Workers Front, or youth, to take the campaign to isolated places or to the interior of the country, using cars with loudspeakers. We have to be audacious in knowing how to pose the factory or local problems that illustrate or link the concrete problems to our general election campaign. The zone leaderships, with the help of the party leadership, are responsible for knowing how to pose the concrete problem that is disturbing any sector of workers: wages, layoffs, union bureaucratization within a factory or trade union; running water, medical care, land, housing, lighting or paving the communities; so as to bring these workers to an understanding of our general program.

As a part of the campaign we should organize a fundraising campaign so that we will be able to pay for the election campaign through contributions from workers.

The time has come for us to use all the experience we have acquired in recruiting and selecting working class candidates to broaden the influence of the party and our program ten, twenty or a hundredfold. The election campaign makes this possible.

VIII. Organizational Objectives: We Must Organize Scores and Scores of Workers', Youth, and Socialist Committees in Support of our Slates

The entire campaign will be like sand slipping through our fingers if we do not accompany it with an attempt to crystallize its development in organizational forms. There are two main organizational forms among these: the Workers Front and youth committees.

It is precisely on this terrain that we should demonstrate that we are not electoralists, since, if necessary, we will sacrifice vote-getting to build these committees.

In places where the possibility to build these committees opens up for us, we should not hesitate for one moment, on grounds that it might be hard and slow work, to delay our own election campaign as a party in order to build these committees, to inspire them, and to utilize them as the principal organizing tool in our election campaign.

We should do likewise if in fact we come into contact with a small group of workers or activists in the community, factory, or trade union who agree with us, totally committing ourselves to trying to organize them so that with our help they are the ones waging the campaign in those places, and if possible in others.

The same is the case if groups of youth arise who are in agreement with our campaign. We should immediately organize them so that they become directly involved in work, making all kinds of concessions so that they become the organizers of the campaign in their sector.

We should be the collective organizers of the worker and youth vanguard who indicate agreement with our election campaign. Every lead that opens up in this direction should be thoroughly exploited, since it is our principal organizational task to pay attention to these openings among workers and youth, without wasting time in trying to branch out solely on our own. Branching out should stem from the initiative and activity of these bodies. In order to organize these groups we should learn not to be sectarian. Any lead that opens up for us is positive if its thrust is to bring together and organize vanguard workers and youth. We have implied that they should agree with our program - let us correct that. It suffices if they agree with any one of the planks on the program. Also if they are only sympathetic to us. The important thing is that an initial two or three companeros are organized to help us with the campaign. The skill of our members will be to find out what work they would like to do, and not impose our schema on them. As minimal as this work may be, it is a beginning toward bringing them close to us through activity. The functional character of these groups has to be respected, and they should not be grouped in other organizational forms that look good on paper, but that don't reflect reality.

We have to do something similar with leftist intellectuals or activists who agree with our campaign. We should organize them so that they constitute a support committee for the election campaign.

We cannot predict the extent of the success of this or-

ganizing campaign since it depends on the situations and moods of the youth and workers vanguard which we do not control. The important thing is to point out that the extent of success in our campaign will be measured in a fundamental way by the extent to which these committees branch out.

The entire campaign should have a postelectoral objective: holding new workers and youth plenums after the elections, in order to draw conclusions from the voting and outline a perspective for the future.

If at each of these plenums we are able to double or triple the size of the one that will be held on the sixteenth, the election campaign will have been a success, since the party's link with these 4,000 worker and youth activists will not end with the voting, but on the contrary, this will be the beginning of a tie that becomes closer each day.

If these organizing objectives are combined with the opening up of headquarters by these committees (not by us), as well as with tripling our newspaper sales during the campaign, which might be reduced later to twice our present circulation, we will be able to say, whatever the results of the voting (between 50,000 and 100,000), that we won a colossal victory, since the party will have at least doubled its sphere of influence, thanks to the election campaign.

2. We Must Wage a Revolutionary Socialist Campaign

[The following article was completed in Buenos Aires on January 11, 1973.]

It is necessary to once again clearly state, but this time more concretely, why we participate in elections. The objective is obvious: to strengthen the party. We don't participate to win massive numbers of votes, or to maneuver among different bourgeois candidates "to win public favor," "cut a good figure." We are the only revolutionary sector running in the elections and logically we are going to have everything against us: radio, television, the bourgeois press, and the opposition of all the bourgeois parties. The mobilization and massive support of the workers movement could, to a certain extent, be counterposed to these negative factors, but not to the extent of winning the elections. This is not the case: the working class will not even in the least degree follow us in these elections. That is, no important sector of workers will support us.

The electoral machine is beginning to turn completely against us. The absence of a workers upsurge is combined with the fact that the crisis of Peronism is beginning to throw up all kinds of electoralist organizations and variants that are creating a number of barriers between the different worker and popular currents that are leaning toward socialism and us. Of these barriers, the most dangerous one and the one we will have to fight against the hardest is the center-left ticket, supported by Stalinism: Alende-Sueldo. But on a provincial level, possibly in Tucumán and other provinces, we will meet neo-Peronist workerist and populist variants that we will have

to deal with. All of this is stirring absolute confusion in the working class electorate, which in spite of our greatest efforts, we will be unable to completely overcome. Our prognosis of an election in which we will get around 100,000 votes currently seems to be the most likely variant. Let us recall that when the PSA [Partido Socialista Argentino—Argentine Socialist party] was united, with long experience in elections and the heritage of Palacios intact, it won less than 180,000 votes in the entire country. A little more than seven years since then, we do not feel that we can surpass this electoral high-point of the old PSA. This perspective regarding the number of votes does not prevent our campaign from being a total success if we conduct it as revolutionary socialists. A hypothetical example will show what is meant by this statement.

Suppose the Alende-Sueldo ticket, with the support of the Communist party and now with Matera, wins 1,500,000 votes and we win 130,000. This could possibly mean that Alende and Sueldo brought in between 600,000 and 700,000 votes, Matera some 500,000, and the Communist party between 300,000 and 400,000 votes. In such a case the relationship between the Communist party and us will be one vote for us to every three or four for the Communist party. If we take into account the CP's financial apparatus, fulltimers and publications, added to the fact that it is a party with a long tradition, with a periphery that has been built up over decades—which means that many professionals, men and women from the middle class, and old workers will vote for it out of tradition—we will have to narrow the relationship between

the CP and us with respect to the new workers and student generation. There the relationship will be even: one for them, one for us. On the whole they will come out slightly ahead. This means that we will have begun to replace the CP as the strongest party on the Argentine left.

But a thorough analysis of the elections cannot stop here. The CP has ceased to be a party of struggle, a revolutionary combat party, in form and policy. Its structure and activity are strictly Social-Democratic. Any of the companeros who has been a member of the CP in the last few years can verify that party members do not pay their dues or return sales money for newspapers, that there is no discipline and that it looks more like a community organization than a centralized and disciplined combat party. The 100,000 votes that the CP might get from working class and student youth will be for this almost neighborhood program and organization.

Our party is the exact opposite: we are a revolutionary party because of our program and organization, composed of disciplined activists, accustomed to a high degree of democratic centralism. The 70,000 or 100,000 votes that we may get from the working class and student youth will be cast for our program and our party. That is, these votes will strengthen the revolutionary party, just as the votes for Alende-Sueldo will reenforce the Communist party's politico-organizational opportunist tendencies.

How Will the Campaign Be Organized?

An election campaign is such a diversified activity, so many things can be done at the same time, that a very great danger exists: getting wrapped up in these activities and carrying them out without rhyme or reason, mixing them, without any order, as they come up. This is why it is necessary to plan this campaign in detail. To do this we have to take into account, very much into account, the following priorities:

One: We have to conduct a census of the working class communities and factories in the zones or districts we will be working in, as well as of train stations where workers and laborers generally circulate; with one very important addition: the downtown areas are a fundamental area of work, since state, sales, and bank employees—that is, white-collar workers—whom we are trying to win over to our program are concentrated there. Therefore we have three clearly fixed areas for work: the downtown areas for specifically reaching state, sales, and bank employees (including office workers); working class neighborhoods; and factories. Since it is summer, a special case is Mar de Plata and other vacation spots. In these places it is necessary to do a census of and study working class and middle class hotels.

To conduct the census we will have to obtain a map of the zone, which we can buy if it is for sale, or request at the Municipality. We have to devise ideas for obtaining this map. Once we have it, it has to be enlarged so that the different communities and factories can be clearly indicated. This element and the registration lists in the respective zones are the two most important tools with which we will face the election campaign.

Along with this we have to specify, to the extent it is possible, the characteristics of the communities and fac-

tories. With respect to the communities we will have to find out if their character is essentially working class, lumpen, or petty-bourgeois; if working class, what sector and nationality? Quickly, within the space of the first few days of the campaign, we have to try to determine which community or factory is most open to our positions in order to avoid having to go to all of them and to thus have the chance to concentrate on areas offering greater possibilities. In the city centers and in each community we will have to determine the following elements: Do we have candidates?, members?, sympathizers?, contacts? Are they well-known and respected? Can a youth, womens' or adult support committee of the workers front be formed? Are there friends or relatives of the candidates, members, sympathizers, or contacts? Is there a community organization? Who does it represent? Is it active? Is it influential? Are there clubs? If there are, we have to ask ourselves the same questions as for the community organizations. Can we swing a sector of or an entire club or community organization in support of our campaign?

We have to formulate similar questions with respect to factories: How many workers are there? What kind of worker: combative, well or poorly paid? Does the bureaucracy carry weight? Are there activists? What is the proportion between men and women? Between adults and youth? Do we have candidates?, members?, sympathizers?, contacts? Members of their families? Can a youth or adult support committee be formed? Is there an opposition tradeunion tendency or current? Are there union activists?

We should not be dismayed if while we are conducting this census we discover we know very little. The mistake would be to launch the campaign without making a map and conducting a census, without answering these questions to the best of our ability. The campaign will enable us to correct mistaken information and fill in the tremendous gaps we might have in the beginning. The important thing is that the day we launch the campaign we have an initial census completed. Beginning on this day, the leadership of the party will go out to all the zones, and the first requirement for beginning to discuss the campaign will be to be shown the map and the census.

Those zones that think they can, should pin small colored flags on their maps to point out the communities, the factories and their different characteristics.

Two: We have to make the electoral program apply to every zone, community and factory. This is as important as the census and much of the success or failure of the election campaign will depend on knowing how to apply our program to the needs of every sector. Here are a few examples:

Our fundamental slogans in the election campaign will revolve around a classical position: We don't vote for bosses, the military, people with professional titles, bureaucrats. We vote for workers and socialist candidates. These slogans must be materialized and concretized so that they can be understood. If we have companeros who are members of a factory, trade union, or community, we can materialize the campaign perfectly, because we can emphasize that a vote for us is a vote for this or that well-liked and respected companero, counterposing them to the Peronist or Center-Left Alliance candidates who are the opposite. We should make this difference very clear, being very

careful not to resort to personal insults. This is one way of pinpointing the most important aspect of our program: the worker and socialist character of our candidates.

This way of placing our campaign on a more concrete and personal level will be the key to much of our success. We have an example to demonstrate this: in 1952 a decision was made to confront the bureaucracy in the textile union and in the Argentine Alpargatas [crepe-soled shoes] Factory. This bureaucracy was one of the most detested and dangerous in the whole workers movement. We discovered that a major part of the employees were Italian immigrants. We took note that the bureaucracy made no provisions in its program for this sector. We raised the slogan of recognizing their right to send part of their wages to their relatives on the basis of a stable currency. We did not restrict ourselves to this, but rather we issued a leaflet in Italian explaining our position. It worked wonders: the bureaucracy was defeated in the Argentine Alpargatas Factory, and thanks to this in the trade union, by 3,000 votes, with the unanimous vote by the Italian compañeros constituting a major part of this victory. This story can be repeated in a hundred cases. We have to be alert to detect what needs we can respond to with one of our slogans or with important support on our part if a mobilization comes up. In every municipality, as well as every neighborhood, there are problems everyone is thinking about for which we should provide transitional answers so as to educate the working class on how to defend their interests. The same applies to every factory. We should always be on the lookout for these problems, and ready to respond with a leaflet, and mobilize on it in the zones as well as in the trade unions and communities. There might be a health or education problem in a working class community, where we would advance the need for a free school or dispensary. There might be a crime problem in which case we would propose that neighborhood commissions democratically protect everyone's person against attacks that occur on a daily basis, authorizing these commissions to be the only armed authority in the zone and demanding that they be provided with the money that is spent on the official po-

We can put forth many other slogans like this, which concretely apply our general program to the community or factory. But we must not lose sight of the axis of our campaign and what we have to make concrete is the class position: No vote for the enemies of the working class, vote for workers, vote for our class. Everything else has the objective of showing the need for this working class vote. For example the need for a dispensary or community school should be put forward while pointing out that it is impossible for the other candidates to wage a basic struggle for this or other transitional slogans, due to their class character, in contrast to our candidates who, because of their very place in society, have no other perspective but to defend the working class.

Three: Resources. An election campaign cannot be carried out by hand. It is necessary to know what resources are available. One of the most important resources is automobiles. A careful poll of what possibilities exist for obtaining vehicles in every zone, and how long they can be used, has to be conducted. Along with taking this survey regarding cars, the problem of loudspeakers for the headquarters and vehicles has to be studied. It would

be perfect if all the available cars were equipped with loudspeakers. This should be studied and thought out as a priority, assigning our technician compañeros to estimate the cost of twenty or thirty amplifiers or the alteration of those we already have in many of our locals.

The headquarters itself is a very powerful resource. The local headquarters should be very tidy and well-arranged in order to make a good impression on worker and leftist compañeros who go there. The entire headquarters should revolve around the election campaign. Decorations should be given serious attention. It doesn't matter if the decorations aren't particularly suitable or the most stunning, but it is more serious if the headquarters is untidy or obviously dirty, since in that case it will make a regretable impression on the compañeros.

Every local should have a team that is able to run off leaflets immediately. Also this team has to learn the technique of hand lettering signs. They should be able to make very good standardized signs by hand that will enable us to put together a hundred or more signs very cheaply at any time for distribution at a factory or in canvassing a community.

As soon as this document is read, we have to go out and find the few empty walls available to paint large signs on. We have to use the fronts of houses of members or sympathizers, promising to return and paint them over after the elections. We have to try to rent the fronts of some strategic buildings, if we can and if they are cheap, to paint them. What we said about painting signs also goes for making banners. We have companeros like those in the Ramos Mejía local who can paint spectacular signs visible to hundreds of thousands of people, depending on where we display them.

Four: Finances. We should draw up a budget that enables us to finance the expenses of our election campaign. We should work out a minimal financial program on the level of each zone and for the entire party that takes into account: (1) teams with loud-speakers; (2) cars; (3) printing leaflets; (4) signs; (5) possible full-timers, and (6) public meetings. This budget should be drawn up on the basis of a financial campaign that covers it. Together with this, a plan must be drawn up for increasing our newspaper sales at least threefold. We should study the possibility of selling three month newspaper subscriptions for 1,000 pesos [old pesos-\$1 US]. As a part of this plan we have to work out an overall financial program and one for each zone. It is fundamental and decisive to observe the custom of making a fund appeal, explaining in advance the reason for our request, at every public function, meeting, or interview dealing with the question of the elections. Contrary to the bourgeois parties, our campaign will be paid for by workers, party members, and sympathizers. We should thoroughly explain what these contributions are needed for. We will have to appeal to sympathizers and members who are economically well-off, and set up national and area financial commissions to try to deal with financial problems.

The slogan is to transform finances into an essential element of the election campaign, at the same time it will be an objective measure of our real advances in this area of activity. We emphasize that the financial campaign should cover the expenses of the election campaign.

We think that on a national scale we should draw up 500, 1,000, and 10,000 peso bonds to sell at all public functions and meetings.

Organizing the Zone and the Party

The party's organizational form is a very delicate problem. If election work proceeds very well, this may very likely mean that out of it will emerge an organizational form for the party that corresponds to the gains achieved during the campaign. Concretely, the emergence of many new teams and members of the party. The thing we have to determine is whether we are in a political-organizational transitional period leading to a spectacular leap in the party, or whether the elections will simply allow us to greatly increase our influence, but not to the extent of producing a structural change in the party. This overall prognosis is decisive and fundamental for making the necessary organizational adjustment. If for example, we aren't going to achieve a fundamental change for the party with our electoral intervention, it would be better to leave the present party structure intact, only broadening our activity. If, on the other hand, a total change could be affected as a result of the campaign, it is appropriate to begin outlining what this change might be, without overly altering the present structure, merely making it possible for the new structure to arise from the old.

Without venturing too much, and taking into account that the campaign hasn't begun yet, we have the impression that this will mean a qualitative leap in activity, penetration, influence, social composition, and party structures. The decisive facts will be the deep penetration of the workers movement and working class districts, as well as a doubling of our membership. Our campaign to win legality has enabled us to transform ourselves into a real national party-with important gaps, but national. This was a very important leap. Now the perspective is opening up for us to transform ourselves into a proletarian party by the nature of its social composition. Based on the urban centers where the party has already won a base, it is a question of our penetrating the workers movement and working class neighborhoods. Another aspect: thanks to our legality we have been able to establish a foothold, and in some places a big foothold—the expression is appropriate - as in San Nicolás, Viedma or Comodoro Rivadavia. Now it is a question of using the election campaign to enable the party to sink deep roots into the factories and working class sectors in different towns and communities. In other words, in all the working class towns in the country. Every area leadership has to keep thinking: how can we sink roots in every working class and leftist sector that exists in our area? We have two precious months to accomplish this.

To accomplish this it is necessary that hard work be taken on, intensive work by rank-and-file militants, extensive work by special teams. For the intensive work it is useful to choose small party groups that must be given every possibility and opportunity to take the initiatives they want to. The principal thing here is to put at least one companero in each of these teams who is a middle level cadre. These teams can be made up of two or three companeros, provided that the middle level cadre is in the leadership. The leadership has to assure that the team

has a place to work that is precisely indicated, whether it be a community, factory, or trade union, because anything less runs the risk of frustration. These small teams have to be given objectives to achieve by the end of the campaign and during the campaign: number of newspapers sold, distributions, public functions and visits to carry out. It is essential that the national, zone, or local leaderships get used to recording statistics: how many compañeros were contacted, how many of their addresses do we know; keep cards with information on each one, who visited them in the community and do we know their family, friends, etc. The same should be done on the factory and trade union level. The leaderships should be responsible for teaching how to record these statistics, principally how to keep a record of addresses and general information on each of these contacts. But more important than this fundamental aspect is teaching these small groups how to work: how they should approach workers, youth, and how they can learn to detect what kind of work they can do. Along with experimenting in forming these small groups, we should try to begin basing ourselves on the locals more than on the present zones, attempting to transform full-timers in each zone into full-timers in a local, which we feel could have very good results, allowing them to acquire experience in the workers movement. This work should set an example for the rest of the zone, without forgetting the possibility that making a transfer to a local that has a weak leadership could at best set a pattern for this campaign, and ideally it shouldn't weaken the strongest local in the zone.

These two organizational measures—forming small teams and concentrating full-timers in the locals—have the same objective: testing new leaderships during the campaign, attempting to transform the small teams into solid teams, and each local in a zone developing its own full-time leadership by the end of the election campaign. This would be the election campaign's greatest achievement.

These objectives have to be accompanied by several revolutions in personal life styles and party customs. First and foremost, we will have to see if there is a posisbility of putting the best companeros on full time during the last month of the election campaign, principally worker compañeros who played outstanding roles during the first month. Without succumbing to workerism, we have to begin to incline toward putting leading worker activists on full time. We will have to be careful not to waste any efforts since, because of their political level, not all these worker compañeros will qualify as party full timers after the election campaign. But this should be the trend. The full timers should be paid by the respective zone. This will be an index of the possibilities and the maturity of this achievement. Asking the party leadership to do the financing would be a serious mistake, except in exceptional cases.

The other aspect is that with the elections we should begin to place many companeros coming from the student movement into the workers movement. This should be carried out in two stages: teams that have started doing good work in a working class community going to live there to the extent that that is possible, respecting customs so that they don't look like strangers from another planet, and—when the elections are over—going into a factory,

principally in those places where we've already begun doing some work or in the trade unions where some inroads might have already been made.

In regard to the national leadership, we believe that a division of labor is required that allows the present full timers to return to a zone level, that they should be occupied with rank-and-file work. We feel that the secretariat should devote attention to the following election and party zones: (1) Patagonia, with an administrative center in Bahía Blanca, which includes the sixth electoral district of the province of Buenos Aires, La Pampa, Río Negro, Neuquén, and Chubut; (2) Central Buenos Aires province, with a center in Mar del Plata; (3) West and North Buenos Aires province, with a center in San Nicolás; (4) Greater Buenos Aires South, with a center in Avellaneda or La Plata; (5) Greater Buenos Aires West with a center in Ramos Mejía; (6) Greater Buenos Aires North with a center in San Martín; (7) Central Buenos Aires with a center in Callao; (8) South Buenos Aires with a center in Dean Funes; (9) West and North Buenos Aires with a center in Donato; (10) River Bank with a center in Rosario; (11) Northwest with a center in Misiones; (12) Central with a center in Córdoba that includes San Luis, Mendoza, and San Juan and, (13) Northeast with a center in Tucumán.

This division of labor by the party's leadership follows the same logic as the subdivision that has to be carried out in the zones: the need to intensify work in order to assure that the party is strengthened, avoiding the possibility of this being held back due to a lack of experience among the compañeros in the recently formed secondary leadership. After the campaign the leadership will be returned to a centralized basis with specific tasks, and in the course of this process a central team will be maintained for the central tasks, especially for electoral activity.

We must Learn to Discuss and Work with our Class

We are going to have two unparalleled months that might not be repeated, or if they are they will be few and far between. We should use them fully and to do this we should definitively learn the art and science of discussing and carrying out joint activities with workers.

To achieve this we also need to know how to apply a transitional program. We say this because many companñeros believe in order to win over a worker companero one element is all that is necessary: propaganda, which by showing them that we have the correct position will win them over; we do this by holding more and more classes, or more and more conversations and explaining all our positions to them. This is absolutely necessary, but is not by itself sufficient, actually it is totally insufficient. If propaganda is not combined with and made to revolve around a joint activity, we will never really recruit this worker. Many compañeros agree with this, but apply it terribly: they use propaganda to win over a compañero, and shortly after they have won him over they propose some kind of activity for him. They have a transitional program for propaganda: they discuss and teach the worker beginning with what the companero is most interested in, but they have a maximum program for activity: soon after recruiting they propose joint activity, the same as we ourselves are carrying out. A transitional program should be two-sided, joint activity from the moment we meet and shake hands, and propaganda. Only in this way is a program complete.

There is also the opposite mistake: becoming so involved in joint activity with companeros or groups that we renounce propaganda, stop fighting for the party's general and specific positions.

What is called for is a close connection between the two aspects. Given the fact that we are going to experience an unparalleled two month period, the most serious danger is the propagandistic one, that is, confining ourselves to carrying out propaganda and not joint activities. Through the elections we will make contact with hundreds and hundreds of companeros and in our relationship with them we should place the emphasis on looking for joint activities.

This is very easy to say, but much more difficult to do. It is very common to see many companeros, mainly young, visiting our locals, something that will increase during the electoral period. The art of our activists and especially our leaderships will be to study each companero or group of companeros that approaches us or that we know, in order to ascertain what they can do. Out of every ten companeros who approach us, eight or nine can do something, in the majority of cases very little, but something to support our campaign. This something has to be discovered, there lies the art, and we have to get them to do it. It is not a question of them doing everything our members do or of carrying out the work we expect sympathizers to do, but rather of them doing something, only something.

We know that this still hasn't been able to be thoroughly tested yet, since the election campaign hasn't begun and our leaderships have been extremely busy recruiting candidates. But now the time has come for all the time we spent on this work to turn in the direction of what we have been saying.

There are infinite possibilities for anyone who approaches us or who might already be close, such as the youth who have already come to see us or the candidates who have agreed to run on our tickets, to begin to do something.

To accomplish this something our members and leaderships have to begin by studying the group or compañero. Is it a question of a former Stalinist activist or group used to working in community organizations? A worker who comes out of the ultraleft? A proletarianized student? A youth who has recently come around the leftist movement? A proletarian housewife? An intellectual or rankand-file worker? A candidate who accepted out of a sense of duty? A candidate with electoralist tendencies? A small Peronist or independent community politician aspiring to become a leader, or on the contrary, an honest one with good intentions, who wants to carry the revolution forward? And finally, above all, is he a trade union activist in his factory or union? Is it a group of slum or factory youth, completely rebellious although they have no trade union or factory experience?

It is precisely the election campaign that enables us to propose *something* for everyone of them to do.

We Must Watch our Language and Learn to Listen

Compañeros in the party are used to living in a tight circle: members, sympathizers, and friends of the party.

they quickly assimilate the party's customs and language. Any human group, of whatever extraction, develops its own language, its own jargon. Several examples will illustrate what we are saying: in popular language flan [a custard] is a dessert, in our language it's a weak person, sometimes a centrist; in common language someone who doesn't work is called a bum, we use the term lumpen; for the people, a person who is employed, but who takes off on holidays, is a person who is resting or "being lazy," in our jargon that person is "lumpening"; in vernacular, distributing leaflets at a factory is "distributing leaflets," for us it is "canvassing;" for a man or woman worker who is having problems with his or her girl friend or boy friend and is consequently disillusioned, melancholy, "they are sad because they had a fight," for us "they're going through a crisis," and if the person involved has already been "courted," he or she is "going through a crisis with his or her partner." We could go on like this until we had a complete dictionary for the left and our party. This language, characteristic of every party on the left, has gained such wide use that one of the most important bureaucrats during the Peronist period, Puricelli, in the metal workers union at Avellaneda, used to let any new body of recently elected delegates say anything they wanted for a period of several months, as long as their meetings were held in the union hall in his presence. For years we didn't understand the reason for this exaggerated freedom, without any intervention on his part save being present, until we came to our wits: he always took attendance of those present and kept the roll. When a delegate said, "this is a progressive compañero" Puricelli asked "what's your name?" and marked the roll. Another said the word "proletarian" and Puricelli repeated his question and marked the roll again. Later we learned the meaning of the marks: they politically classified the delegate by what he said. The one who had said "progressive" was marked "red vermin" (the bureaucracy's derogatory expression for compañeros in the Communist Party); the one who said "proletarian" was detected as a member of Voz Proletaria; the one who stressed that "we have to be united in the face of the boss" was detected as one of our companeros, etc.

When new compañeros come into contact with the party

Now we are going to be working in sectors that are completely new to the party, and therefore every unusual word or expression goes against our attempts to make contact with these sectors. We should make an effort not to appear strange in any way, principally in our language.

Hidden in the language question is a much more important question: that of learning to link up with our class, of getting accustomed to establishing a close tie with all its sectors. Many compañeros who want the workers or students who link up with us to learn the great lessons of history confuse how a student or an exceptional element of the workers vanguard learns—which is through books and long historical and theoretical discussions— with the general apprenticeship of the working class and the vanguard. Workers don't learn through books or through our experience, but rather through their own experience, their own life and activities. Compañeros forget that the entire history of the class struggle of this country and the world is concentrated in the concrete life of every rank-and-file activist or worker. Every worker is exploited

and alienated; every activist experiences the class struggle that every worker endures; every proletarian housewife is double exploited. This is why we have to know how to listen, how to encourage the working class compañero or group of workers we contact to speak. By listening and encouraging compañeros to speak, we will learn their language and through their language we will get to know their life, experiences, and struggles. We want the compañeros to draw the fundamental lessons from their life and their experiences and to do this we have to know them.

By listening we are going to meet the old Peronist worker, who was given a house or spent a summer vacation in Mar del Plata for the first time under Perón's government, and he is going to say to us "How great he was, we owe everything to him." If we have not listened to this worker and restrict ourselves to telling him that "Perón is a typical representative of bourgeois populism which can no longer make concessions to the workers movement, because the Argentine and Latin American bourgeoisie is in a crisis," that there used to be "prosperous times" and this is why the workers were given "concessions," he isn't going to understand us even if we talk to him for a century.

Everything will change if, by patiently listening to this rank-and-file worker, we understand his arguments, which are not exactly the same as ours, but no weaker because of this. The only thing he knows, which he has experienced. is that under Peronism his standard of living improved astonishingly. If we accept this truth: that under Peronism his standard of living substantially improved, if we systematically stress his gains, as the conversation evolves, we make it known to him that we have only one difference with him: that we do not believe that Perón gave him these gains, but rather that they were won by the struggle of millions and millions of companeros like himself who risked their lives on October 17 and on many other occasions. That we want them to continue this united struggle of the working class that accomplished wonders under Peronism, that has begun to accomplish wonders since the Cordobazo. From this basis of agreement on the facts, which we should undertake to stress - that under Peronism he lived his best as a worker, we will develop the dialogue that will inevitably have a positive conclusion, principally that we are not gorillas or nonconformists, but rather that we are further to the left than Peronism, but we recognize the gains of the period. If we say this in a language he understands, we will be surprised by the results.

What is involved is that the workers learn essentially from their own experiences, and for this reason we should very carefully listen to them in order to learn something from these experiences. It is a question of beginning to raise the level of every worker or sector of our class so that, influenced and led by our party, they are the ones who create history, convincing them that there is no greater force than a united and mobilized working class. There is no other way of convincing them of this than by using examples from the history of our class and of each sector or individual. We are trying to have them gain confidence in their own strength and not depend on the parties and institutions of the bourgeoisie. For this they have to

be successfully developed from what they are and how they speak.

The Proletarian Housewife

Let's look at a few examples. Beginning with the proletarian housewife who agrees with us on some point.

Beforehand we should have won her sympathy by listening to her problems and positions, as well as by having adapted to her language and worries. We have to propose that she write a letter to her friends in the community, urging them to vote for our tickets. If she doesn't dare to because it's too much, we should propose that she should get together with her friends in the area, the way she always does, but in this case setting it up so everyone is present, so that one of our women compañeras can meet with and explain our program and our objectives to the two, three, four, or five proletarian housewives. If the meeting can be somewhat broader, we will arrange for our women candidates to attend the meetings, beginning with Nora, if she is available. If we see that this produces results, we will raise a slogan for meetings in working class areas, organized by these housewives, so that our women candidates can come into contact with and explain our program to them, especially the part concerning women. The objective is minimum, not maximum: a meeting of at least two women in a worker's home in a working class community. The key should be that the companera we contacted do something for this meeting. The maximum is that she be the main organizer, but it is sufficient if she introduces us and allows us to invite people to the meeting in her name because this would already be doing something. While we are proposing this to a proletarian housewife we should be paying close attention to her children, particularly her daughters, to see if they go along with us in our position in support of women. But let's suppose that because she is shy, a housewife is not inspired to do anything we have mentioned (surely it would be because of the incapacity of our compañeros, but let's leave it at that), nothing prevents us from inviting her to come to our headquarters once a week, with the prior agreement of her compañero (it would be a serious mistake for example, to try to suddenly overcome the paternalistic and macho structure in many proletarian marriages), so that she does something there. The alienation of day-to-day life in the proletarian neighborhood, the pleasure of going "downtown" as a way of leaving this alienation and monotony, could help us if we are sufficiently on the alert so as to know how to approach her very fraternally and give her something useful she can do well in support of the campaign. For example, hem a banner or paint a sign, or any other task that meets her abilities, making her feel useful and a part of the campaign.

The Rank-and-File Worker

Let's now take up the rank-and-file worker whom we may have met while distributing literature at a factory or canvassing a community. Here again we have to begin with the level the worker is on. One example will make this clear. On one of my visits to the interior of

the country I had the opportunity to go to a small city where the only factory was a wool washing factory. Our compañeros were in close contact with some construction workers, and some from this factory, and with some of the city's residents through some artistic activity. When I was there they called a meeting with several workers from the factory, because it was bankrupt and ready to close. Only one worker came, because he was a friend of the compañeros. Our compañeros, clearly understanding the role of the bureaucracy, were sharply attacking the union leadership for not having done anything basic for the workers. When their friend arrived - he was more a friend than a companero—they began to sharply criticize the bureaucracy. I was able to get them to let the worker compañero speak. After talking for a good while, during which he didn't venture any opinions and only asked questions, the following conclusion was reached: the worker belonged to the most conservative, pro-boss sector of the factory, but, deeply shaken at this time by the perspective of the factory closing, he began to radicalize very slowly; until that time his criticisms of the bureaucracy were still from the right; with an accurate class instinct he felt that the fundamental thing was not to criticize the bureaucracy, but rather to win the conflict. The party positions we advanced opened up a fruitful dialogue and relationship with this worker: "Tell your leaders that our party is unconditionally at the service of the textile union, of your present struggle to keep your jobs, and that we are available to discuss with them how we can organize all the unions, workers, and people in the city to support you. We would like to see the secretary-general to coordinate this common action. Let's forget old criticisms and confront the closing of the factory together."

We are relating this anecdote because, facing a rankand-file worker, we should not begin violently criticizing anyone without very patiently listening to the reason he has come into contact with us, so that we can develop it from there. It could be sympathy for us or one of our candidates and nothing more. Human sympathy, not political. It could be distrust or hatred for the boss candidates, those with professional titles, and nothing more. It could be a slight political sympathy. We should clearly determine what it is that motivates him to get in contact with us, because it could also be only curiosity and this would be the most difficult case, because it might be combined with the fact that this curiosity has been aroused because some good-looking student companeras brought them around to us and, in this case, the curiosity would not so much be political and human in general, but rather of a more concrete character. As good Marxist politicians we will have to begin with this characterization so that we can decide on a policy toward him. As with housewives, the objective will be to see what possibilities there are for organizing meetings in his home, club, area organization, or snack bar (if the compañero works in a factory), for holding conversations, which should be attended by compañeros and not just women compañeras, having a worker compañero from his own trade union if possible lead the axis of the conversation. We should see if we can go into his home to contact his family, wife, sons and daughters, brothers, etc. to do the same thing.

I feel that this is the most fascinating experience for any

revolutionary socialist who is proud to be one: learning to speak to proletarian housewives and rank-and-file workers and getting them to do something because we can understand them and orient them.

The Party's Candidate

With respect to a candidate who has electoralist aspirations we are confronted with a problem similar to the previous ones. We have to start from what he wantsto be elected-to encourage the formation of a support committee for his candidacy. If the party is running him as a candidate it is probably because, apart from his electoralist aspirations, he carries a certain amount of weight in his neighborhood or factory. On the basis of these two facts we should try very hard to promote the organization of the rank-and-file behind him. It would be very difficult for him not to help us if we undertake the formation of a committee directly supporting him. This committee will take advantage of the campaign to propagandize for the party's program, and will try to come into contact with and organize all the youths who support him or who support us in that factory or neighborhood. Logically, to assure that this committee functions, we will have to leave aside all the psychological aspects of the candidate, whether or not he is conceited, or whether or not he is egoistical, in order to focus on organizing a rank-and-file committee. Time will be on the side of our party and its program and not the candidate's ego. The slightest subjective comment against the candidate, if there are negative psychological aspects about him, will work against us and not him, as it could threaten the cohesiveness of the group or committee we have organized.

We have cited all these examples without taking up the programmatic aspects of the problems. What slogans will we use to approach a housewife or rank-and-file worker? We take for granted that these slogans have already been drawn up by the party and formulated by each zone.

The Trade Union Activist

This is the sector we are most interested in—together with the working class and student youth. We have to come directly to the point with the trade union activist: his day-to-day struggle with the boss and, in many cases, the bureaucracy. Along with this we should ask for his opinion on the trade-union contracts and the union negotiations, as well as on the situation in his factory.

Here too we should know how to listen to the story of his struggles. The obvious question will be to ask him if he believes the struggle against the boss in his factory or union should be broadened on a national scale and raised from the trade-union to the political level. If he is a trade union fighter with a clear antibureaucratic consciousness, one much more concrete question will do: Are you going to fight against the bureaucracy's boss candidates?

If the trade union activist has syndicalist tendencies, the discussion will be hard and difficult, because he's going to tell us that he's not interested in politics, that in general it's for the bosses, and the workers should have nothing to do with it because everything the work-

ers get they get through trade union activity. We should then point out to him how political activity, although it involves certain risks for the workers movement, in general is the only form through which the workers can definitively free themselves from exploitation. The question is whether or not we are opposed to exploitation. If we're for ending it, we can't just restrict ourselves to trade-union work, since it is always a palliative and doesn't definitively solve anything, that sooner or later everything we might gain through the union struggle is lost on the political level through not being in power. It's possible that a profound lack of confidence in the possibilities of the workers movement is hidden beneath his syndicalist position, and that the syndicalist might finally say to us, "What you say is very nice, but the workers will never come to power because they aren't capable of it." We must point out to him that this is untrue, that this is exactly what the bosses say when work conditions and wages are discussed, purporting that the workers don't understand anything about the problems of the company. We believe that there are many things the worker doesn't have a profound knowledge of, but the same is the case with the majority of the bosses who know nothing about politics, or business management, or who very often don't even know their own companies, as happens in the case of capitalists in the big international monopolies or with the big oligarchies. We have to give concrete examples of bourgeois elements whose businesses are administered by technicians or managers. The same thing the bosses do we can do much better, in politics as well as in managing the companies: assigning the best people, but controlled by the workers who are familiar with the problems because they work in the country and in the companies. Working class politics means precisely the following: to insist that the workers and above all the trade union activists lose their inferiority complex about political and economic problems, and put themselves forward as the only political, union, and economic leaders who can save the country and the workers, provided that they are organized in a revolutionary party. If they don't do it, no one will.

If the trade union activist has ultraleftist leanings, because of the influence in the factory of some students who have gone to work there, the discussion will be even more difficult, because instead of lacking self-confidence - like the modest trade unionist who from day-to-day feels the tremendous weight of the bourgeoisie-he will tell us just the opposite: he has such confidence in his organization, his ideas, and the current revolutionary consciousness of the workers, that he considers it somewhat ridiculous to intervene in the elections. According to them, all the workers already understand that there has to be a revolution, so why lose time using the elections to fight the bourgeoisie's electoral fraud. Actually, there isn't a single important sector of the working class that isn't going to go and vote for the bourgeois tickets on election day, but this doesn't interest the ultraleftist: what is important is his dreams, the balloon that they blow up every day in the sect, like "neither coup nor election, revolution," "a working class front in the elections," etc. It is very difficult to convince these honest and self-sacrificing compañeros. To do this it is necessary to base oneself on one's own experience in the working class and on what Marxist classics said with respect to this question. If they are so busy blowing up their balloon that they refuse to open their eyes and ears, we shouldn't waste our time: the reality of our campaign is more important than trying to convince these inveterate sectarians, who believe and in many cases will continue to believe that the only reality that exists is the one in their imagination.

The Working Class or Student Youth

When we come into contact with young people we should begin by letting them know that the companeros in our youth organization want to meet them. Sometimes not even this is necessary: take their names down right away and notify the companeros in our youth organization. The young person doesn't have to agree with us on anything. The mere fact that this is a youth who might listen to us is an opportunity to make our positions and our program known.

The compañeros in the youth organization will be responsible for drawing up an entire program and a procedure for approaching and contacting youth. Therefore, we will limit ourselves to giving some guidelines of a general nature.

Above all, the youth should feel that for us the present and future is better than the past when it is a question of youth. More concretely, he should understand that we believe in the youth because we believe in the revolution and it is precisely the youth who will make this revolution. But we should not fall into formulating any generational positions other than this one, since the youth will make the revolution based on the heritage of Marxism and of the class struggle in the country. Thus, just as there is a continuity in the class struggle, there is a continuity in generations.

Another aspect we have to treat—if the youth is a worker—is his specific problems as a worker: lower pay for the same work adults do; the lack of opportunity to study, and the social injustice this represents. We should point out to the youth in general that our party is the only one that has confidence in youth, for that very reason it runs young workers as candidates for president and vice president and for all the principal offices. This is what our adult party should say to the youth; everything else is a question that should be elaborated and applied by the unsurpassed Juventud Socialista de Avanzada [Vanguard Socialist Youth.]

The Election Campaign

This will be developed during the discussion of the labor contracts negotiated by the bureaucracy. In view of the sky-rocketing cost of living which is the primary problem affecting the entire working class, much more so than the problem of the elections, the axis of our election is to combine this with the struggle and concrete expectations of the working class with respect to the labor contracts.

Given the non-electoralist character of our party, which tries to educate the working class about the true road to its liberation, it is absolutely necessary for all the party's teams, the zone leaderships, and the party as a whole to overcome the headiness caused by so many months of trying to gain legal status, and to a large extent return to doing what we have always done: advancing ourselves as a real alternative in the concrete struggles of the working class. This means that we have to get back to thinking and doing what we have always done when confronted with discussion of labor contracts, the economic problems of the working class in general, and in every trade union or workplace in particular. as when we are faced with any working class conflict. After this document has been read, we have to immediately formulate a line and a concrete program, just as we have always done when faced with labor contract discussions in any factory or trade union we are working in. Without resorting to personal insults, we will have to very strongly denounce the lack of democracy in discussing the provisions of the labor contracts, we should demand a wage increase and minimum wage in line with the demands and grievances of the trade union in question, and we will have to demand that nothing be signed without consulting the rank-and-file in an assembly or through a referendum. Again we emphsize: we have to go back to what we have always done, without succumbing to the headiness of electoral activities.

The Axis of Our Activity During the Struggle for Labor Contracts

The election campaign should enable us to perform this activity in a much stronger, not weaker, form. The principal point of our election campaign should be precisely this: the election campaign serves to produce a generalized intoxication that enables the bosses to divert the workers from an immediate, imperative, urgent struggle, a struggle for survival, a struggle for wages to enable them to overcome their current hunger and poverty. The trade union leaders are playing into the hands of the bosses. The party's major national slogan should at this time be: Let's prevent the elections from diverting the working class from the struggle for good labor contracts and for a substantial wage increase. We have to apply this line and propagandize around it everywhere in an immediate way. We should produce one or two leaflets weekly in each trade union or workplace, exclusively taking up the subject of labor contracts so as to give our concrete position on the subject.

It will link up with the problem of the elections in several ways. First the leaflets will always have to be signed by the fraction of the Partido Socialista de los Trabajadores [Socialist Workers party—PST] in the trade union or company. In other cases, they will have to be signed by the individual candidates of the party in that sector. Second: The fraction that signs these concrete statements will give our political position and link it to the problem of labor contracts in a complete way in other leaflets: if the contracts are signed under difficult conditions, we will point out that this is a result of the bureaucratic character of the leaderships, without insulting them, and

that the same is happening on a political level, where these leaderships have a suicidal line for the workers movement. Third: In the concrete, specific leaflets regarding labor contracts we will have to refer to our political position in the past. Fourth: We will have to permanently aim ourselves in the direction of the trade unions with a respectful united front position in relation to the discussion on labor contracts (we should not give the impression that we are demagogues who are taking this position to win votes, but rather, on the contrary, that we want a good labor contract and that we are the best fighters for winning it), proposing a trade-union - political agreement to them, for example, informing them that we support a specific concrete labor contract (the bureaucracy's or one that we elaborate) and that if we are victorious we will legally impose it, asking them if they want us to publicly sign this agreement. So that they do not think that we are maneuvering, we will have to tell all the trade union leaders that our objective isn't to win votes or to discredit them because of the political positions they hold - Peronist or whatever they might be - since we are honest enough to be ready to form a front in relation to the particular trade union struggle with the political parties that they feel are acceptable, with all the parties if that is what they think is necessary, but basically with the Peronist party, so that they promise that if they win. the next day they will vote this labor contract into law: for example in banking, that the banks will be totally nationalized and controlled by the workers, in order to guarantee a 120,000 peso minimum wage (a sliding scale of wages starting at this level beginning in January), and promotions within the banks in accordance with ability, seniority, etc. In these public statements calling for a united front we will have to again and again stress that we want unity in order to win a good contract that solves the problem faced by the trade union, using the elections. Our position has to be: the elections are provoking an intoxication that is causing the working class to forget its real major concrete problems, at this time the starvation wages; we must transform the elections into the opposite, into a formidable tool for overcoming this problem, forcing the different parties to promise to put the specifications decided by the workers into law.

The Election Campaign and Workers' Conflicts

This is the essential axis of our election campaign, with its practical consequences: we will have to intervene in all conflicts or preparations for conflicts over labor contracts that arise during this period. Electoral activity should not be a reason for removing ourselves from conflicts, on the contrary, the campaign should allow us to discover and participate in many more conflicts than usual. If we take this approach our campaign will not be electoralist. If we don't, in spite of all the revolutionary language we use, we will be turning away from the real experiences and struggles of our class to propagandism.

Distributing huge numbers of leaflets, distributing literature at factories, should enable us to discover every posible conflict and every already existing one. The party, with its candidates and leaderships, should throw itself into these conflicts. In them we should pose the question

of why the other more important candidates from the other parties are not involved, and we should demand that a united front of all the parties that support the victory of the working class be formed. At the same time, we should be the champions of the conflict, picketers, propagandizers, organizers, without any sectarianism, whether or not they agree with our electoral program or our candidates.

In spite of it being summer, there are possibilities that conflicts might erupt or that some are in the making and the election campaign should help to tie us in.

In summary, we can say that the election campaign does not mean that the party's usual activity in the concrete struggles of the working class, ranging from salary increases to the Cordobazos, will be abandoned, but rather that the huge experience we have in this kind of struggle will be broadened and expanded.

We Must Distribute Literature at the Factories

The most important objective of our election campaign is to penetrate the workers movement. We can succeed in this objective if the basic axis of our activity on the zone level is distributing literature at factories, as well as in the downtown areas in order to work on white-collar workers.

We should arrange for the distributions at factories to be carried out by the same companeros. The companeros have to familiarize themselves with the problems and get to know the workers in the factory. This will only be achieved if it is always the same companeros who go there. Before they sell their first newspaper, it is very important that our salespeople who are distributing literature at the factory or factories know the characteristics of the factory and that they be systematically asked what they think can be done to improve our work. We have to avoid transforming the companeros into vending and leaflet-distributing machines. They have to consciously fulfill their tasks and begin contributing to them from the first day. This is why it is appropriate to discuss the results of the sales and distributions when they return.

Taking advantage of the campaign, we have to transform every factory newspaper sale and literature distribution into a small public meeting. To do this we have to be creative in thinking up the best procedure, without appearing odd, in order to have an impact on the workers and get them to pay attention to us and read our leaflets. By taking along several photographers with flash cameras and our principal candidates together with compañeros holding signs, we can have an impact on all the workers who come up to us. The factories have to be distinguished by their character, and, if possible, candidates from the same trade union or work sector have to be sent. We should place a lot of importance on factories employing a majority of women, to use Nora's campaign and distribution teams with a majority of women companeras to maximize the impact on them. Before going out to sell newspapers, we should very carefully study the characteristics of every factory, shifts, location. This, along with a thorough grasp of the problems in the factory or trade union, especially the contract, will help us succeed in our sales.

The other decisive sector of our work will be the down-

town areas, making a concerted effort to reach white-collar workers. The party places very great importance on this work, as it considers this sector to be intimately linked to the working class, in fact forming a part of it, since they are salaried, they live on wages. The present development of capitalism increases the numerical importance of this sector even more, as a consequence of the development of technology. All the guidelines we laid out for distributing literature at factories, although complemented and expanded, we apply to the downtown areas. Our public meetings should be even more creative. After first thoroughly investigating the margins of legality, we should give free rein to our imaginations in regard to the creativeness of the public meetings. In resort towns, leaflets should be distributed at working class hotels.

A lot less importance will be placed on slum work, although for the most part it is the principal sector for youth and women's work. Here it is a question of canvassing from house to house, as when we were signing up members, being careful that the time is appropriate, especially now that it is summer. The best time would be after six or seven in the evening. Finally, a very important sector to heavily concentrate newspaper sales in are train stations, which thousands of workers pass through. Each zone should study sales at these stations, trying here as well to send the same salespeople.

Accompanying this work of distributing leaflets, we should always take along *Avanzada Socialista*, which we should always try to sell. If it is possible to take tables along, we will take all out literature.

Public Meetings

All the zones and the national leadership will get together to prepare the campaign during the first week of the initial stage of the campaign, that is, the week of Monday, January 8 to the 15, and in the course of it, will take up different alternatives for public meetings. There are two types of meetings: those that are local and those that have a national scope. The latter will feature speakers such as Coral, Nora and Páez. The local meeting will be directly prepared by the zones. These public meetings, although they may attract a very small audience, should be held in the communities as well as at factory gates. We have to take advantage of these meetings to test compañeros as speakers. We have already said that a lot of importance has to be given to transform every sale or leaflet distribution into a blitz meeting. We will have to become real experts at putting together blitz meetings. We should have compañeros trained in organizing this kind of meeting and we should know how to utilize our most noted representatives, Coral, Nora, Fote, Páez, etc., at workplaces and at factory gates, in conjunction with the blitz meetings and our newspaper sales. It will be very important to investigate the possibilities of making, for these blitz meetings, or rather for propaganda during them, records of some chants to send to all the zones.

We should quickly ascertain the legal possibilities for the meetings. Party speakers should adequately prepare themselves, paying a great deal of attention to this work. They should begin from the premise that the point is to convince those who aren't convinced, and when we use the means of mass communication our audience increases tremendously, and we want to convince this audience, not fortify our own members. The axis of our campaign is simple: Vote for a workers and socialist program and for worker and socialist candidates; don't vote for our class enemies. The election campaign does not have to be separated from the current struggle for labor contracts and a 120,000 peso minimum wage. The central argument throughout our campaign should be: compañeras and compañeros, you are exploited inside and outside the factory, the bosses and merchants say that you don't know how to manage business or regulate trade so that they can better exploit you. Do not neglect to take advantage of voting; do not let those who exploit your work all year round exploit your vote on Sunday, May 11; don't vote for them, cast a vote for yourself and your class. Every argument should be very carefully formulated in its language and concepts, which should be simple, clear, without any ideological terrorism, without giving the impression that we are superior or pedantic, or that we believe we have the world on a string, being very careful not to be perjorative-except towards exploiters—but rather convincing workers and employees who don't know us or know us very little, who haven't heard our jargon, or language, who in many cases believe that the Communist party is way left, or who are confused, who have never heard anyone say the Leninist phrase, "utilizing legality," who, when they hear it, think that it's a new brand of soup. We are speaking for them, we emphasize, for them and not for ourselves: We have to find arguments and a manner of speaking to reach them and so that they will say - at the very least - How clearly the people in the Workers and Socialist Front speak! How down-to-earth they are! They're first-rate even though I don't agree with them! Our speakers should be received in this way.

Other Means

Posters and leaflets will be other basic tools of our campaign. We have to make large and attractive posters with the party's fundamental slogans and with the candidates' photographs, accompanied by a short biography of each, explaining who they are, ending with the question: Workers, will you vote for a fighter for your class like them? Or for the bosses, people with professional titles and bureaucrats? We could make several posters, but we should not be merely satisfied with a photograph and name, although they should be the essential part of these posters. Signs painted on walls and large murals will be similar.

Leaflets will perhaps be the most important tool of the campaign. We should produce all kinds and on all levels: ranging from a national or provincial leaflet to what we run off for a small factory of twenty to fifty workers. The more concrete the leaflets are the better, because they will be much clearer. This concrete character has to be stressed. We have already pointed out the fundamental importance of the struggle for labor contracts and the conflicts they bring forth. Now we will emphasize the need to take advantage of producing leaflets that include personal profiles of the compañeros fighting in a trade union or factory.

On a national and provincial level it is necessary and

compelling for us to put out general and special leaflets for each trade union, including an analysis of how the Alianza, supported by the CP, is only running a few workers for the principal candidacies, and how Justicialismo (running bureaucrats and only a small number) and the FIP [Frente de Izquierda Popular - Front of the Popular Left] are doing the same thing, as opposed to us. We should pose the problem of why this trade union is not represented in the candidacies of the bourgeois parties with influence in the workers movement. Moreover, we will take up the concrete problems of each trade union in depth. These general and trade union leaflets will be an essential axis of our campaign. Along with them we should have special leaflets for women and youth. With respect to women, we will clearly state the same points as in regard to the general leaflets for the workers movement. Why do the bourgeois tickets disregard them? With respect to youth, we should emphasize that we are the only ones who are running youth and women candidates.

If our finances permit, we'll publish pamphlets with the biographies of our candidates and their campaign platform. These pamphlets should be edited very carefully. Included in this entire process in addition to leaflets, Avanzada Socialista should be considered a fundamental tool. It is now time for the editorial staff to draw up an overall plan for the entire campaign. We have to study the possibility of publishing some special four-page issues that could be given away or sold for 10 pesos. The editorial staff has to study all these possibilities.

The other fundamental media are ones we have less control over: radio and television. For these media we should avoid the idea that comrades can learn as they go. We have to present compañeros who are experienced and who are good debaters. The compañeros should dress carefully and have their speech prepared so as to show that we are serious and responsible young workers, avoiding falling into offensive or formalistic postures. We should explain out reasoning with simple examples. We have to gear the preparation of our intervention to the radio or television audience we are addressing. We always have to be prepared to present our message, i.e., that it is not the journalists who run the program, but rather us: we have some statements to make and we make them. Our skill will rest in how we use the occasion and the questions to say what we want to say.

The Supporting Formations Needed for the Campaign

It is necessary for us to know how to create supporting formations for the party's campaign. Without these it would be very difficult for us to do much. We have to be very patient and know how to take maximum advantage of every possibility to create these bodies. The possibilities exist, let's use them!

The first formation we have to utilize in depth is one that we could create around our candidates. We have to patiently discuss with the candidates what their friends, acquaintances, co-workers, or neighbors can do to support their candidacy. It would be very difficult to imagine that there aren't two or three relatives or friends who want to do something for their candidacy. Our objective is to create support committees for a concrete candidacy.

As a minimum we want these two or three friends to meet to see what they can do, however little it might be, since we want them to begin to put it into practice. The party should send very good propagandists and organizers to these concrete groups of support for specific candidates, in order to convince them to do something and to spur their initiative.

This is the beginning of the organizations we want to build, it is the easiest thing to begin to do, but not the most important, as in every case it will be difficult to organize trade union activists and youth around these committees—our maximum objective—except in situations where the candidates are trade union activists and leaders with influence among the youth or in the community. To do this we will persist in the fronts that we want to organize and that are basic.

(a) The Workers Front

Along with the Socialist Front this is the most important political, as well as organizational, aspect of the campaign. At every literature distribution in a factory or working class community, we should bear in mind that there is no task more important than bringing the sympathizers of our election campaign together, so that they carry out some kind of work in support of the worker candidates. The essential and most advanced part of this campaign lies at the level of each factory or group of factories in each zone and in the attempt to organize the best working class trade union activists. This is the decisive aspect, requiring us to sacrifice any aspect of our activity in order to organize work among every group of activists within a factory or trade union. To do this we should put aside any sectarian attempt to directly recruit them to the party: every group of activists that works to organize the Workers Front is, by virtue of this act, playing a highly progressive role, and it would be a crime to spoil it because of attitudes that they may see as manipulative or as an attempt to coopt the front committee. But this should not be a reason for yielding to any attempt or pressure from those apolitical sectors, or sectors with positions different from ours, to stop our own election campaign. We should be highly respectful of the independence of every member of the Workers Front who wants to remain independent, while demanding freedom of action to propagandize our positions.

The task of organizing the Workers Front committees, whose most valuable aspect is the trade union activists existing within a factory or trade union, should now begin by calling together Workers Front committees on the level of each zone, around as many candidates as possible, having them form support committees for a specific candidate on a factory or community level. It would be a very concrete way of forming or beginning to organize these committees. They will have to be named: Workers Front committee in support of a particular candidate or candidates or in support of the worker candidates in general. They will have to begin to propagandize. We are not over optimistic, nor do we believe that these Workers Front committees can become generalized. On the contrary, we believe that they will be built in a local and fragmentary way, principally in greater Buenos Aires. But this doesn't mean that they can't be built in certain sectors. Successfully getting them to function with real

autonomy, succeeding in getting a worker who was recently recruited to the party through the election campaign to play an active role in these Workers Front committees, will be a gigantic achievement, the principal achievement in every zone. It doesn't matter if only a few Workers Front committees are formed. The important thing is that they are formed and, even more important, that if they are built, they be factory, trade union committees with activists or rank-and-file workers. The zone leaderships should already focus on the possibility of beginning to set up these Workers Front committees, which should never be auxiliary to us, but rather, no matter how small they are and although we might be their prime movers, should really contain activists who are independent of us.

For our cadres in general and the secondary cadres in particular, this will be a trial by fire. To build these Workers Front committees it will be necessary to know how to thoroughly understand trade union activists, neighborhood activists, as well as rank-and-file workers. We should watch our language so that it doesn't seem strange and study how to thoroughly take advantage of every opening. We should be very careful and pay attention to each compañero we come into contact with, because generally owing to the fact that his language is different from our jargon-we relegate him to the sidelines or think of him as different from us. On the contrary, we should make efforts to understand his language and thinking and realize once and for all that every compañero who has one ounce of agreement with us deserves all our attention and care, because this ounce is only a beginning and when he feels more comfortable in our presence, it will be easier for us to progressively win him over to other points of our program.

The zone leaderships should strive toward the goal that each small party team becomes the animator of at least one Workers or Socialist Front committee.

(b) The Socialist Front

Events are demonstrating that the analysis we made at our congress at the end of 1971, where we put forward the slogan for a Workers and Socialist Pole, is correct. At that congress we said that we saw only two possibilities: on the one hand, the formation of a front with the best activists in the workers movement, and on the other hand, a front with the leftist sectors of the old socialist movement and new leftist sectors from the university movement. This prognosis is taking form before our eyes. The successes of the Workers Front during the last few weeks have made us forget the historic importance of the Socialist Front. The Workers Front corresponds to the most profound current need for trade union activists and the working class itself to achieve the political independence of the workers movement. But the Socialist Front reflects the most profound historic, not immediate, need, although intimately linked to it, which is the need to propagandize for socialism. Bourgeois populism and Stalinism have for several decades occupied themselves with making the workers movement forget the significance of socialism as a new social order of proletarian internationalism, the class struggle, etc. The Socialist Front has this fundamental objective: to begin to raise the old banners of socialism, the class struggle, proletarian internationalism, etc. What is ABC for every leftist militant is,

however, at present totally foreign to Argentine workers. Faced with the crisis of Peronism, the perspective is

opening for this united campaign to be led by the party and to a large extent capitalized on by it. To do this we have to be able to unite everyone who claims to be a socialist around joint action or joint committees, in order to develop through this much more efficient action. This will enable us to mobilize numerous layers of individuals and small groups who, thanks to the election campaign and our line of forming Socialist Front committees, could be put into motion. As in the workers committees we shouldn't behave in a sectarian manner and we should give them a wide margin of freedom and autonomy, or in other words, practically a total margin of freedom. This activity can bear many fruits in putting into motion and linking us up with many intellectually useful and militant individuals and small groups, but at the same time it will cause us the worst headaches, as we will come into contact with the most disparate sects who will be looking for wind to fill their sails. Striving to build Socialist Front committees in an unsectarian manner with every group or individual who wants to struggle for socialist candidates and a socialist program in these elections will be one of the essential tasks for all of our zone leaderships. If we prove capable of working in an unsectarian manner we will be surprised at the results that this activity can yield, opening up unsuspected possibilities and contacts to the party in all areas. In this way we will open up a much broader road than what we accomplished with legality in relation to intellectuals, activists and middle class sympathizers, for whom the party will be transformed into a true pole of attraction. Because of this, the national leadership will demand that Socialist Fronts be built in every zone.

(c) The Other Fronts

Among the other fronts, the most important, as important as the Workers and Socialist Front, is the youth. The Juventud Socialista de Avanzada will have to undertake activity that is parallel to that of the party in its specific sector of activity. We don't want to lay down a line on the form for approaching electoral work, because this is the job for the youth as a whole and its leadership on all levels. The only thing we can say is that a study of the party documents can produce a general orientation that the youth formations should apply to their specific tasks. They should also build all kinds of youth fronts, principally worker and socialist.

Another very important front is the specifically neighborhood front of community organizations, that are interconnected with, but not strictly the same as Workers Fronts. We should draw up a program for the community organizations and for the municipalities in the country's interior where there is no proletariat, since the struggle is occurring there in such a way as to interest sectors of the middle class in our program and candidates.

The other fundamentally important front, although we will only be involved on a level of certain sporadic cases, should be the womens front, that of the feminist struggle. The fact that we are running so many women candidates should be accompanied by a systematic call to women to free themselves from their double exploitation. We should investigate what the possibilities are for assigning a woman compañera in the national leadership to spend full time seeking the support of womens liberation organizations for our candidates and our program.

Once Again: Let's Strengthen the Party

The phrase "we are participating in the elections to strengthen the party" could be dangerous if we do not clearly state what we mean by it, since the party is strengthened by increasing newspaper sales, contacts, general party propaganda. All of this is true, but in this specific case, the party will be strengthened by increasing the number of sympathizers and members.

The leadership of the party does not want to set specific numbers, because it does not know for sure the actual possibilities that will open up with the elections. It has suggested a tentative possibility: every party local and zone should come out of the elections, that is by July 1973, with twice as many militants, sympathizers, and newspaper sales. As the campaign is beginning to take shape there is already an apparently certain possibility that we didn't foresee in complete detail: the appearance of small locals in working class neighborhoods. We will have to clearly outline this perspective which comes within the realm of the other perspectives that were laid out. If this perspective is confirmed we would have to add that we should come out of the campaign with at least twice the number of locals we presently have. Time will tell if we have to add this new perspective. Concretely, immediately, we want

to participate in the elections in order to come out, to the extent possible, with twice the number of members and everything this signifies in terms of locals, newspaper sales, sympathizers, etc.

When we emphasize that we are not sure about these perspectives, we are referring to several facts. First, our lack of experience in this activity. Second, the difficult objective situation that we are facing, full of possibilities caused by the crisis of Peronism and the revolutionary situation on the one hand, and full of centrist pitfalls and confusion on the other hand, exacerbated by the relative ebb of the workers movement. Third, we still don't know how the workers movement and the vanguard are going to respond to the electoral process, since it hasn't really begun to unfold yet.

It is because of these three factors that the party leadership hasn't attempted to set definite, obligatory goals for the election campaign. For the time being our goals are approximations and they will have to be made more definite halfway through or at the end of the campaign.

This approximate character of our goals makes it more than ever necessary to attentively study how to focus the campaign so as to avoid erring in our orientation.

The election campaign will be a trial by fire for the national leadership and the different zone leaderships. The success of our campaign will to a large extent depend on their skill in thoroughly utilizing all the perspectives and openings.

Unification of the PSA-PRT

Basis of Unification of the PSA-PRT

(Reprinted from the November 13, 1972 issue of Intercontinental Press)

[At the end of 1971 a unification ook place between the Partido Revoucionario de los Trabajadores (La Verdad) and the Partido Socialista Argentino (Coral). The PSA was one of the groupings that emerged from the Argentine Social Democracy when it split up under the impact of the Cuban evolution. Under the leadership of Juan Carlos Coral, the PSA moved to the left as the economic and social crisis deepened in Argentina.

[The PRT (Revolutionary Workers party), organized around the weekly ournal La Verdad (the Truth) was neaded by Nahuel Moreno, a well-known Argentine Trotskyist leader.

[The two organizations merged inder the name of the Partido Socialsta Argentino. The PSA publishes a weekly journal Avanzada Socialista (Socialist Vanguard). This replaces La Verdad.

[The basis of the unification was set forth in the following declaration of principles, unanimously approved by the executive committees of the two organizations. The translation is by Intercontinental Press.]

* * *

That the Republic of Argentina is a capitalist country of uneven development that has become increasingly dependent upon the exploitation and capital investment of world imperialism, operating in close association with a highly concentrated and centralized big national bourgeoisie.

That the exploitation of the country by imperialist capital is not being carried out against the wishes of and in spite of the national bourgeoisie, but through its most highly concentrated sectors and with its backing and complicity.

That the high degree of concentration and centralization of capital in Argentina remains an economic and political burden upon the sectors of the middle and petty bourgeoisie, which are semi-exploited by big national and international capital, lack any possibility for independent development, yet at the same time exploit the working class through their enterprises.

That this middle and petty bourgeoisie cannot, as a result, play any decisive leading role in the struggles the Argentinian people must undertake if they are to achieve their liberation, since historically these classes always end up acting as instruments of the big imperialist monopolies.

That the economic and social structure of the country requires linking the struggle for national liberation from the imperialist yoke closely to the struggle against the capitalist regime and the big national bourgeoisie.

That the Argentine Socialist party and the PRT (La Verdad) pledge to allocate all their forces to building the party.

That the party will establish the most fraternal relations with all groups that are struggling—legally or illegally—for national liberation and socialism, in order to jointly work out programmatic, strategic and tactical questions.

That in the course of building the party organization, there must be a deepening of theoretical criticism of the opportunist, reformist and populist deviations that divert the Argentine proletariat from its historic goals, but this critique must not be seen as a hindrance to alliances between the party and all working-class layers that are struggling, around concrete and clear issues, for national liberation and socialism.

That it is essential for the party to establish fraternal ties with the working masses who today are caught up in Peronist populism and its bourgeois reformist ideology. The party must encourage and join with these masses in all of their concrete struggles against exploitation and oppression, helping them to understand how the political structure and the tradeunion bureaucracy serve to block their desire to struggle and limit achieving their historic objectives, which are none other than those that lead to the destruction of the capitalist system and the construction of socialism.

That the party must utilize every method of struggle required by the changing political reality.

That although we are convinced that the state is always an expression of the dictatorship of the ruling classes, even though it may be masked by bourgeois democratic forms, nevertheless, every opening provided by bourgeois legality must be utilized to promote the organization of the workers politically and economically and to assemble a force capable of making the revolution that objective conditions in Argentina and throughout the world have made the most urgent task of the day.

That the utilization of the legal methods of struggle within its reach must not be allowed to divert the attention of the party away from the tasks of also preparing its organization to take up the struggle for political power on all levels and by every means that conditions permit or require.

That the party, through a front of the workers and the exploited masses, must tirelessly struggle to bring about a workers and people's government that will assure national liberation and the revolutionary construction of socialism. Both committees stress the fact that although it may proclaim itself to be socialist, no state is truly socialist unless the working class exercises direct control over the entire state apparatus—the armed forces, the executive administration, the courts, and the legislative power.

That the only combination in which the proletariat and its party can participate is one that moves toward the conquest of state power by the working class, that is, socialist and working-class combinations. Treacherous combinations with any sector of the bourgeoisie are rejected as a way of taking power.

That both executive committees acknowledge the existence of layers of small peasants (growers of fruit, tobacco, cotton, sugar cane, grapes, etc.) who are exploited by the big proimperialist bourgeoisie, and who are agitating and struggling against their exploiters. Although in the final analythese sectors are struggling to maintain their position as small producers, just as they will struggle tomorrow against any attempt to socialize agricultural production, the party nevertheless supports their struggles as a social movement (but not politically) so as to isolate the main enemy-the big national bourgeoisie and its senior partner, imperialism. But through that support it will strive to make its momentary allies understand that their problems as human beings can only be solved through socialism, and it will try to win the best ones to the cause and the party of the proletariat. The party will adopt the same position toward the movements that the small shopkeepers, manufacturers, and craftsmen might form in their struggle against the monopolies, whether imperialist or

That both executive committees obviously reject the so-called Gran Acuerdo Nacional¹ in which the national bourgeoisie and imperialism are attempting to cover up their cruel dictatorship through "La Hora del Pueblo"² as a response to the profound revolutionary mobilizations of the working class that have been developing since the Cordobazo.³

That this masquerade is possible only because of the complicity of the Peronist leadership, which seeks to divert the workers from their great historical tasks and keep them within the bounds of mildly reformist and conformist activity that is designed in the last analysis to preserve the capitalist system and imperialist domination.

This rejection includes the ENA⁴, a new opportunist attempt to raise the slogan for a bourgeois democratic revolution, and the new Frente Cívico⁵ proposed by Perón as a way of reaching an agreement with Frondifrigerismo,⁶ as another variant for protecting the capitalist system.

That the tragedy of the organized Argentine workers' movement is the sinister union bureaucracy - an agent within the workers' movement that has prostituted itself to imperialism and the national bourgeoisie. That, faithful to the soundest principles of proletarian internationalism, both executive committees point out: that the main enemy of the workers of the world is U.S. imperialism, world cop of counterrevolution and the major exploiter of the nations and masses of Latin America: that there must be stronger ties with and total support for all peoples struggling for their liberation,

- 3. A massive workers' uprising in the city of Cordoba in May 1969.
- 4. Encuentro Nacional de los Argentinos (National Forum for Argentines), a Communist party-inspired popular front with "progressive" sectors of the capitalist class.
- 5. Civic Front In addition to sectors of the Peronist movement, the ENA has also participated in this formation, which represents "prodevelopment" sectors of the capitalist class and which is designed to promote the elections.
- 6. Movement led by former President Arturo Frondizi and Rogelio Frigerio. Its official name is the Movimiento de Integracion y Desarrollo (MID—Movement for Integration and Development). It calls for increased governmental support to the development of national industries.

for all the forces and all the systems that are heroically struggling to build socialism, and especially for the revolutionary movements of Latin America, for socialist Cuba, and for the present vanguard of the world revolution—the heroic Vietnamese guerrillas

That without failing to defend the socalled socialist states from any imperialist attack, we will support any struggles by the working class of those countries for socialist democracy, since socialism is the highest expression of democracy for the workers and toiling masses—which means complete freedom of expression and criticism for the workers and their organizations, parties and unions.

That, while recognizing the need for an International, neither of the executive committees, nor the party, will yield their inalienable right to determine strategy and tactics to any leadership or tendency that is not rooted in the proletariat and the Argentine people.

That on the basis of these points, both executive committees are devoting their efforts to building a great Socialist Party, a revolutionary workers' party, deeply rooted in the realities of the nation, in solidarity with all the socialist movements of Latin America and the world, and into which they hope to regroup in a solid vanguard the currently dispersed Argentine revolutionary left.

Demands for Immediate Struggle

i. For democratic rights. Down with the repressive bodies and laws.

For the immediate release of all political and social prisoners, especially the guerrillas and trade-union activists.

For a national campaign including all individuals and organizations that want to struggle for the release of Flores, Santucho, Tosco, and their comrades.

For the repeal of all repressive legislation.

Down with the Camara Federal [Supreme Criminal Court].

For the immediate abolition of all repressive bodies—the Office of Security, SIDE [Servicio de Informaciones del Estado—State Information Service], DIPA [División de Investigaciones Policiales Antidemocráticas—Bureau for Investigating Antidemocratic Activities], etc.

^{1.} Gran Acuerdo Nacional (Great National Agreement). The GAN is Lanusse's name for the preparations leading up to the elections scheduled for 1973. It is a coalition through which the dictatorship hopes to unite the ruling class behind one candidate and bring the Peronist union bureaucracy into collaboration with, and participation in, the new government

^{2. &}quot;The Hour of the People." A middle-class united front formed in November 1970 that advocates a greater role in national politics for political parties. Among the groups associated with it are the Partido Conservador Popular (Popular Conservative party), the Partido Democrata Progresista (Progressive Democratic party), the Union Civica Radical Bloquista (Bloquista Radical Civic Union), the Peronist movement, the Union Civica Radical (Radical Civic Union), and the Partido Socialista Argentino (Argentine Socialist party, Selser wing).

For the allocation of free prime time on radio and television to all political parties, whether officially recognized or not.

For freedom of the press—the Graphics Union to guarantee the publication of any newspaper. Printshops to be obligated by law to accept for publication the organs of political parties, whether officially recognized or not.

Down with the state of siege.

Legalize the Communist party.

For the right of Perón to return to the country and become a candidate.

For the right of every citizen to reside in the country, take part in political life, and form a political party.

II. In defense of the living conditions and jobs of the working class.

An immediate 40 percent wage increase and a minimum salary of 70,000 pesos [\$1 equals 10.20 pesos].

For a sliding scale of wages, to be readjusted every sixty days.

Against unemployment. For unemployment insurance that guarantees a full salary during a period of unemployment.

For a ban on the profits of foreign monopolies being taken out of the country and for their reinvestment in new areas of work in accord with a plan drawn up by the working class.

Elimination of all taxes harmful to public consumption and the work force.

For nationalization without compensation of all industries that close down or stop production, so that they will continue operating for the government but under workers' control;

For the application of law 14,250 on collective bargaining and for parity of labor and management.

For a special parity that makes up for weak trade unions having to negotiate from a position of weakness.

III. For trade union democracy. Kick out the union bureaucracy.

For the unconditional defense of the CGT [Confederación General de Trabajo] and the unions.

Against bureaucracy in the union

The same salary for trade-union leaders as they earned when they were working.

Total replacement every two years of the leading cadres so that leaders

go back to the factory or their jobs.

No worker can be expelled from the union unless his expulsion is approved by his co-workers in a section or department. Let his working-class morality be judged by those who know him and not by the bureaucrats.

Every worker or activist fired by management to continue to remain a full member of the union for a minimum of two years in order to prevent any joint attempt by the bureaucrats and the bosses to keep the best activists not only out of a job, but out of the union.

Annual rank-and-file conventions of all trade-union organizations, from the CGT to the smallest regional organization. Delegates must be democratically elected by their co-workers and represent the number of votes they received in the election. All sectors of the workers' movement to be represented.

For the formation of a Class-struggle Union Movement that will include all union activists who are ready to struggle for union democracy, for the removal of the union bureaucracy, and for its replacement by a new, class-struggle leadership.

IV. For women's liberation

Free and legal abortion, performed in state clinics that have prior authorization from official medical bodies and all the necessary guarantees for safeguarding health.

For the free sale of contraceptive devices once they are approved by state medical schools. Full protection for the unmarried mother and elimination of any legal differences between legitimate and illegitimate children. Equal rights for legal and common-law families.

For completely free, twenty-four-hour child-care centers.

Forty percent of the minimum wage to be paid to working mothers for every child under eighteen years of age.

For effective implementation of the principle of equal pay for equal work. Against all discriminatory practices against women that deny them equal opportunity in carrying out their activities. Obligatory inclusion of women in all union bodies, in proportion to the number of women in the corresponding branches of work, as well as in all governmental and popular

bodies. Elimination of any regulation or practice that impedes free sexual relationships between men and wom-

Elimination of any discriminatory law or regulation between men and women.

V. For education that serves the working class and the people.

For student control of exams.

For curricula that help students serve the working class and the people. Scholarships so that students who lack the means to study can do so without having to work.

For the elimination of state economic aid to private universities. Free admission to the university.

For a university government comprised of students, teachers, and nonteaching workers freely elected by each sector, and with the majority consisting of students.

For a university that serves the struggle for socialism in our country. Compulsory, secular, and truly free primary and secondary education for all.

Supply all students in state schools with materials, books, and uniforms. Coeducation and a full program of sex education.

Integration of productive labor at all levels of education. An aggressive campaign to end illiteracy. End all repressive regulations and guarantee the full right of secondary and university students to organize. Repeal the Jorge de la Torre act.

Increase the budget for education and pay for it out of the budgets of the military and repressive forces.

VI. For the democratization of the armed forces.

For an end to the repressive role of the armed forces and their use in the service of capital.

For a lowering of military service to a period of three months. For the right of students and workers to fit their military service into a schedule convenient to their studies and their occupations. For the right to organize military service through the universities and the unions. For the constitutional right of soldiers and officers to take part in politics. Statepaid wages for draftees. Opening up the rank of officer and field officer to noncommissioned officers.

A ban on soldiers performing any domestic tasks or personal services.

VII. For socialized medicine.

Free medical care and medicines for every inhabitant.

For the nationalization of all the clinics, hospitals, and factories that produce medical supplies. For workers' control of all welfare institutions. For a national health plan drawn up by the workers' movement with the aid of doctors and all health service workers.

And Struggle on a Permanent Basis

I. For a socialist economy in Argentina.

For immediate nationalization without compensation of all national and oreign banks, insurance companies, oreign trade, the big meat-packing plants, and monopolistic national and mperialist-owned industries.

Repudiate the debts and concessions o imperialism contracted by the dicatorial and reactionary governments.

For workers' control in the big plants, in nationalized industries, and n foreign trade.

For an agrarian reform based on he expropriation without compensaion of the big estates, and for their being handed over to the wage workrs and small rural producers to be leveloped into collective forms of proluction.

For the return of occupied lands o the indigenous communities.

For a new colonization in agriculure, implemented on a socialist economic basis in which the priority will so to rural workers settled on tenant lands, those who have been forced to migrate to the cities by the present latifundist set-up, and immigrant workers from neighboring Latin American countries.

Respect for the holdings of small farmers and the organization of cooperatives for them with low credit rates and technical help from the state.

For the immediate expropriation and urban development of the districts where the workers live in shantytowns. For an urban reform that provides every proletarian family with a comfortable home, paid for out of a small percentage of a worker's salary.

For expropriation of all luxury homes not permanently occupied in Mar del Plata and the other summer resort areas, so that they can be turned over to squatters in the shanty-towns. For creation of jobs for those who move into these areas.

For the drawing up of an economic plan by a rank-and-file congress of the CGT that can get the national economy rolling and raise the working class's standard of living.

This plan shall take into account the necessity of reaching agreement with the trade-union movements of Chile and Uruguay on a joint plan to move toward uniting the economies of our countries.

II. For an international policy aiming toward the unification of Latin America within a Federation of Socialist Republics.

For breaking the pacts that bind us to imperialism (bilateral Rio de Janeiro agreements, OAS [Organization of American States], IMF [International Monetary Fund], etc.

For the immediate recognition of Socialist Cuba.

For economic and diplomatic support to the steps taken by the governments of Chile and Peru to nationalize imperialist companies and to all other anti-imperialist measures taken by any other Latin American country economically blockaded or attacked by Yankee imperialism.

Unconditional defense of Socialist Cuba against any external attack, especially by Yankee imperialism, aimed at interfering with the construction of socialism.

For proletarian internationalism.

For the unconditional defense of any workers state attacked by the United States or any other imperialist power.

For solidarity with the people of Vietnam and all peoples struggling for national liberation and socialism.

III. Build a workers and socialist united front to:

Fight, on all fronts, against "La Hora del Pueblo," the ENA, the Frente Cívico, and any similar coalition that the bourgeoisie and imperialism have cooked up to divert our heroic working class from the revolutionary mobilization that began with the Cordobazo.

Present a class-struggle and socialist program in the coming elections.

Denounce these elections as merely a diversionary maneuver of the exploiters.

Struggle resolutely for the only solution for the country and the workers—a workers and people's government; for the convocation of a free and sovereign constituent assembly on the basis of a genuinely democratic ballot; and to lay the basis for building a Socialist Argentina.

Long Live the Future Socialist Argentina! \Box

Development of a Revolutionary Socialist Movement:

Interview With Juan Carlos Coral

The following interview with Juan Carlos Coral was obtained for The Militant earlier in 1972. We are running it for the information of our readers because of the increased interest in Argentine politics accompanying the return of former president Juan Perón to Argentina. Coral is a central leader of the Argentine Socialist Workers Party (formerly called the Argentine Socialist Party - PSA).

[Last spring the PSA was able to register 33,000 people as members to satisfy government conditions for participation as a legal party in the elections scheduled for March 1973. The PSA called on other workingclass and socialist groups in Argentina to join in its election campaign as a Workers and Socialist Pole in opposition to all procapitalist candidates in the elections.

Q: Why is the Argentine military government planning to hold elections next year?

A: The elections are a maneuver by the capitalist class to maintain the status quo. In Argentina the bourgeoisie swings like a pendulum between concessions and repression. When "representative" democracy is not effective in controlling the mass movement, the armed forces enter the scene to make the necessary correctives to maintain the rule of the capitalists.

But sometimes violent repression does not work; the ruling class is unable to control the workers movement or suppress it. Then they turn to their other alternative, which is to offer elections as a legal safety valve to try to placate the masses for a time, until the rulers decide once again to make a military coup.

We are witnessing this oscillation of the capitalist class today. Despite its procapitalist, Peronist leadership, the workers movement has reached such levels that it tends to break out of the control of the union bureaucracy, a bureaucracy that attempts to restrain the masses and that is integrated with the state apparatus.

(Reprinted from the January 12, 1973 issue of The Militant)

Under these conditions the capitalist class has found it appropriate to open the safety valves. That's all.

When [Arturo] Illia was president [from 1963-1966], the capitalist class feared the Peronist movement would sweep the next elections. Despite the bourgeois nature of the Peronist movement and the bureaucratic nature of its leadership, the rulers feared that under the impact of a Peronist electoral victory, the pro-Peronist mass movement might develop a dynamic that would get out of their control. So they decided in favor of a coup and [Juan Carlos] Onganía came to power.

But with the new rise in workers struggles, as represented by the Cordobazo [a massive workers uprising in Córdoba in 1969], the ruling class began to look toward a return to an electoral course. Onganía was thrown out and Levingston came in, who in turn was thrown out by Lanusse.

Lanusse suddenly appeared to be for democracy—as though the armed forces had been converted overnight to democratic ideals. Now all the politicians-who had nothing to say about the military dictatorship while the ruling class favored it—join with the army in what they call the "Hour of the People." And there you will find the Peronists and the Radicals, the two major civilian forces calling for a democratic solution.

Q: Does the ruling class still fear an electoral victory of the Peronists?

A: Under the impact of the workingclass advance, which is breaking out of the control of the bureaucracy, the rulers can no longer afford rifts within their own ranks. Thus they seek to close ranks for the electoral maneuver. All the so-called progressive wings of the capitalist class - the socalled nationalist wings - disappear in the hour of crisis.

Perón is the key to the electoral solution for the capitalist class because he is the last bourgeois figure with

popular support among the workers. Their goal is to use Perón's popularity as a brake on the masses.

But the mass movement makes it difficult for Perón to come to an agreement with Lanusse and still maintain his popularity. We are bound to see oscillations in Perón's position and a growing crisis among his followers.

Q: What is the position of the Communist Party?

A: The traditional land owners; the Radicals-of-the-People, with their base in the middle class; the Frondizists, representing modern sectors of the capitalist class and of foreign monopolies that are penetrating our country; and the Peronists - all these sectors are united. The opportunist left, the Communist Party, through the National Encounter of Argentines [Encuentro Nacional de los Argentinos -ENA], has officially declared that the solution is to join in the Civic Front with the ruling class.

The CP wishes to create a popular front through the ENA but they have only united with a handful of "leaders" of bourgeois parties.

Except for the front of the bourgeoisie with the opportunists and reformists of the left, there is nothing else besides the front we in the PSA propose - the Socialist Pole - to combat them.

Q: What is the Socialist Pole?

A: I believe the Socialist Pole is the correct response to the present situation. Class lines are becoming clear. On the one hand, the capitalist class is uniting, and on the other hand, the workers, through the Socialist Pole, are confronting them.

As I pointed out, the rank-and-file workers are questioning the Peronist trade-union bureaucracy. Now they are beginning to question Perón, as they see he is acting as an instrument of the armed forces and the capitalist class in general. This is creating a scattering of the Peronist workers. The

Socialist Pole can begin to politically regroup those on the left who seek a class-struggle alternative.

In the recent period we have seen a growth of the left. There are many individuals who are beginning to support a class-struggle line and who are not affiliated to any organization.

The Argentine Socialist Party went through a series of splits, internal rebellions, and frustrating experiences, and has really begun anew. Today we have a clear line and a correct interpretation of the national situation.

So we have a convergence of these two forces—the socialist vanguard and the Peronist rank and file. The socialists who have broken with previous revisionist and opportunist functioning to become an organized vanguard with a clear class-struggle line, and the newly awakening rank and file of the Peronist movement, which has been held back by the Peronist bureaucracy.

Thus the call for a Socialist Pole is not an artificial slogan but reflects the development of a new vanguard stemming from the masses themselves.

Q: Is the Socialist Pole a concept strictly for the elections? How does it relate to your other activity?

A: The objective of our utilization of legality is to reach broader layers of the working class than we could under conditions of illegality. This permits us to strengthen our organization and influence in the working class.

Since, as I have said, the elections are simply a safety valve for the capitalist class, it follows that our present legality is quite precarious. It is quite possible that we will never have the elections. But if tomorrow there is a coup, we would be satisfied by the work we have been able to do in the past twenty days because of legality. Naturally we do not believe that legality is the path to victory.

After the Cuban revolution a polemic occurred that resulted in a fundamental division of the PSA and other sectors of the left. The division was based on two antagonistic alternatives: the road of insurrection or the road of superficial work. After the Cuban revolution there was a debate over this in the PSA. Some members proposed that the party convert itself into a detachment of guerrillas, and the other sector believed in electoral

work pure and simple.

We came to the recognition that the insurrectional road and the utilization of legal opportunities permitted by the capitalist class are not two antagonistic paths, but rather are complementary.

I say all of this in order to answer your question about in what sense we are organizing for the elections. It is not to build a social democratic party, or to go to parliament to improve the budget and lower the national debt.

Q: Then you do not believe it is possible to take power through elections?

A: Of course not, absolutely. In the early years of Marxism this was a truism, but today we have to reaffirm it as a basic position.

Q: Who do you believe has the power, then, in Chile?

A: The capitalist class. In Chile there has been no fundamental change; even the Socialists will not deny this. They do not really control the government or the parliament; they don't have the judicial power or the cabinet. They have neither the power nor the government.

Q: Does the PSA support the Cuban revolution?

A: We have supported it since its triumph and up to now.

We participated in the OLAS [Organization of Latin-American Solidarity] conference [held in August 1967], but we opposed the foco theory [of guerrilla warfare], which was quite popular then. We argued against it by specifically citing the conditions in Argentina.

Today we have criticisms of Cuba; for instance, the trip Fidel Castro took to Chile—which was disgraceful. Also the solidarity the Cubans extended to the Peruvian government has added an element of confusion.

Q: What are the differences between the PSA(Coral) and the PSA(Selser)?

A: To explain that I must refer back to the split in 1958 that resulted in the formation of the Social Democratic Party (PSD) and the Argentine Socialist Party (PSA). The PSD was a classical social democratic current. We

in the PSA favored the formation of a revolutionary Marxist-Leninist party.

The PSD entered the Union Democratica [Democratic Union], which includes some of the most reactionary sectors of the oligarchy.

But a residue of social democracy was left in the PSA and it was expressed again in the party. This led to a split in 1966. The left wing, with the support of the youth, formally had a majority, but the right wing maneuvered to expel us. That is why we still contest the name Argentine Socialist Party.

When the ideological struggle broke out inside the PSA, we first suffered a split of a group called Socialismo de Vanguardia [Vanguard Socialism]. That group had everything in it—pro-Chinese, pro-Moscow, nationalists, and some Peronists. One grouplet joined the CP and another still exists today as the Maoist organization.

The last split in the PSA occurred when the left wing won the internal party elections. Social democrats carry out elections like the capitalist class does—they abide by them only if they win, so they can run things legally. If they lose, they make a coup. The social democrats are so bourgeoisified that they copy the bourgeois electoral methods. We won the elections and were expelled forthwith. We demanded a party congress. But then came the Onganía coup [in 1966], and we ended up with two PSAs.

Q: When did the PSA first adopt a position of no support to any sector of the capitalist class?

A: After the split of 1958 we held a convention in 1960 that decided against support to the national bourgeoisie and called for a Workers Front. There was a discussion at that time over whether [Arturo] Frondizi [president of Argentina from 1958-1962] represented the progressive wing of the capitalist class. Some thought we should support Frondizi, but our call for a Workers Front ruled out a bloc with any sector of the capitalist class. In 1967 we reaffirmed this position, and by then there was unanimity.

Preparing the Workers and Socialist Pole

The Coming Elections in Argentina

by Peter Camejo

(Reprinted from the September 8 and 15, 1972 issues of The Militant)

Like all capitalist elections, Argentina's projected elections are aimed at helping the capitalist class maintain its rule. The problem facing the Argentine ruling class is how to gain advantages for themselves from the electoral process in terms of creating illusions and confusion among the masses, and at the same time to prevent the workers from using the increased democratic forms to aid their struggle both organizationally and politically.

The elections offer opportunities for revolutionary groups to present an anticapitalist alternative for the working class.

Key to the electoral maneuver of the Lanusse dictatorship in Argentina is the Peronist movement. The Peronists control the powerful trade-union federation, the CGT (Confederación General del Trabajo—General Federation of Labor), and Juan Perón remains the only capitalist politician with influence among the masses.

In an attempt to take advantage of Perón's popular support, General Alejandro Lanusse offered the former dictator a chance to return to Argentina from exile in Spain. However, the mass mobilizations of workers and students in past months have made it difficult for Perón to make a deal with Lanusse without losing his standing among the masses.

Perón chose not to return to Argentina by Aug. 25, the deadline set by Lanusse for residence in Argentina

for anyone desiring to run in the 1973 elections.

Lanusse is also seeking to come to an agreement with the Peronist trade-union bureaucracy.

After the general strike of Feb. 29 of this year, Perón sent a letter to his followers urging them to cool things down until after the elections. The top Peronist leaders have adopted Perón's orientation, but the secondary trade-union leaders and rank-and-file workers are not so easily controlled.

The Peronist movement is entering a crisis because of the pressures of the mass movements and the continued compromising stands taken by its leadership.

The Peronist movement is composed of various groupings, including some leftist trends. The Peronists have participated in negotiations and blocs at the highest levels of the capitalist governmental circles. At the same time they have used trade-union action and even terrorist acts as levers in their maneuverings.

Thus in Argentina there are guerrilla groups, trade-union bureaucrats, rank-and-file workers, ultrarightists, and major capitalist politicians, all claiming to be the followers of Juan Perón. They function as a kind of coalition under the label of Partido Justicialista (Justicialist Party).

Guerrilla groups

Another component of the Argentine political scene is the guerrilla groups. Their response to Lanusse's promise of elections has been such ultraleft slogans as "Neither coup nor elections — revolution!" and "Against the electoral farce, revolutionary war."

Armed groups have existed sporadically in Argentina since the overthrow of Perón in 1955. After the Cuban

revolution, small groups attempted rural guerrilla warfare but were wiped out.

Then, after the Ongania coup in 1966 and the general decline in the class struggle that followed, the frustrations felt among radicalized middleclass layers created new interest in guerrilla warfare. After the Cordobazo, the guerrilla groups have oriented toward urban guerrilla warfare.

The guerrilla groups' only answer to the Lanusse government and the projected elections is to continue what they call "revolutionary war"—that is, armed actions by small groups such as disarming policemen, expropriating banks, kidnapping, and lately, assassinating hated officials.

None of the groups participating in armed actions have any influence in the organized working class—with the possible exception of the Peronist guerrilla groups that are part of the broader Peronist movement. This is partially due to the totally clandestine conditions under which they must function. But in addition, they have no program for the day-to-day struggles of the masses.

The guerrilla groups have suffered terrible repression in the last two years. The most active group, the People's Revolutionary Army (Ejército Revolucionario del Pueblo — ERP), has some 150 members in prison.

Class collaboration

The two major capitalist political formations cooperating in the GAN are the Peronists and the Radicals. In addition, all other capitalist political parties have joined in, from the Christian Democrats to the various split-offs from the Radicals.

To try to project the elections as the solution to the problems facing Argen-

tina, the Lanusse dictatorship has organized conferences to show the nation how all sectors of Argentina are supposedly sitting down together and working things out. At such conferences all the procapitalist groupings—with the possible exception of the rightist New Force led by Alvaro Alsogaray—hold discussions with the Peronist labor leaders and Socialist and Communist leaders.

The Communist Party has attempted to organize a popular front with "progressive" sectors of the capitalist class in a grouping called the National Encounter of Argentines (ENA—Encuentro Nacional de los Argentinos).

The ENA has participated in the Frente Cívico (Civic Front), a formation representing "prodevelopment" sectors of the capitalist class and designed to promote the elections. Sections of the Peronist movement are also working within the Civic Front.

The Communist Party has attempted to maintain an image of opposition to the government. However, its policy through the ENA has been to give legitimacy to the politics of Lanusse and to the notion that Argentina's problems can be solved by the collaboration of the exploiters and the exploited.

Only one political party has rejected this class-collaborationist policy, and that is the left wing of the Socialist Party of Argentina (PSA) led by Juan Carlos Coral. The PSA was one of the parties legalized under Lanusse's call for elections.

The PSA

The Socialist Party (SP) in Argentina once had an important influence in the trade unions. But after the Peronist era, the SP was essentially reduced to an electoral formation. It split in 1958 into right and left social democratic parties.

The left-wing group, called the PSA, began to radicalize under the impact of the Cuban revolution in the early 1960s. It received a substantial number of votes in the mid-1960s, at times carrying districts in Buenos Aires.

In 1965 the PSA split again. The strongly pro-Cuban youth were expelled by the more conservative elements, in spite of the fact that the left had a majority of the membership. The 1965 split resulted in two PSAs, one led by Coral and the other by Jorge Selsar.

The Selsar PSA has since united

with a populist group and changed its name to the Popular Socialist Party (PSP). It has joined in building the GAN and supports the popular-front strategy of uniting with "progressive" capitalist politicians. Some members of Selsar's group have gone over to the Coral PSA in protest against these policies.

After the 1965 split the PSA (Coral) moved further to the left. It rejected any blocs with capitalist parties. It declared against the Communist Party's theory of a two-stage revolution—that is, the theory that Argentina needs first a capitalist-democratic revolution and then, later, a socialist revolution. The PSA instead calls for a socialist revolution in Argentina.

The PSA has called upon all working-class organizations to refuse to participate in the conferences organized by the military dictatorship and to oppose all blocs with any sector of the capitalist class. Instead, it has characterized the coming elections as a farce that cannot solve Argentina's problems and has urged all socialists to unite to form a socialist pole, or socialist alternative, against the capitalist pole of the GAN.

The PSA has also taken the lead in urging socialists to take full advantage of the openings presented by the elections to reach the working class on a mass scale. It plans to run candidates against all the procapitalist candidates, calling for a workers' government as the only government that can begin to meet the needs of the masses.

PRT(La Verdad)

The call for a socialist alternative in the elections and the recent rapid growth of the PSA are partially due to an agreement reached between the PSA and the PRT (*La Verdad*) (Partido Revolucionario de los Trabajadores — Revolutionary Workers Party).

The PRT (La Verdad) is a Trotskyist party that has recently been growing
rapidly among both students and
workers. Organized underground because it is considered "illegal" by the
government, the PRT (La Verdad)
has been able to gain influence in
important trade unions, maintain a
clandestine weekly newspaper, La Verdad (The Truth), and even lead some
of Argentina's most important strikes
in the recent period.

The PRT (La Verdad) position is that Argentina has entered a prerevo-

lutionary situation since the Cordobazo in 1969. It holds that the Cordobazo revealed the key to Argentina's revolution: that the urban workers, especially the industrial workers, are the vanguard of revolutionary change.

This group believes that the crucial task in Argentina is building a revolutionary party with a mass base in the major industrial unions. It has concentrated on winning influence through the factory committees.

Its program in the unions calls for automatic cost-of-living increases in wages to fight inflation; a minimum salary of 70,000 pesos a month (about \$70); political independence of the trade unions from all capitalist parties, including the Peronists; freedom for political prisoners; tradeunion democracy; and trade-union participation in anti-imperialist struggles.

It also calls for a rank-and-file congress of the CGT, the largest union federation, to project a plan of struggle around these demands.

Since the PSA-PRT(La Verdad) united effort began, it has grown rapidly—becoming the largest formation to the left of the Communist Party. The PSA is the only party, other than those blocking with the capitalist parties, that has met the stringent requirements imposed by the Lanusse government to enter the elections. The government requires that four out of every 1,000 voters in at least five provinces formally join the party. The PSA has met this requirement, registering in its legal structure some 33,000 students and workers.

The PSA has established a legal newspaper, Avanzada Socialista (Socialist Vanguard), and has opened headquarters in almost all major cities of Argentina.

In spite of its rapid growth, the PSA-PRT(La Verdad) is still a relatively small current in the context of Argentina's workers movement as a whole. Whether the socialist pole will be able to attract a sufficient following to substantially affect the course of events is still unclear. But regardless of the results of the elections—which may not even be held—the present electoral maneuver by the ruling class under pressure from the mass movement is giving the Marxist movement in Argentina an important opportunity to build the revolutionary party.

The Maneuvers Between Lanusse and Peron

(Reprinted from the March 20, 1973 issue of Intercontinental Press)

[The following article provides an analysis of the Gran Acuerdo Nacional (GAN—Great National Agreement) between General Alejandro Lanusse, Argentina's military president, and Juan Perón to negotiate a mutually acceptable formula for the legalization of the Peronist movement and its participation in the elections in March 1973. The negotiations are still going on.

["It is an open secret that General Lanusse has been in regular contact with Mr. Perón, who lives in Madrid," noted Juan de Onis in the March 2 New York Times, "since the Argentine Government returned to Mr. Perón last year the remains of his late wife, María Eva Duarte de Perón, better known as Evita. Her body was secretly taken from Argentina and buried in Italy by the military who overthrew Mr. Perón."

["The very logic of the Gran Acuerdo," wrote Jorge Raventos in the February 15-21 issue of the Buenos Aires magazine Panorama, "consists, purely and simply, in making explicit the draw that Argentine civilian society has put up with for more than fifteen years: Once the opponents of Peronism had overthrown it, they were not able to put together a stable regime that integrated Perón's followers."

[We have translated the article from the February 9 issue of *La Verdad*, published in Buenos Aires.]

* * *

The sharpening of the economic crisis is endangering the government's political plan. Briefly, this crisis is a combination of the stagnation of economic activity, one of the highest rates of inflation in the world, and a national debt to foreign dealers and creditors that cannot be resolved without further loans and extensions of payment deadlines. Hovering over this gloomy picture are the other evils of our chronic crisis: the systematic decrease in agricultural production, the collapse and paralysis of old industrial plants through machinery that is never renovated, power shortages, and inadequate roads.

There may have been other times

when the situation was worse, but never have so many aggravating social and political factors been piled on top of one another as today: the split and conflict between various sectors of the owning class and imperialism, which plunders the country on a vast scale and which controls the most profitable branches of production; an institutional crisis characterized by the fact that the political parties do not properly reflect the interests of the various social strata; and the threat posed by the workers' movement. which has begun, through action, to overcome the bourgeois and bureaucratic limitations of Peronism. All this makes the present crisis one of the most potentially revolutionary in the country's history.

The GAN: A Response to the Crisis

Ever since Lanusse came to power, the military dictatorship has been pushing its policy of reaching an agreement with all the exploiting sectors of society to come up with an electoral solution and a plan for the postelection period. This "gentlemen's agreement" must—according to official plans—serve as the premise for an intelligent regulation of economic contradictions, and above all, for checking and diverting the upward course of the workers' and popular movement, and isolating the various elements of the revolutionary left.

An objective balance sheet of 1971 shows that the government made important progress in carrying out its plan. Through the excitement surrounding the agreement and the complicity of Perón and the union bureaucracy, it managed to control the explosive wave of workers' struggles and to slow down the development of the new class-conscious, revolutionary directions. Since then, Perón has become the most solid prop holding up the government and the GAN.

This is a partial and relative victory for the government because the combativity of the workers has acquired a self-critical and deliberative character. Now is a time when methods and tools of struggle are being perfected; this points to bigger and better-led battles in the future. An ex-

ample of this is the victory of the compañeros at Citröen, which we believe is of historic and symptomatic significance.

Still, the government's victory is a contradictory one, achieved at the cost of great damage to its allies in the plants—the union bureaucracy and Perón himself—in the eyes of the masses.

Despite these limitations, it is no less a fact that this victory has given the government the breathing space and authority it needs to turn its attention to the alliance between the bourgeoisie and imperialism, and to gain a greater hearing and support.

However, the deterioration of the economic situation in the past two months has brought about a retreat, has strewn the path of the GAN with difficulties, and has jeopardized the one political plan the bourgeoisie is counting on.

The Dangers of the GAN

It is not simply a matter, as some of the bosses' publications seem to think, of the people—that is, the "voting middle layer"—being driven to desperation by the extremely high prices. Nor even that in these conditions the tactical necessity for the government to resort to populist demagogy becomes practically impossible.

In reality, the economic crisis confronts the dictatorship with a more direct and dangerous threat: that important elements of the bourgeoisie may turn their backs on the political agreement and do their best to impose their own particular interests through a coup. This could unleash an open struggle for power and, within a short space of time, bring the working class and the people into the dispute.

The situation has not yet reached this point of seriousness for the government, but it cannot be denied that the crisis is complicating the ongoing political negotiations, making a concrete agreement on the elections difficult, and increasing tensions.

The Power of the President

The economic crisis has lessened the

president's room for maneuver. Having gotten over his convenient illnesses and finished his travels abroad, and with the annual vacation period drawing to a close, the deadline for making decisions is almost falling due.

Although the use of presidential imagination is uncovering a few ways to surprise the country with artificial games, the room for maneuver is slight.

The president's power flows from the homogeneity of the military team that sustains him. The symptoms and manifestations of the crisis in the armed forces have not yet made their way up to those at the pinnacle of power. This team has demonstrated its ability to maneuver and apportion various roles among its members without losing its unity. The opposing faces of [General Alcides] López Aufranc [an army corps commander] or a Lanusse have up to now been the clear expression of a coherent orientation, just as repression and political legality are harmonious components of the GAN. The same homogeneity makes it possible for a few of its members-for example, [General Tomás Sánchez de Bustamente [another army corps commander] to give the impression that they are heading up some kind of "coup" as a way of forcing decisions to be taken.

This basic strength of the ruling team, and the backing of Perón, are the only tokens of stability that the capitalist regime holds today. And it is this that persuades the bourgeoisie and imperialism that, should the government fall, they would have nothing to put in its place.

At this time, the fate of the GAN, and even more of the regime as a whole, is being played out between the economic crisis that is eating away at both of them on the one hand, and the homogeneity of a small military nucleus that is centralizing power in its hands and narrowing the seat of power with the direct support of the union bureaucracy and Peronism on the other. If the equilibrium breaks down and the struggle for power breaks out, it is inevitable that a new protagonist - the working class with its new vanguard-will sweep onto the scene.

It is this transparent dilemma that prompts the bankers of the United States and Europe to grant the military team one of the largest loans the country has ever obtained, in spite of the fact that Argentina is one of the most unstable places in the world for such an investment.

The power of guns, the support of Perón, the imminent economic and political aid of imperialism, and the reality that without them no other bourgeois solution is possible, are the cards that Lanusse will play in the coming months to force every wing of the bourgeoisie, the submissive as

well as the reluctant, to come up with at least a "small national agreement." And today, in our judgment, this is the most probable variant.

Rarely has the Argentine revolutionary left had such a favorable opportunity for swinging the balance in its favor. Think of what would happen if the workers' movement mobilized and set itself up as the absolute leader of a population provoked by the scourge of high prices. The only thing preventing it from doing so is the rotten role of the union bureaucracy and the weight that Perón still maintains.

There remains no doubt then that the most urgent task is to build a workers' and socialist front that can lead the struggle against the main pillars and accomplices of the GAN—the government, Perón, and the union bureaucracy—and against any other bourgeois variant.

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Women's Oppression Debated

(Reprinted from the May 15, 1972 issue of Intercontinental Press)

The special oppression of women under capitalist society is a topic that is being discussed by the left in Argentina, reports the April 26 issue of Avanzada Socialista.

A few weeks earlier, it noted, several political organizations cooperating in the military government's plan to hold elections next year (the plan is referred to as the GAN, Gran Acuerdo Nacional — Great National Agreement) held a meeting that took up the question of the situation of women in society. Among the groups that participated were the Peronist movement, the MID (Movimiento de Integración y Desarrollo - Movement of Integration and Development), the UCRI (Unión Cívica Radical Intransigente - Uncompromising Radical Civic

Union), and the Communist and Popular Conservative parties.

The meeting, however, revealed no intention on the part of the participating groups to take up seriously the fight against women's oppression, observed Avanzada Socialista. One of the spokeswomen at the meeting was Nelly Casas of the MID, whose reactionary position on the question was made clear in a television interview a few days prior to the meeting. Also participating in the interview was a staff member of Muchacha, described as a "magazine that represents the most combative layer of youth and that is endeavoring to organize a militant feminist movement." The following exchange between the two occurred:

"Muchacha. There can be no doubt that women suffer a special oppression.

"Nelly Casas. Those of us women who have led rich and very active lives and have worked like men feel far removed from a situation that would be qualified as one of oppression. I have been a worker, I have been a rural teacher, I paint my house, I take care of my kids—in other words, things a man does. Besides, I am a man's equal economically speaking: I pay taxes, I work, I am active. . . . The term oppression is too strong.

"Muchacha. A woman who enjoys a privileged status in relation to women as a whole cannot take her own situation as a criterion for evaluating the situation of all the rest. . . . I would ask a telephone operator, for example, why all her superiors are men and if she in fact does not consider herself discriminated against."

At another point, the following dialogue took place:

"Muchacha. There are fewer possibilities for women on the job. In some strikes, for example, they are given smaller wage increases.

"Nelly Casas. Negotiating committees are elected at internal elections. As a political activist, I would like to ask, 'How many women go to the meetings where the members of these committees are elected?'

"Muchacha. The other day I was talking with a working woman about this and I asked her: 'Why is it that most of those who take part in union activities are men?' She replied: 'Do you think that a married woman who works eight hours, spends another two coming and going, has to go and pick up a child she has left with a neighbor or her mother when she gets back, and then has to clean, wash, iron, and cook—do you really think she has the same opportunity as her husband to take part in union ac-

tivity?"

The spokeswoman for the GAN not only "denies the existence of female oppression," observed Avanzada Socialista, but she "ignores the injustices that prevent women from developing their trade-union and political consciousness."

The Argentine Socialist party, it concluded, "calls on women, as one of the social layers that suffer unjust exploitation, to organize themselves independently in order to push for their demands, and at the same time to struggle for socialism, which will do away with all social injustices."

Manifesto of Argentine Socialist Party Convention

(Reprinted from the July 31, 1972 issue of Intercontinental Press)

In its June 21 issue, Avanzada Socialista, the weekly paper of the Argentine Socialist party, announced that it had fulfilled the requirements for taking part in the elections that have been promised by the military dictatorship. Among other things, the Socialist party was able to register 35,000 people as members to meet the stipulations for getting ballot status. The party offered the platform it gained in this way to all revolutionary forces that wanted to campaign against the dictatorship and for a socialist Argentina. This offer was repeated in the manifesto of the Socialist party convention, which we have translated below.]

* * *

To the revolutionary activists, to the anti-imperialist fighters, to the workers, to the students, and to the militant youth, the Fifty-First Convention of the PS [Partido Socialista—Socialist party] reaffirms its determination to fight for a socialist revolution.

Anti-capitalist struggles are spreading around the globe. This is the dynamic our Vietnamese brothers and sisters are following and it is present in all countries, even in the very entrails of the imperialist monster, which is being rocked by the struggles of the American masses themselves. Day by

day, these struggles are growing in intensity, despite the counterrevolutionary agreements signed between the imperialists and the bureaucrats of the workers states, who themselves are being shaken by demands for proletarian democracy.

Our country is not absent from this red battle map of workers' and popular offensives. Since 1969, the date of the historic uprising in Córdoba, we have been caught up completely in the revolutionary torrent sweeping indiscriminately over national borders. Although our main enemy is imperialism, which exploits the country as a whole, our national liberation can be achieved only by getting rid of the bourgeoisie, which is intimately linked to, allied with, and dependent on the foreign monopolies.

The present occasion is a special one for a convention of Argentine socialists on two accounts. This is the sixth anniversary of the rise to power of the "Argentine Revolution" [the military dictatorship], and this date coincides also with a redoubled militant offensive of the workers and students, who have just carried out a new Tucumán uprising and are in the course of waging more than a dozen trade-union struggles.

This coincidence offers a good occasion for drawing up a balance sheet of the last six years, which have been rich in revolutionary lessons and experience.

A direct result of the "Argentine Revolution" is the dire need that is creating despair in the homes of our people. Other results are the million unemployed clustering in our cities and the fury of the repressive forces, who are imprisoning and torturing our best young people. The final outcome of the "Argentine Revolution" is the political scheme called the "gran acuerdo nacional" [the Great National Agreement by which the big capitalist parties (the Peronistas, the Radicales [liberals], etc.) are trying to set up an electoral trap as their last defense against the onslaught of the masses.

The bonapartist government rose to power ostensibly to right the wrongs done by imperialism and the bourgeoisie. Like the monarchs of old, it promised an era of progress and happiness. And now, at the end of six years, the regime must prepare to retire ingloriously from the scene, junking all of Onganía's pretenses and illusions.

This failure epitomizes the historic incapability of the Argentinian bourgeoisie to develop the country, free it from the yoke of imperialism, and guarantee its inhabitants a decent standard of living. This long period of more than half a decade—in which the most powerful sectors of the national bourgeoisie, concealing their nature behind military swagger and gold

braid, have ruled us—has brought a worsening of the catastrophic trend of the last twenty years. For this whole time the country and the workers have steadily lost ground economically.

The Bonapartist government of Ongania found its direct support in four powerful sectors that have alternated in the leadership of the country's economic and political life—the landowning oligarchy; the big modern national monopolies; the big foreign industrial and financial monopolies; and the bourgeoisie serving as the intermediary for foreign investment—the sector favoring industrial development, represented by Frondizi and Alende.

With a few differences in their points of view, these sectors concurred on a governmental program whose essence boiled down to two points-getting an inflow of investment from abroad and increasing the productivity of labor, that is, the exploitation of the workers. They began to get their investment after they crushed the great strikes of the stevedores, railroad men, and sugar workers. They achieved this with the complicity of the tradeunion bureaucracy. The sellout was symbolized by the tie that Vandor put on for the first time to meet Ongania; it was embodied in a wage freeze, compulsory arbitration, and repeal of the law on firings in the construction industry.

The setback of the workers and the defeat of the student movement were the exact barometer of imperialist penetration. When the new team led by Krieger Vasena took over, representing the rise to dominance of the financial bourgeoisie, it achieved the "miracle" of stabilizing the peso and getting a strong flow of investment into the modern and high-productivity industries. In the face of such "success," the liberal middle bourgeoisie ousted from power by the coup and the Peronista industrialists prostrated themselves, putting the wraps on their criticisms. From Madrid, Perón said: "We will have to wait and see."

But far from bringing progress, the Yankee capital that the Argentine bourgeoisie pined for introduced an enormous imbalance into our economic structure. There were no bounds to investments and financial penetration, and so foreign capital began to flood sectors previously reserved for the Argentine bourgeoisie—the banks,

agricultural sectors, modern light industry, supermarkets, etc. This situation led to growing opposition from wings of the bourgeoisie. Frondizi, Alende, and other politicians who had played leading roles in assisting colonization, became alarmed at the disastrous result of financial penetration. The lead of this bourgeois opposition was taken by Perón and Balbin, in the name of the middle bourgeoisie in ranching and agriculture and new light industry. This was the beginning of the history of the Hora del Pueblo [Hour of the People-a middle-class united front], whose final chapters are being played out in these days.

The government that shortly before had been all-powerful began to show weakness. It could intrinsic no longer play the role of arbiter in the conflicts between different sectors of the bourgeoisie and imperialism. Lacking any support or strength of its own, it was left suspended in midair. At the same time, the first symptoms appeared of a wave of worker and student rebellions, especially in the interior of the country where the tradeunion bureaucracy was weaker and less able to hold back struggles. Under the influence of new leaderships, new battles started up. One of these, the fight waged by the SMATA [Sindicato de Mecánicos y Afines del Transporte Automotor — Union of Automobile Mechanics and Related Workers] against layoffs culminated in the Córdoba uprising, which could only be understood in the context of the economic crisis and social discontent embracing the various strata of the population.

While the tremendous imperialist offensive served to dislocate the structure of the economy and accentuate still more the economic crisis and conflicts within the bourgeoisie, the explosion of rebellions in the interior profoundly altered the entire situation in the country as a whole. They left an indelible imprint. The changes went beyond the fall of the Onganía government and a shift in the political line of the "Argentinian Revolution." They left their impress on the mentality, experience, and organization of the Argentinian masses. In this sense, the Córdoba uprising was the same thing for us as the "spring revolution" for Czechoslovakia, the Gdansk rising for Poland, the Tet offensive for Vietnam, the colossal mobilization against the war in the United States, the Uruguayan strikes, the great advance of the revolution in Bolivia, and the French May, all of which occurred in the same period.

For the workers and people's movement the Córdoba uprising was a landmark in the cycle of struggles that are continuing and intensifying in this period, a cycle which has now also passed through other memorable episodes such as the rebellions in Rosario, Mendoza, Mar del Plata, and now, once again, Tucumán. This cycle has various features that make it unique. In the first place, the student movement and the middle class have broken out of their traditional isolation from the working class and joined with the workers in a common front against the regime. In the second place the process of developing new leaderships has intensified. In the previous period this was proceeding in a scattered and molecular way. Now in the living reality of the immense majority of workers' struggles led by independent or left leaderships, the process has become concentrated. There is an objective tendency for these new leaderships to group together in classstruggle and revolutionary nuclei outside the Peronista apparatus, which is controlled by the trade-union bureaucracy and the bourgeoisie. The high-water mark of this trend has been the development of the group around Sitrac-Sitram [Sindicato de Trabajadores de Concord-Sindicato de Trabajadores de Materfer — the Materfer and Concord plant unions]. Although this formation suffered a temporary defeat, it can be repeated on a higher, directly political, level in the Polo Obrero y Socialista [Proletarian and Socialist Pole].

The Córdoba uprising and the workers and people's struggles forced the government and the exploiters to change their political plans completely. Onganía himself tried to carry out a change in course, but he was already discredited in the eyes of the So, they bourgeoisie. pulled the Levingston transitional government out of the hat. This regime tried to continue the Bonapartist administration, basing itself on the pro-European development sector represented by Alende and Ferrer. It tried to answer three needs - to make some precautionary concessions to the masses,

reaucracy that we are waging in the factories must be combined with making public demands on the bureaucracy to assume its leadership responsibilities. By making such demands, without placing the slightest confidence in the bureaucracy, we can force it to move or to end up by exposing its betrayals in front of the masses.

But checkmating the new style Bonapartist dictatorship, confronting the bureaucracy, and shaking the regime by mass struggles is not enough. What we win in a hundred mobilizations, we can lose in an instant if our enemies are able to get their "Gran Acuerdo Nacional" off the ground without our being capable of projecting an adequate political response. Against the background of the Argentinian crisis, what we are discussing is the crisis of revolutionary leadership, the lack of leadership of our heroic masses, who despite their selfless militancy have been continually sold out and betraved.

The political stage opened by Lan-

usse has enabled us to begin to overcome this tragic lack of a strong revolutionary leadership capable of leading the proletariat and the people and directing their struggles toward the political objective of a genuine socialist revolution.

From the Córdoba uprising up to today, the Argentinian proletariat has produced thousands of revolutionists, who have participated in and frequently led the factory and popular struggles. For these activists and fighters against the bosses and the bureaucrats we raise the historic possibility of grouping ourselves in a Polo Obrero y Socialista [Proletarian and Socialist Pole], in a front capable of forging a revolutionary party. Concretely, we call on the compañeros who led the historic Chocón strike, on the members of Sitrac-Sitram, on the supporters of the Lista Marrón that has won in the Córdoba SMATA, on workers Banco Nación, Petroquímica, Chrysler, Citröen, as well as all the class-struggle tendencies and activists involved in the new day-to-day struggles to use the recognized legal status of the Partido Socialista to constitute a force that can unify the new revolutionary worker and student vanguard on a national scale. This organizing on a political level will immediately be reflected in a qualitative leap forward for the mass struggle.

Finally, the Fifty-First Convention of the Partido Socialista declares that by mobilizing the workers and popular sectors and by organizing the Polo Obrero y Socialista, we will be able to carry on the task of building an internationalist revolutionary party capable of undertaking the construction of a socialist Argentina, which is the only alternative to a bourgeois and semicolonial one.

We affirm the necessity of the socialist road and restate once again our methods of thought and action—revolutionary Marxism as our philosophical approach, and mobilizing the masses on the basis of their immediate needs and constantly raising the level of the struggle as our method of action.

such as civil liberties, pay rises, etc., to cool their militancy; to placate the bourgeois opposition and the imperialists themselves by promising elections and a return to constitutional government; and to save what was salvageable of the national economic sectors not yet swallowed up by the financial penetration of Yankee imperialism. This necessary line of timid nationalism and populism ended up seeming derisory both to the masses and the bourgeoisie itself. So, the Junta Militar decided to make a decisive shift. Lanusse took over with his new variant of the "Gran Acuerdo Nacional" (GAN).

Lanusse accentuated the nationalistpopulist course, which is an objective necessity for the bourgeoisie as a whole and which coincides with the demand for elections by the Yankee imperialists, who see a return to parliamentary democracy as the only means for sidetracking the mass upsurge. The present government is continuing the Bonapartist tradition of the "Argentinian Revolution." However, it has tended to favor and base itself on the big agricultural bourgeoisie that produces for export. It has sought by this means to reinforce the capitalist economic structure as a whole and in the process shoved the financial sectors somewhat to the background.

But Lanusse's classical Bonapartism is combined with a need for achieving a parliamentary type of agreement with the bourgeoisie as a whole and its political parties. He needs unity in order to confront, divert, and devitalize the social struggles that are shaking the foundations of the regime. This is the significance of the "Gran Acuerdo Nacional," or the pact with the big bourgeois parties and with Perón in particular, which is aimed at preparing the way for an electoral solution. As a result of it, we are now suffering a kind of Lanusse-Radical-Peronista coalition gov-

It should be pointed out that the bourgeois parties and Perón have accepted this variant and that the tensions and conflicts are due to the extreme gravity of the economic crisis, which leaves little room for making populist concessions and setting the final seal on a "gentlemen's agreement" between the bourgeoisie and imperial-

ism. The greatest supporter of the "bosses' agreement" and the government is still the Peronista trade-union bureaucracy, which has put on the white shirt and tie of class collaborationism for good. It is seconded by the Communist party, which through the ENA [Encuentro Nacional de los Argentinos — National Meeting Ground of Argentinians] is proposing partial alliances within the camp of the bourgeois and imperialist forces who subscribe to the "acuerdo."

The Holy Alliance of Perón, the trade-union bureaucracy, the imperialists, and the government has proved insufficient to contain the colossal upsurge of the working class and the working people. With fresh fighters moving into the front lines and new cadres developing, the struggle gives no respite. From the automotive industry to education and the courts, there are constant struggles going on. And these are continually reinforced and deepened by the student movement, which, although lacking a leadership that could give its struggles a mass character and a revolutionary direction, is confronting the problems that flow from inadequate state financing of the schools and from bourgeois and professorial domination. These problems keep the student movement on a permanent battle footing.

It is the duty of socialists and revolutionists to unify all these struggles of the workers, popular sectors, and students by stressing the need for mu tual solidarity and support. It is their duty to give a conscious expression to the objective tendency toward unity in action and the development of a common front of struggle for common objectives.

Our party has devoted itself to an unconditional defense of the democratic liberties that the bourgeoisie tramples under foot every time they constitute a threat to the regime. Presently the working class and the popular sectors are the sacrificial victims of a criminal apparatus of repression and coercion. It is the duty of all democrats and revolutionists to fight for the release of the prisoners, for the abolition of the repressive laws and apparatuses. Along with this, we demand political rights for all parties and leaders. This means the right for Perón to return freely and exercise

all his civil rights, and for the Communist party and the rest of the groups on the left to carry on their political and propagandistic activity legally. This demand for civil rights for all overrides any differences we may have with other groups.

In our demand for the release of Tosco, Flores, and Santucho, as well as the other prisoners, and for ending the outlawry of Perón and the Communist party, we want to sum up the democratic objectives that should lead us to carrying out common mass action against the government.

The formation of a coordinating committee by the youth groups of the Peronistas, the Communist party, and other parties can be a very positive step forward in waging this democratic struggle. We are well aware that this move holds the danger of a maneuver by the government and the bourgeois forces to promote a kind of organization that would fit in with the "acuerdo," such as the Frente Cívico de Liberación [Civic Liberation Front]. But the mere formation of such a coordinating committee raising democratic demands is a step we must support and further by calling for a consistent struggle for the democratic objective that it has set itself.

There is only one way to unify and give a mass character to the demands of the workers, popular sectors, the students, and to demands for democracy. The highest body of the organized workers, the CGT [Confederación General del Trabajo - General Confederation of Labor] must issue a plan of struggle and carry it out. This plan must set forth a minimum program including the following, among other workers' and popular demands: an emergency raise, a sliding scale of wages, a guaranteed work week, wages for the unemployed, higher appropriations for education, health, etc., the immediate release of the prisoners, and repeal of the repressive laws and bans.

All of our mobilizations must be designed to press the CGT leaders to call a congress of the rank and file that could draw up a plan of struggle and elect a new proletarian leadership capable of carrying it out. We must be guided in this by the examples of the Mendoza teachers and the Mar del Plata students, who were able to force the CGT to support them. The day-to-day struggle against the bu-

(Reprinted from the October 20, 1972 issue of The Militant)

[The following interview with Nahuel Moreno was obtained by *The Militant* last month in Buenos Aires. Moreno is a member of the executive committee of the Argentine Socialist Party (Partido Socialista Argentino — PSA). He is well known on the Argentine left as a leader of the Trotskyist movement since the 1940s.

[The interview refers to the elections that have been promised by Argentine dictator Alejandro Lanusse for 1973. Through the elections Lanusse hopes to unite the various capitalist parties and draw the trade-union movement, led by followers of Perón, into collaboration with, and support of, a new "constitutional" government. As part of this election maneuver, Lanusse has invited Perón back to Argentina from his exile in Spain.

[The Argentine Socialist Party has taken advantage of the government's promise of elections to try to build the revolutionary movement by confronting the procapitalist candidates in the electoral arena. The party was able to register 33,000 persons to meet the requirements for ballot status. The PSA has offered use of its ballot status to other forces on the left who want to campaign against the capitalist parties and for a socialist Argentina.

[It was in the context of the Lanusse regime's promise of "democratization" that on Aug. 22 guards at the Trelew naval base prison shot down 19 political prisoners. Of the 16 killed, 13 were members of the ERP (Ejército Revolucionario del Pueblo — People's Revolutionary Army, the most prominent guerrilla organization in Argentina), two were members of the Montoneros (a left-Peronist guerrilla group), and one belonged to the FAR (Fuerzas Armadas Peronistas — Peronist Armed Forces).

The three prisoners who were wounded but survived the massacre have reported that the guards opened fire on the prisoners in cold blood with no provocation. Lanusse had

gone on nationwide radio and TV to claim that they were shot in an escape attempt. The survivors' story has not gotten out to the Argentine public, however, because of strict government censorship of all news.]

Militant: What were some of the forms of protest in the aftermath of the Trelew massacre?

Moreno: The entire working class and the majority of the country were indignant at the government slaughter and felt great sympathy for the martyrs. The organized mass protests, however, were not as great as they should have been, or could have been, had all the political tendencies worked together to build united protest actions. Still, there were many acts of repudiation of the government.

The CGT (Confederación General del Trabajo — General Confederation of Labor) in Córdoba offered their headquarters for a memorial service for the slain guerrillas from that city and also carried out a day-long general strike against the government.

The mood of repudiation of the government and sympathy with the martyrs was indicated in a meeting at Luna Park (similar to Madison Square Garden) that was scheduled as a musical festival with Theodorakis (a popular Greek musician). Because of the repressive laws banning public meetings, Young Socialists from the PSA helped to transform the festival into a public memorial for the martyrs, condemning the murderous government and also calling for the release of Hugo Blanco (the Peruvian revolutionary-socialist peasant leader presently being held in an Argentine prison).

They shouted slogans and raised a large banner with the names of the martyrs and a huge "Z," which in Greek means "life," or "live on!" The entire audience solidarized with

The PSA sought to mobilize pro-

test against the government by attempting to build united-front actions with other left currents. We succeeded in various factories, schools, and offices, One of the most important of these was the minute of silence requested by our comrades at the Banco Nación in Buenos Aires. The Banco Nación represents the largest concentration of employees in the country, with more than 6,000 workers.

There were probably other public meetings and acts of repudiation that I don't know of. There are hundreds of factories, offices, and schools where we don't have contacts.

About 2,000 attended the memorial service held by the Peronists in Córdoba. As was to be expected, they used the service to sing the Peronist hymn and to hail Perón—although the majority of the slain comrades were not Peronists but members of the ERP.

The Peronists had police permission to mourn the dead until six in the evening and to make public statements previously agreed to by the military and the government in keeping with a Christian service and burial. Conspicuous for its absence was the five-pointed-star ERP banner, symbol of the organization of the majority of the fallen heros.

Militant: What effect did the events surrounding the Trelew massacre have on the relationship between Lanusse and Perón?

Moreno: Their relationship has deteriorated but not broken in the last several months as a result of the radicalization and the economic crisis. These two things convinced Perón that if he continued his alliance with Lanusse he would soon lose authority among the workers.

Consequently Perón pulled back and began to flirt with the guerrilla groups, while at the same time continuing to consolidate his bureaucracy in the trade unions. We think this is one of the reasons for the relative growth of the Montoneros, a Peronist urban guerrilla group; Perón and the official Peronist leaders insist that their guerrilla organizations are an important part of their movement.

Militant: Did the Trelew events bring a change in the government's projections for "democratization" and elections in 1973?

Moreno: We don't think so. There will very probably be elections. The Argentine capitalist class as a whole—as represented in the military and the various procapitalist parties (including Peronism) are convinced that the working class and the masses of Argentina will not stand for a government like the Brazilian military dictatorship.

But there is still a contradiction the ruling class has not been able to resolve. All sectors of the ruling class agree that the election maneuver should be used to try to harness and co-opt the workers movement, but at the same time each of the antagonistic bourgeois sectors—mainly the rural and the industrial ones—wants to capitalize for itself on this attempt to tame the workers.

This is a difficult problem for them to solve because it encompasses Perón's delicate situation—balancing between his role as a representative of a sector of the capitalist class who has to protect the general interests of the exploiters, and, on the other hand, his need to retain political control over the working class because this is the only way to guarantee stability of the capitalist system in Argentina.

Militant: What is your evaluation of the series of massive uprisings and political strikes that have occurred in Argentina in recent years? Do you believe Argentina is in a prerevolutionary situation?

Moreno: The uprisings have been among the most important in the history of Argentina. They were probably only surpassed by the "Tragic Week" of January 1919, when all of Buenos Aires was in the hands of the workers movement.

The semi-insurrections in Córdoba, Rosario, Mendoza, Tucumán, and Roca have shown a consistent line of development, with each new rising surpassing the preceding one. I say "semi-insurrection" because the masses in struggle were consciously moving against the government and its pol-

icies. In each case the working class and the populace won significant victories.

During the last uprising, called the "Rocazo,"* the masses were careful to avoid a confrontation with the army, and were able to neutralize the troops through mass pressure. An example of this was when everyone in the streets turned their backs on the army as it paraded through Roca.

Argentina has no doubt entered a prerevolutionary situation, as indicated by the confusion and crisis among the exploiting classes, the left turn by the middle classes, and the large mobilizations of the working class and populace.

Unfortunately, two factors are complicating the process. Because of a lack of leadership, the workers movement subsided somewhat at the beginning of the year. This appears to be about over. The lack of a revolutionary leadership in the Argentine labor movement is what blocks the prerevolutionary situation from becoming directly revolutionary. Without a mass revolutionary socialist party there is much less chance that a revolutionary situation will be attained, or, if one occurs, that it would be victorious.

Bolivia and Argentina today serve as lessons for other Latin American countries. Situations like the one in Bolivia under General Juan José Torres (from October 1970 to August 1971), and the one now developing in Argentina will continue to occur throughout Latin America. We can expect more and more Cordobazos and Rosariozos in Latin America. But for victory we need to develop a revolutionary leadership of the masses and their organizations.

Militant: What kind of opportunities will the PSA have during the election campaign?

Moreno: We will be able to publicize and defend our revolutionary program, our denunciation of the reactionary dictatorship, the capitalist and semicolonial regime, from one end of Argentina to the other. In Buenos Aires we are thinking of going factory-to-factory and house-to-house to speak with working people. As a legal party, we are now also able to hold public meetings.

The electoral maneuver of the rulers creates contradictions for them that will help us in this effort. For example,

the election laws say that because the PSA is a legal party, the government has to give us a whole series of "rights," including free transportation for our organizers on public facilities, as well as some free telephone and postal services.

Militant: How many candidates will the PSA field, and for what offices? Moreno: There are hundreds of posts to be contested—president and vice-president, governors, senators and national deputies, mayors and town councilors. We will have to choose several key areas in which to run several hundred candidates. We will not be able to run for all of the offices. This would only be possible if a real united front of all workers organizations were formed for the elections.

Militant: Will you receive radio and television coverage?

Moreno: Without a doubt. We have already received some in the interior of the country, but have yet to be granted some in the federal capital. Whatever form it takes, the coverage will be very limited, however, since the monopolies controlling the radio and TV and the government view us as the "extreme left" and until now have waged a national campaign of silence against us. But the regime has opened up a crack that we are utilizing as much as possible, given the lack of experience we have in legal work. (The Trotskyist movement has been forced to operate underground since its founding prior to World War II).

Militant: What has been the response from other workers and socialist organizations to the PSA's call for a workers and socialist pole in the elections?

Moreno: Not very warm. With the exception of some diplomatic feelers, no left-wing party has yet accepted the platform of our campaign. The entire left is very confused. Some groups have a position against participating in elections. Others would like to form a front along the lines of the Chilean Popular Unity or the Uruguayan Broad Front, so as to build "an election campaign that would have a chance to win."

Militant: What has been the attitude of the Communist Party and the guer-

rilla organizations toward your campaign?

Moreno: The Communist Party has a policy that runs directly counter to a "workers and socialist pole" in the elections. They are the most fervent advocates of the perspective exemplified by the Uruguayan Broad Front—a union of workers parties with parties of the so-called progressive bourgeoisie. Thus the CP is the main supporter of the ENA (Encuentro Nacional de los Argentinos—National Encounter of Argentines), a front of Peronist and liberal bourgeois leaders.

The PRT (Combatiente) (Partido Revolucionario de los Trabajadores — Revolutionary Party of the Workers, which publishes the newspaper El Combatiente) has not answered our call for support. But in one of the latest issues of their newspaper, they raised the possibility that it will be necessary for the popular and "socialist" parties to intervene in and use the elections. As yet they have not made clear their position on the elections.

Militant: What is the circulation of your newspaper, Avanzada Socialista, and how many local branches does the PSA have?

Moreno: We print 10,000 copies, almost all of which are sold in the streets. In this way we are able to meet many contacts and sell to sympathizers.

We are expanding our circulation beyond Buenos Aires to almost every province. We have 20 branches in Buenos Aires, each with its own public headquarters, and 20 more offices in other cities of the country.

Militant: You have become known as a leader of the PRT(La Verdad) (Par-

tido Revolucionario de los Trabajadores — Revolutionary Party of the Workers, which published the newspaper La Verdad). What is the relationship between the PRT(La Verdad) and the PSA?

Moreno: The two organizations have fused, so the PRT no longer exists as a separate organization. The new leadership of the PSA includes a large number of former leaders of the PRT.

Militant: Is the PSA a Trotskyist party?

Moreno: There is no doubt that its program and theory are Trotskyist. Ninety-five percent of our members are convinced Trotskyists. At our next congress we plan to take up the question of our political solidarity with the international Trotskyist movement

Militant: What is the situation with the defense campaign for Hugo Blanco?

Moreno: An intense campaign has been launched, which includes a broad petition campaign. We have only been able to organize a few scattered public protests because such actions demanding the restoration of civil liberties are illegal.

We were also able to pressure the CGT into issuing an open letter to the government in support of Blanco's right to remain in Argentina. So far the government has made no answer.

Militant: What is the situation with political prisoners in Argentina?

Moreno: Under the military rule, political prisoners are at the mercy of the authorities. Arrests are made at random, and prisoners have no channel for legal defense. The guerrillas

and other political prisoners who are tried under the reactionary laws are subjected to a national tribunal, notorious for its hasty and severe sentences.

It is hard to estimate how many political prisoners there are. Some of the defense lawyers speak in terms of thousands. My estimate is that there are about 1,000.

Militant: Is there an organization fighting to defend these prisoners?

Moreno: There are various organizations—of the families of prisoners, the lawyers' guild, and similar organizations. Unfortunately each of them is tied in with a political tendency and they fight among themselves. Attempts to unite all groups that defend the rights of political prisoners into a common front have met with very limited success up to now. In our newspaper and general work, the PSA has consistently pressed for the formation of such a united front.

^{*&}quot;Rocazo" is the popular term for an explosive rebellion in the city of General Roca in south-central Argentina. On July 4 of this year a 10-day general work and business stoppage was called at a mass meeting sponsored by local civic organizations to protest actions of the Provincial Court that were harmful to the local economy. Workers and students joined the protest and broadened the demands. City government was taken over by a "provisional government" chosen by the masses. This government declared itself independent of the provincial government. The army attempted to occupy the city but was unable to "restore order" for several days, and only after making several concessions to the popular demands.

Against Popular Frontism in Argentina

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Agustín Tosco, a figure in the workers' movement whose name is associated with the Córdoba uprising and who is known as one of the most prominent victims of the repression of the dictatorship, has been released from prison as the result of a chain of circumstances. Chief of these was the pressure of the workers' and people's movement, and, by extension, the government's need to "pacify" the country during the preelectoral period.

Avanzada Socialista was the first political paper to interview Tosco on his release. Our correspondent spoke to him in Trelew a few hours after he left the prison. Our readers will understand that, as revolutionary politicians, our first concern in speaking to Tosco, along with expressing our happiness at his release, was to question him about his political position in the present situation.

From his answers - which were later confirmed in Buenos Aires in his press conference Monday, September 25 - it appears that Tosco is calling on the working-class, popular, revolutionary, and anti-imperialist forces to unite to confront the dictatorship and, thereby necessarily, the capitulationist and treacherous leaderships of the workers' movement. However, he asked for some time to think it over before trying to answer the specific question of what political form this broad unity should take and especially whether it should be headed up by workers' candidates with workingclass programmatic demands.

While one of our correspondents was talking to Tosco in Trelew, another of our reporters in Buenos Aires was interviewing Julio Guillán, the leader of the "militant sector" of the Peronist trade-unionists. Guillán also proposed a united front similar to the one projected by Tosco. His answer to our question about working-class candi-

dates was "maybe."

Despite the cautious tone adopted by these two leaders, we think that their answers show that there is a climate in the country clearly favoring united action of proletarian and popular forces under the leadersnip of working-class leaders and representatives. Tosco and Guillán come from different currents within the trade unions but they are beginning to converge on a political solution.

The favorable attitude we find in these two leaders only reflects - even lags behind-the impression we get every day at the factory gates. There the workers agree - and they tell us so frankly - that they are sick of voting for the candidates of the bosses and the despised trade-union bureaucracy, that they want something new and different, something like the regroupment pole or workers' front that we are calling on them to form. We are also getting a positive response from many of the activists, shop stewards, and leaders of the small unions in the interior of the country with whom we are discussing the same problem.

Socialists, however, must issue a strong warning against the danger that this extraordinarily favorable climate for forming a political movement of the workers will be wasted and that the militancy of the workers will be diverted into supporting sections of the capitalist class and the petty bourgeoisie.

Any compañero can read in the daily papers that there are politicians who are also calling for "the unity of the working-class, popular, revolutionary, and anti-imperialist forces." They call this by various names—a popular front, an anti-imperialist front, or a front of national libera-Concretely, politicians like Sueldo, Alende, and the spokesmen of the Communist party -- to judge from some recent statements of the ENA [Encuentro Nacional de los Argentinos-National Forum for Argentinians] and from its political tradition are calling for the formation of such

The objective of these fronts — which have nothing to do with our Work-

ers' and Socialist Pole of Regroupment—is to get the workers to come around to accepting a program that mixes up their interests with those of the bosses, and to support some "distinguished" personality, or capitalist or petty-bourgeois politician.

For example, on its front page Monday the daily La Razón claimed that the Argentine left is looking for its own Liber Seregni. Since our party was mentioned as part of the left, we want to make it clear that we are absolutely opposed to the workers putting up any Argentine Liber Seregni as their representative.

Liber Seregni was the candidate of the Uruguayan Frente Amplio [Broad Front], behind which the left of our sister country united. He was a retired general inclined to democratic and populist poses. To be clear about it, we think that it was a crime for the left in Uruguay, where the Communist party controls the trade-union federation, to run a bourgeois candidate and call on the workers to put their trust in him.

It should be clearly understood that we socialists are also for uniting all the working-class and popular forces and that we are happy to see the Sueldos, Alendes, or any other "distinguished" figure moving closer to the workers. But what we oppose is their leading the front, heading the ticket, or setting the tone of the program.

Let the Argentine Liber Seregnis, if they will, support our Agustín Toscos, our anonymous and heroic fighters, the self-sacrificing worker activists fighting exploitation and capitalist repression, and not the other way around!

The vacillations shown by Tosco and Guillán, as well as the Communist party's traditional "popular front" policy, and the lack of time the workers have for choosing tickets and discussing their program constitute a real threat to the developing workers' front.

We oppose this "popular front" snare so strongly because something very grave is at stake. Those who want to set up a "popular front" and get the workers to support bourgeois and petty-bourgeois sectors are wrecking the chance we have today for taking a great step forward toward winning the political independence of the workers. That is, a step toward the workers having their own party and not letting the capitalist politicians dictate what they should do.

At the same time, these people want to sabotage another great opportunity. They want to keep us from using the elections to organize the class-struggle vanguard in the unions so that it will not only move toward independent political action but will be united and reinforced in order to carry on its struggle against the bosses and against the labor bureaucrats more effectively.

For this reason, we say that the only answer to the danger of a "popular front" is to build the workers' united front, which we have called the Workers' and Socialist Pole. This is also a standard behind which the other noncapitalist forces can and must rally.

The workers' movement itself must develop a program and demand 70 or 80 percent of the nominees. In order to accomplish this, we must build assemblies and meetings in all places of work and proceed with the task of developing a program and

electing our representatives. Besides the fundamental anti-imperialist planks, the program must also include specific anti-capitalist workers' demands. And our representatives must be the best and most respected figures in the movement.

This is why it is so important for recognized leaders like Tosco, Guillán, and Romano or Fote in Tucumán, as well as those who have led the great strikes and mobilizations in recent years, to call publicly for drawing up a ticket and a program around which the rank and file can rapidly unite.

Basing itself on a working-class program and working-class candidates, the front must call for full participation of all the popular currents and all the anti-imperialist sectors. The next thing is to discuss the tactical and secondary problem of what party label to use to give its ticket official status. Already the Partido Socialista has offered its place on the ballot in eleven provincial districts and the federal capital unconditionally to candidates of a workers' front. "Unconditionally" means that it has publicly rejected the proposal to participate in a foul, opportunistic bloc, because it thinks that the workers should run

independent candidates.

We call on all class-struggle tradeunion leaders, and above all those who have been cautious in taking a position, to declare themselves clearly for the political independence of the workers' movement and to join in a workers' front that will present its own candidates in the elections.

We call on the workers to come together in the factories and in our party offices to discuss program and the election of representatives at all levels.

In this way we can utilize the fraudulent elections the dictatorship plans to stage. In this way we can deal with the trap the regime has set. In this way we can come out of the elections with a united and reinforced revolutionary class-struggle vanguard.

Standing on this principled ground, we will take up the concrete task of drawing up a ticket and forming alliances to intervene in the elections. We will go to all the meetings; we will discuss with all sections of the workers and the populace, whether Peronists, socialists, Communists, liberals, or Christians. But our objective is to defend the political independence of the workers' movement, which today requires putting together a working-class ticket for the elections.

Argentine PSA Discusses Peron's Return

(Reprinted from the November 27, 1972 issue of Intercontinental Press)

[The following article has been taken from the November 8 issue of Avanzada Socialista, the weekly paper of the Partido Socialista Argentino (Argentine Socialist party). The translation is by Intercontinental Press.]

* * *

For seventeen years the majority of Argentine workers have called insistently for his return. And our party, as part of the workers' movement, has fought with determination for his democratic right to be present and to participate in political life. Now, finally, Perón has announced that he is coming back and this time he seems to be serious about it.

The question that must be asked is whether he is coming back to help the workers or to make a deal with the exploiters and offer the military government a political way out.

Unfortunately, all the signs indicate that the latter is his reason for coming. Perón has sent an unmistakable message calling on all "compañeros to collaborate and cooperate in order to provide the best conditions so that my mission can be accomplished in an atmosphere of peace and tranquillity." He has not called the people into the streets. Quite the contrary. On the other hand, the note that Cámpora [Perón's representative] gave to Lanusse and the Junta Militar [Military Council], as well as the

government's immediate response, fully confirms what we have been predicting for some time in Avanzada Socialista: that if Perón returns, it is because a draft of an agreement is ready, or almost ready, to be signed by the three parties - the Peronists, the military party, and the Radical [bourgeois liberal] party. "Perhaps at last this government has been understood" — these words with which Lanusse ended his conciliatory speech last night would suffice to prove what we have said. But it would be useful to recapitulate a few facts that indicate how in the last few days the three parties have been rapidly reaching a point of agreement:

• As for the Peronists, let's leave

aside the already familiar invocations of the leader's return as "a pledge of peace at any cost" and Cámpora's insistence that there will be no "guns or machetes" here. Let's leave aside the fact that ten days ago, Cámpora refused to deal with the government and now he has given Lanusse the communiqué on Perón's return. What speaks louder than all these words is the fact that the trade-union bureaucrats' meeting with Lanusse—an essential step for the agreement—was endorsed in advance by a telegram from Perón.

- The Radicals, on the other hand, have abruptly ended the minicampaign that Balbin and Alfonsin unleashed a few days ago against "continuismo" and "quedantismo" [extended terms in office by strong-man rulers]. Now they "do not doubt that the armed forces will keep their word."
- The government did not fall out of step either. In his speech on Tuesday [November 7], Lanusse opened the door all the way for the final negotiations. Less widely circulated but more substantial, the "Fourteen Guarantees" published yesterday by Confirmado represented a major step toward agreement. In these the government only recapitulated, as the basis for agreement, the celebrated "pact of guarantees' already signed by the component groups of the Hora del Pueblo [the Peronist-led Popular Front formation]. And Lanusse is taking these conciliatory steps just after his unveiled threats about staging a "coup within the coup" to establish a tough line, and about "calling off the elections."

Two weeks ago the different parties seemed on the brink of a rupture. What has happened in the meantime to restore the idyll? As all the political commentators would have to confirm,

the quarrel could be summed up in one word—the candidates, more specifically the Peronist candidates. If a "climate of peace" is restored, it is because progress has been made on this point of the "gran acuerdo" [Great Accord, the junta's political formation is called the Gran Acuerdo Nacional, which stands for the "government of national unity" that they advocate]. We cannot say if they have decided the name of the lawyer or general who is to bear the Peronist standard. But it is clear that a basis of agreement has been reached between Lanusse and Perón for resolving the problem. In its November 7 issue, Confirmado enumerated the military's "list of conditions" for allowing Perón to return that Cámpora took to Madrid on his last visit.

The basic demand was that "all the candidates for the presidency must be honorable men (especially the Peronist candidate)." Since these matters of "honor" are very much open to questhe pro-Lanusse magazine, tion, recognizing the doubts that might arise, was careful to clarify this a bit more: "Today we can give assurances that all the candidates appearing on the ballot - Balbín, Alfonsin, Taiana, Manrique, Osiris Villegas, Matera, and the others - will be Lanusse men. . . ."

The president will not realize his greatest dream of being the only candidate of the "accord." But, under various names, he will have achieved the essential thing, the application of a single policy, the policy of the GAN. We will see when the Justicialista [Peronist] candidate is nominated, whether within the framework of the general agreement Perón has been obliged to accept a name directly linked with Lanusse (Osiris Villegas?) or whether the indicated candidate is

some figurehead representing a deal between Perón and the church. Nor can we discount the possibility that settling the final provisions of the accord will give rise to a new tug-ofwar between Perón and the government.

Innumerable workers, Peronist compañeros struggling against the regime, have hoped for many years for General Perón's return. They thought that the day he came back would be a day of struggle and triumph for the working class, as well as the day of the collapse of this system of poverty and the iron fist that oppresses all workers—Peronist or not. But the hard reality is that Perón is not coming back to fight. Perón is coming back to put the finishing touches on a deal with the regime, with the worst enemies of the working class.

We only hope we are mistaken!

We have a duty to warn the people very frankly about this situation. We fervently hope the working people will prevent such a deal. Despite Perón's order not to mobilize for his return, we imagine many Peronist workers will not accept this.

We completely support the attempt to mobilize that will surely be made by the fighting sections of the Peronist movement. Although we warn that this is not what Perón wants, we support such a mobilization as we support all combative actions of the workers. But we think that it must raise the demand that Perón come out for a plan of struggle against poverty and unemployment; that he stop any candidates being chosen through a deal with the military; that he recognize the sacrifices of millions of workers who have supported him for years and even risked their lives, by giving 80 percent of the nominations to work-

ing-class candidates.

Why PSA Refused to Meet With Peron

(Reprinted from the December 18, 1972 issue of Intercontinental Press)

On November 20, former Argentine President Juan Perón met with some fifty political, trade-union, and business leaders in the Nino Restaurant in Buenos Aires in an attempt to bring about a unity of civilian forces as a preliminary step to undertaking any direct negotiations with the military government. Nearly all political forces in the country were invited to the meeting. Only two invited groups, the outlawed Communist party and the Partido Socialista Argentino (PSA-Argentine Socialist party), refused to attend. (The December 1 issue of the Cuban magazine Bohemia inaccurately reported only the Communist party as having done so.)

[The following is an interview with the general secretary of the PSA, Juan Carlos Coral, explaining why the PSA refused to take part in the meeting. It was published in the November 29 issue of the PSA's weekly, Avanzada Socialista. The translation is by Intercontinental Press.]

Question. Why didn't we attend the meeting in the Nino Restaurant?

Answer. We stayed away from the Nino meeting because we were not prepared to take part in a secret dialogue with the enemies of the working class. There you had Perón meeting not only with Balbín, Amadeo, and Frondizi, but also with the representatives of the exploiters' organization (the CGE [Confederación General Económica — General Económica — General Economic Confederation]), and the trade-union leaders, who are accomplices of the military

government. The obstinate refusal to allow journalists to cover the event was not incidental: Behind the pretext of discussing the bases for "national reconstruction," what was really involved was an attempt to give concrete form - behind closed doors - to the Great National Agreement called for by the armed forces: in other words, to explicitly lay down the conditions that the organizations in attendance would agree to observe during the next "legal" period. This is the reason not one word was said about political prisoners and repression, about unemployment and the wages of the workers, or about crooked business operations and the surrender of the national economy.

From another point of view, it was the culmination of a laborious effort on the part of Perón that began in 1967 through contacts with Aramburu and Balbin and later evolved with the grouping of the bourgeois parties into various fronts representing all shades, from La Hora del Pueblo [The Hour of the People] to the ENA [Encuentro Nacional de los Argentinos - National Forum of Argentines], with Frecilina [Frente Cívico de Liberación Nacional - Civic Front for National Liberation and the Alianza de Centro Izquierda [Center-Left Alliance] in between. Perón had his representative in every one of them; he stamped all of them with definite restrictions and an electoralist outlook. Ultimately, it was very easy for him to get them to sit down and attempt to reach agreement with the government's strategy.

In short, our attitude represented a categoric denunciation of the fact that

what was being worked out behind those doors was a kind of "Democratic Union-1972" into which official Peronism, after having exhausted its populist stage, would be incorporated. It was in order to accomplish this task that the armed forces made Perón return, and it is for this reason that he has not denounced the Balbíns, Frondizis, Ruccis, and Corias, or called for any program of struggle against poverty and unemployment.

Q. A Peronist compañero told us that he thought our position was sectarian, since it seemed to him that we were rejecting any dialogue with his party.

A. Not at all. We are ready to engage in a dialogue with General Perón and the Peronist movement, provided that it is public and in the interests of the workers. For example, we have repeatedly called on the Justicialist movement [the Peronist party] and other parties to reach a public agreement on a national mobilization to free the political prisoners. We likewise call on the Justicialist movement to urge the adoption of a "plan for struggle" by the CGT [Confederación General del Trabajo - General Confederation Labor] and the presentation of workers' candidates [in the upcoming elections]. If General Perón or any other party would like to enter into a public dialogue on questions like these, we will be the first to agree to join them in doing so.

Launching the Frente Obrero

Workers Front and Revolutionary Socialists Launch Joint Campaign by Fred Halstead

(Reprinted from the January 19, 1973 issue of The Militant)

BUENOS AIRES, Dec. 18—This weekend I attended three meetings here concerning the elections that are scheduled for Argentina next March.

The first took place Dec. 16 in a rented movie theater in a working-class suburb of Buenos Aires. It was a meeting of the Frente Obrero (Workers Front), a united front of working-class candidates pledged to run in these elections independent of the capitalist parties, including the Peronist party.

As I enter the theater the meeting has not yet begun. A few hundred people are there early preparing the hall with banners, and as groups from around the country arrive bringing their own, these too are placed around the hall.

The biggest banner hangs above the stage: "First Plenary of the Frente Obrero. Against the Trap of the Generals, Bosses, and *Doctores* /titled persons / For Workers Candidates."

Some of the other signs, which are of all sizes and colors, read: "Petrochemical—La Plata. We Support the Workers Candidates"; "Barrio of Mendoza Present!"; "Sugar Workers of Tucumán Present!"; "Metalworkers, Barrio La Carolina"; San Nicolás With the Frente Obrero—Long Live the Struggle of the Workers of McKee San Nicolás!" (McKee is a metalurgical plant.) There are dozens of such banners being placed now, as the hall begins to fill up.

A group from Rosario enters, forces its way down the center aisle and sings a song made up for the occasion. After each verse there are cheers from the others, who catch the chorus after a few times and join in: "We don't want to vote bosses, only workers."

A large banner hangs from the balcony: "First Special Congress of the Partido Socialista de Trabajadores /PST—Socialist Workers Party/—For Workers Candidates—For a Socialist Argentina." This is the new party resulting from a fusion of the left wing of the old Socialist Party of Argentina and the Trotskyist Partido Revolutionario de los Trabajadores (PRT Verdad—Revolutionary Workers Party).

The PST is a key part of the Frente Obrero, whose candidates will use the PST ballot status to place their names on the ballot. This arrangement of a broader front of candidates using the ballot status of a part of the front is not unusual in Argentina. Several of the other parties, including Perón's National Justicialist Movement, have made similar arrangements in this election. But unlike all other fronts, the Frente Obrero includes no capitalist parties.

After the meeting of the Frente Obrero, the congress of the PST is scheduled to take place in the same hall.

SITRAC-SITRAM

A few young men, their shirts removed because of the heat, are hanging another large banner from the balcony, and as it falls into place the crowd—now filling the lower floor of the theater—cheers. It reads: "Down with the Government. Liberty for Paez, Flores and the rest of the comrades of SITRAC-SITRAM! Free All the Prisoners of the Military Dictatorship!"

Paez and Flores are leaders of SIT-

RAC-SITRAM, unions in two Fiat auto plants in the northern industrial city of Córdoba. These unions broke with the Peronist bureaucracy that dominates Argentina's top union leadership and played a vanguard role on a city-wide and national scale. They led the two famous uprisings called the Cordobazos. SITRAC-SITRAM have been banned by the military dictatorship that rules the country, and many of their leaders have been imprisoned.

It is announced from the platform that Paez has just been released from jail and will be attending this Frente Obrero meeting. The audience breaks into cheers and then into a rhythmic chant: "Two, three, many SITRAC-SITRAMs!"

Throughout the rest of the meeting this kind of chanting occurs repeatedly. Chanting, of course, is also common at rallies in other parts of the world, but what is different here is that many of the chants do not seem to be traditional, but seem to be made up on the spot—like a Calypso singer's verses—so widely do they vary and so closely do they fit the particular moment or the particular point being discussed.

The lower level is quite crowded now, and I can't see at first who is coming down the aisle to spreading cheers. It is an old man, walking straight and erect. One of the chants tells me who it is: "Mateo Fossa from Tucumán, coordinator of retired workers!"

Mateo Fossa has been a leader in

the Argentine workers movement for half a century. In the 1930s he visited Leon Trotsky in Mexico and has since then been sympathetic to the Fourth International.

The cheering is quite wild at his appearance; I notice one lithe young man almost turning flips. I wonder at what this says about the generation gap, since the great majority of the audience are young persons in their twenties. At the very least it is clear these young workers are proud of their ties with the oldest militants.

One of the old workers takes the stage after running the gauntlet of cheers. He is Pedro Milese, as the chant tells me: "Old Pete, veteran of SITRAC-SITRAM and Córdoba!"

Finally the meeting is called to order, but before it begins the cheers interrupt from the back: "Paez! Paez! For many more SITRAMs!"

José Francisco Paez comes walking down the aisle, a short man in his mid-twenties wearing loose-fitting blue jeans and a faded red shirt. He is accompanied by a work-worn woman and several small children. He pauses in the audience briefly while seats are found for the woman and children and then proceeds to the stage.

The meeting begins. Old Pete speaks first. "I represent those who fought before. I remember those who were imprisoned. So many. It is a triumph to be here. This is the way to fight the masters."

It is a speech befitting a rally, which is what this meeting really is. There are only a few simple points of business—to decide whether to field a presidential slate in addition to the parliamentary and local candidates, to recommend that slate, and to set up an ongoing committee that can enlarge itself and direct the campaign.

The people here, many of them candidates themselves (the Frente Obrero hopes to field 1,000 candidates), represent local party groups of the PST, local Frente Obrero groups, committees in various unions, and neighborhood groups, many of them called Sociedades de Fomento (Improvement Societies). The latter are longstanding mass organizations found in many working-class neighborhoods in Argentina. Many of those representing such groups are women.

Disillusioned with Peronism

A woman of about 40 in a red dress is pointed out in the audience by one of the speakers on the stage. She is described as a longtime Peronist leader in a workers neighborhood. She stands in the audience and says a few words: She is joining with the Frente Obrero because she can't stand the Peronist policy. The audience cheers.

A number of other speakers express similar sentiments, most of them workers in their late 30s and 40s. A dock worker introduces himself as "a revolutionary of the Peronist movement." I have failed for 17 years because of Peronism. We have had no victories for 17 years. Those responsible for those failures aren't here to support this very important meeting on behalf of workers power. . . . The workers must decide, must save the country. The people must take power by jumping over all the traps the capitalists put in our way."

I notice a banner on the side wall that says: "Rucci doesn't represent anything." Rucci is the Peronist head of the Confederación General del Trabajo (CGT — General Federation of Labor) of Argentina.

It is one of the most powerful union movements in the world, organizing close to 90 percent of Argentina's workers. Its top leadership has a long record of class collaboration, sweetheart contracts, and strikebreaking against the rank-and-file plant committees that are the real strength of the Argentine union movement.

At present, the CGT leadership cooperates with the military dictatorship. Politically it is part of Perón's Justicialist party. In this sense, though not in others, Perón's party is similar to the Democratic party in the U.S.—a procapitalist party containing within it a spectrum from rightists to the leadership of the labor movement.

A big difference is that the Peronists have been illegal or semi-legal for much of the time since Perón was over-thrown in 1955, and they have an aura of persecuted anti-imperialists. Also, workers remember the significant social reforms that they won during Perón's rule.

This makes Peronism the biggest block to independent working-class political action. Thus the fact that the Frente Obrero has attracted militant workers from the Peronist movement for the crucial step of breaking with capitalist politics is a highly significant beginning.

Also present at the Frente Obrero rally are some militants from the Communist party as well as other tendencies on the left. The CP in Argentina did not attempt to get ballot status, seeking instead a bloc with "progressive" capitalists.

Late in the afternnon the Frente Obrero meeting becomes involved in a discussion over whether to field a presidential slate. It is clear the great majority favor this. To do otherwise would not pose clearly a working-class alternative.

Old Pete, however, opposes it, and perhaps others as well, so a long process of patient explanation goes on with no doubt as to the outcome. I take the opportunity to look in on another rally taking place at the same time a few miles away.

Revolutionary youth rally

This is a meeting of the Juventud Socialista de Avanzada (JSA, the Socialist Vanguard Youth, which is affiliated with the PST). Before I leave the Frente Obrero meeting I carefully estimate the crowd—about 1,500 at that point.

The youth rally is also being held in a rented movie theater. Inside there are some 700 young people, delegates from around the country representing a youth group of more than 2,000, according to the organizers.

This meeting is all spirit and chanting. I jot down a few of the chants: "The youth fight for working-class independence!"; "To fight, to win, workers to power!"; "Trotsky, Guevara, the people are getting ready!"; "Chile, Cuba, Vietnam, the people salute you!" After this chant there is some discussion of the regime in Chile, with Allende coming in for sharp criticism.

It is obvious just from physical appearance that the majority of these youth are not from universities but are younger. I speak to as many as I can in the short time I'm there. Most are from high schools (secundarios, they are called here). Some are young workers.

After an hour or so I return to the Frente Obrero meeting. They have decided to run a presidential slate and are now discussing who the presidential and vice-presidential candidates will be.

A PST official, Alberto Pujal, formally offers the ballot status of the party to the Frente Obrero candidates, declaring that the PST will set aside 75 percent of the spots for leaders of the rank-and-file struggles in plants and neighborhoods.

He also announces that the party is prepared to run two of its own members—Juan Coral and Nora Ciapponi—for the top posts, but that it will yield to a slate of Paez and Leandro Fote, secretary of the San José sugar refinery workers in Tucumán, if they accept.

It is announced that Fote sends a message declining for personal reasons. The time has come for Paez to speak. The whole audience eagerly awaits his decision. The youth—by this time have adjourned their own meeting and piled into the balcony here—are chanting for Paez as presidential candidate.

Cordobazo

One reason for the charisma of Paez and the other revolutionary unionists from Córdoba is their leading role in the Cordobazos. These were semi-insurrections that took place in 1969 and 1971, marking the upturn in the class struggle in Argentina that is still in effect.

Indeed, it is in an attempt to deal with this new situation that the current military dictatorship has promised elections and a return to constitutional government. It is for this reason they have allowed Perón to visit the country.

The rulers are counting on the Peronists to help deflect the workers' revolutionary energies into capitalist parliamentary politics. The Frente Obrero is countering this with independent working-class political action.

Paez takes the floor. He has stage presence, the makings of an orator. He pledges support to the Frente Obrero but says he cannot decide on the presidential nomination right now. There are differences among his comrades in Córdoba and he must discuss with them.

At this point some people from Córdoba stand in the audience and begin chanting for Paez to accept. The whole audience is wild with chants, then one chant takes over from all the rest: "Come, come, come, compañero. For

here we are forming the Grand Party of the Working Class!" (In Spanish it has meter and rhyme.)

But Paez is firm in his decision. He will have to talk to his comrades from Córdoba. The naming of the top slate will have to wait until the PST congress tomorrow.

The rest of the Frente Obrero meeting is anticlimactic. The form of the continuation committee is discussed and decided. The meeting is adjourned to shouts of "Obreros al poder!" (Workers to power.) I am told there will be a band and dancing to finish off the night.

I ride home on the bus with a PST member who is also in need of sleep since he spent the last two nights in jail for selling the party newspaper in front of a factory. Election campaign or not, Argentina is still a military dictatorship and the state of civil liberties is touch and go.

The next morning, on the way to the PST congress, I pick up the papers and see a news photo of Abal Medina, general secretary of Perón's National Justicialist Movement being physically thrown out of his own party's Buenos Aires provincial meeting.

Medina had demanded the meeting nominate one candidate for governor of the province—the second most important post in the country—and the meeting had instead nominated someone else.

The story goes on to say that the candidates who were nominated by the meeting were later expelled from the party by the leadership. The papers are full of descriptions of physical fighting, including gunplay and even an assassination, among the Peronists as they attempt to work out their slate of candidates for the coming elections. It is obvious the Peronist movement is in crisis.

By contrast the PST congress is well ordered and discussion is full and democratic. One thousand people attend, about half as many as at the height of the Frento Obrero meeting the day before. There are 195 voting delegates from 12 provinces and the city of Buenos Aires.

The first major point on the agenda is a speech by Juan Carlos Coral, leader of the Marxist wing of the old Socialist Party of Argentina that fused with the Trotskyists to form the PST.

His speech here is a description of

the prerevolutionary crisis in Argentina, of the present opportunity to reach the masses who have been entrapped in Peronism, and of the necessity to build a revolutionary party.

"The Frente Obrero," he declared, "is not a propaganda concept, but a tool in the hands of the Argentine proletariat. But there is something even more important: calling for the conquest of political power by the working class is for this party not a romantic pronouncement, a utopian slogan, but the concrete, immediate task of this generation, which will make the social revolution in Argentina."

The audience gives Coral a standing ovation. A number of reports and resolutions follow, including approval of an election platform for the PST and approval of a position of solidarity with the Fourth International, the world Trotskyist party. Then discussion of the presidential slate begins.

Presidential ticket

Paez takes the stage, but this time he sits behind a table and asks the audience not to applaud. He speaks quietly, without flourish, and says a great deal:

He has been up until two in the morning talking with those who had come from Córdoba, and he still could not resolve the problem of running for president. For himself, yes, he is for it. But he tells of the problems in the newly formed Frente Obrero in Córdoba.

Among the vanguard in Córdoba are many for whom participation in the elections seems a betrayal. They offer instead slogans like "Neither coup nor election, revolution!" and "Active boycott of the elections."

Paez says that much of the vanguard in Córdoba is taken in by these ultraleft conceptions. There is much discussion among the tendencies, groups, and parties, many of them from university circles that in Córdoba have had an influence on the young revolutionary union leaders. They said it was criminal for Paez to suggest that the leaders of SITRAC-SIT-RAM and other factory leaders should look to the alternative of presenting workers candidates in the elections.

However, he says, he spoke with the people in the factory, in the neighborhood, the ordinary people. They did not understand the ultraleft slogans. They asked what they should do in the elections. For whom should they vote?

Because of this he sought answers that the masses could understand, that flowed from their needs at this point in the struggle. And the majority of the workers in his factory understand the proposal of the Frente Obrero for independent working-class political action and agreed with it.

For himself, Paez had to go with the workers and their needs to develop the concrete struggle, hence, with the Frente Obrero campaign. But in Córdoba, some of the comrades now opposed to this can be won over. They have a record as good fighters and can be won. Paez doesn't want to confront them with an accomplished fact regarding his candidacy. Some time is needed. So it is better to nominate someone else for the presidential spot.

He says he was astounded by the meeting yesterday. It is something entirely new and very important. He would accept immediately if possible. He suggests perhaps another leader of union struggles could be found to take the top spot.

The ovation that follows is profound and powerful. The crowd is thinking hard.

A debate follows that divides the congress. Most of the party leaders and workers on one side, many of the youth, it appears, on the other. In this debate not only the delegates but the observers from the youth organization and from Frente Obrero speak. The issue is whether to proceed with the nomination of the PST members—Coral for president and Nora Ciapponi for vice-president—or to wait either for Paez to work things out in Córdoba or to find another union leader for the top spot.

For some of the youth the lure of the spirit of the Cordobazo is all important and they raise to the level of a principle having a worker as presidential candidate.

Nora Ciapponi, 30, qualifies in this respect. She is a longtime leader in the textile plants, though she has been blacklisted and is now a full-time party worker.

Coral is a professional politician. He has a long record of fighting against the dictatorship and of leadership in the movement in defense of the Cuban revolution, and in peasant struggles, but he is not a trade unionist.

On the other side the arguments go as follows: When we proposed Paez-Fote or Coral-Ciapponi it is because these are the best spokespersons, those who can present the front and the party in the most effective manner, who can take advantage of the TV, who can answer the press. The problem is political, not symbolic. Our inability at this moment to firm up the slate of Paez-Fote or a similar one of equal quality is not accidental.

It is a result of the incipient character of the Frente Obrero, which is only a month old.

We are not going to take power in this election or even get a huge vote—and if we had a majority and waited for a bourgeois election we would be fools—but we are posing the question of workers power. We are beginning a process of breaking the vanguard of the workers from the capitalist political traps, particularly Peronism. It will take time.

The process will now begin in Córdoba, but we cannot be artificial about it. To field a less effective spokesperson because he or she is a worker would be counterproductive, not only for the party but for the Frente Obrero.

We should field a socialist-worker slate, using in the presidential slot the best orator and propagandist we have—and, what is more, a nationally prominent socialist figure. For vice-president we have a union leader who symbolizes the struggle of the most exploited workers and also the struggle of women against the capitalist system.

The debate is long and patient, and when the vote comes it is solidly for the Coral-Ciapponi slate. Then the whole audience joins in a chant: "For workers independence: Nora and Coral."

Woman candidate

There follow a number of technical points of business and the election of the national committee of the party. Then Nora Ciapponi speaks: "We want, and it is one of the objectives of my candidacy, to show to all the women of the working class that they should not be a base of moral support to the bosses, holding their comrades back. . . . We want to show

the working woman that she has a key role to play: Not just encouraging her compañero, but demonstrating, alongside her compañero, that she is capable of fighting along with the rest of the workers of our land."

I had met her earlier for a brief conversation. Soft-spoken, serious, an earthy sense of humor, tough. These were my impressions.

She continues: "We want to end, once and for all, the dependence of the workers movement on capitalist alternatives. We want to construct a truly revolutionary party that can bring to a successful conclusion the revolutionary process in our country.

"I don't know if some of the youth who today expressed doubts about the slate understand that this is not just a formula for candidates, but a formula to guide, to guarantee, a truly revolutionary process."

She ends with: "For a victory, not in votes, but in gathering together the best of the vanguard of the workers movement in the Frente Obrero! For the construction of our revolutionary party, which can guide the working class to take political power! Long live the Fourth International!"

It is a short speech, almost blunt, and the crowd loves it.

At the end of the congress two guests speak: Mateo Fossa, the leader of retired workers from Tucumán, and Paez once again. Paez says he is impressed by the congress, that he thinks it has done the right thing regarding the slate, that he agrees the most important thing is to build the revolutionary party. He says he would like to be a candidate, perhaps for governor of Córdoba, and to tour the country with the national candidates, and that he will propose this when he gets back to Córdoba.

It is the end of a long weekend. On the way back to my room I notice with renewed interest the many slogans and posters on the walls in Buenos Aires. One of the most common is a printed poster with a picture of Perón and the following text: "With Perón in the Country—Social Peace, Reconstruction, National Liberation." It is signed CGT, the big union federation led by Peronist bureaucrats.

By contrast, in the quiet night, the refrain of the meetings I have attended rings in my ears: "To fight, to win, Workers to power."

Program of the Workers' Front

(Reprinted from the January 15, 1973 issue of Intercontinental Press)

(Translated from the December 20, 1972 issue of Avanzada Socialista)

Forty percent across-the-board increase in wages and a minimum [monthly] wage of 1,200 pesos [about US\$120]. A sliding scale of wages to be adjusted every three months.

Nationalization, under workers' control, of all plants that have been shut down.

Deal with the housing shortage by expropriating resort homes and houses that are standing empty. Eliminate the slums and institute a plan whereby the cost of housing will amount to 10 percent of one's salary.

Control over retirement funds by those in retirement.

Nationalize medicine. Free medical care and treatment.

Local and neighborhood control over municipal budgets and their distribution.

A progressive tax on the more wellto-do sectors and on industries located in each zone in order to finance every area's gas, light, and water systems, Against the Trade-Union Bureaucracy

Remove leaders from office every two years and let sovereign assemblies decide whether to return them to office. A leader's salary cannot be higher than the average wage of a worker.

No government interference in the trade-union organizations.

No trade-union bureaucracy. For a new leadership of the CGT (Confederación General del Trabajo — General Confederation of Labor], to be selected by a rank-and-file convention.

On the Problems Facing the Country

For the nationalization, under workers' control, of all foreign and national monopolies, foreign trade, banking, and financial and credit institutions.

Repudiate the national debt.

Expropriate and break up the large rural estates and distribute them without cost to the poor peasants and agricultural workers.

Equal pay, opportunity, and rights

for women and men; free, twenty-four-hour child-care centers.

Immediate freedom for political, trade-union, and student prisoners. Review of the sentences laid down by the antisubversive law. Compensation to those who have been victims of it.

Dissolve the parapolice and paramilitary bodies and punish those responsible for torture.

Politics

Against FREJULI [Frente Justicialista de Liberación—Justicialist Liberation Front, the Peronist electoral front], the Alianza Republicana [Republican Alliance], the Frente Manriquista [Manriquista Front, named for its leader Manrique], the Alianza Popular [People's Alliance], and all other parties of the bosses.

For workers' candidates.

For a workers' and popular government as a first step toward a socialist Argentina. \Box

Revolutionary Workers Alternative in the Argentine Elections

(Reprinted from the January 26, 1973 issue of The Militant)

[The following are major excerpts from an article describing the position of the Argentine PST (Partido Socialista de los Trabajadores—Socialist Workers Party) on the elections scheduled for March. The PST, which will be on the ballot, initiated a broad Workers Front (Frente Obrero) involving rebel trade-union leaders and activists from around the country. The party is offering 75 percent of the possible candidacies to the Workers Front.

[The article is reprinted from the December 20 issue of the PST's weekly newspaper, Avanzada Socialista. The translation is by Intercontinental Press.]

In June 1969 in the city of Córdoba, we began to say "Enough!" to hunger, exploitation at the hands of imperialism and the national bourgeoisie, persecution, torture, and also to the sellout directives of the tradeunion bureaucrats, who always embraced whatever government happened to be in power. Hundreds of strikes and mobilizations followed the Cordobazo [the semi-insurrectional uprising that occurred in Córdoba], engulfing entire cities in raising the demand for bread, dignity, and justice for the workers.

We are far from having obtained these things. But the oligarchic and imperialist dictatorship, which had planned to rule for twenty years, had to renounce its plans, change its list of priorities, and call elections. Thus, it opened up the possibility of exercising civil liberties, although it is maintaining a monstrous repressive apparatus that threatens the life and freedom of the people's fighters.

With the elections the regime is attempting to divert us from our struggles by getting us to place our trust in electoral promises and to support the various fronts put together by the old politicians of the bosses. In order to accomplish this, it was obliged to allow Perón to return and to permit the participation, within certain limits, of the Justicialist [Peronist] movement.

The compañeros who are followers of Perón must ask themselves in a completely candid way what prompted Lanusse to allow the presence of Perón and the Justicialist movement, as well as why Perón is declining to run, why he is joining with our worst enemies, and why he is refusing to struggle against the repression, hunger, and high prices.

No Faith in False Promises

Our party is also intervening in the elections. By doing so, we are going to defend the small amounts of legality that the masses have won and respond to the challenge of the government and the bosses' parties. We are taking part in the elections in order to proclaim a very simple truth: In the face of the economic disaster in the country, which constitutes a merciless burden on the backs of the working people, there is no possibility of getting out of the situation without removing the oligarchy, imperialism, and the big national bourgeoisie from political and economic power.

All the parties of the bosses are promising everything under the sun in exchange for our votes. Yet, underneath all their pompous phraseology, none of them are guaranteeing real solutions, none are calling for a showdown and a break with the oligarchy and imperialism, and none foresee a reorganization of the country in the interests of the workers. But even when they do—demagogically—put forward some proposal that would benefit the workers (as when Alsogaray, for instance, proposes an end to unemployment, or when all the parties of the bosses assure us that they will defend the people's standard of living) the problem is who will guarantee it. For not one sector of the bosses is capable, in the present circumstances, of adopting and carrying out a consistent policy of solving the problems facing the people. Only the workers in power can do this.

We ask the parties of the bosses and their various fronts and candidates, who are promising us everything under the sun if we vote for them: Why have you refused up to now to initiate any mobilization of the working people in behalf of a minimum [monthly] wage of 1,200 pesos [U.S. \$1 equals approximately 10 pesos] and freedom for all prisoners?

We are going to unmask all these parties with the truth that only struggle and mobilization can guarantee bread, dignity, and justice for the workers—never the promises made by bourgeois military men and politicians.

Not that we seek violence. We are working people and as such we suffer from brutal exploitation and persecution. Many of our brothers live in pigsties, earn miserable wages, and have to watch their children die of hunger and illness. We hope to change this state of affairs by getting rid of exploitation of man by man. And we hope to accomplish this peacefully. But we have learned that winning even a pitiful increase in salary requires a struggle, that to keep ourselves from being thrown out of the shacks we live in requires putting a whole municipality on a war footing, and that even the constitutional right to have an election has to be taken by force through Cordobazos, Tucumanazos, Rosariazos, and Mendosazos. All the more will we have to struggle to bring about real solutions to the daily tragedy that is the life of the workers.

In the Election Campaign, Let's Build a Workers' and Socialist Front

But we are also taking part in the elections in order to build a most necessary instrument: the workers' and socialist front.

For many years, the workers' movement has been the captive of a tradeunion and political leadership that has brought it defeat after defeat.

For years, thousands of workingclass activists and leaders have been rebelling against this kind of leadership and searching for an independent path to follow. Generally, they have been kept down by the weight of the government, the bosses, and the bureaucracy, or else they remain in a state of cautious expectation, knowing that if they take chances, they will be crushed. In any case, this independent, antiboss, and antibureaucratic vanguard is desperately looking for a way to unite in order to create a new, alternative leadership for the workers' movement.

The election campaign and political struggle are giving us the historical opportunity to do this. The PST's call for the formation of a workers' front has coincided with the hopes of this vanguard, of hundreds of union com-

mittees, delegates, and activists—many of them fired from their jobs—and heroic union leaderships like that of SITRAC-SITRAM [Sindicato de Trabajadores Concord-Sindicato de Trabajadores Materfer—Concord Workers Union-Materfer Workers Union], which led the Cordobazo.

Thus, we have been able to launch a workers' front in which the classstruggle union vanguard, community representatives active in the mass mobilizations, and activists of various organizations have come together. We are united around one, principled point, which differentiates us from all the other forces: Our candidates are neither generals, nor bosses, nor tradeunion bureaucrats, but workers elected by the Workers' Front. While the trade-union bureaucrats are calling for support to Cámpora, and while every front put together by the bosses is looking for a general or dignitary with links to the oligarchy or with "progressive" credentials, the Workers' Front has sought out the best fighters of the workers' movement and working-class communities, and the Partido Socialista de los Trabajadores has turned over 75 percent of its spots on the ballot to these candidates. The Workers' Front is the only movement that is offering a solution to the great problems facing the people. On the one hand, through its program it is seeking to reorganize the country to meet the needs of the workers. On the other hand, by organizing the workers on a trade-union and political basis, it is laying the groundwork for the future workers' and people's government that will be capable of carrying out these solutions to the problems of hunger, high prices, unemployment, housing shortage, lack of medical care, and imperialist and capitalist exploitation in general.

This Campaign Will Give Us a Chance to Build a Strong Workers' and Revolutionary Party

The elections have led to a small subsidence in the struggles of the working people. While the bourgeois parties are seeking frantically, by making promises on all sides, to prolong this subsidence, we are certain that the struggles will begin anew in the near future.

But the indisputable precondition for enabling the coming Cordobazos to end in a triumph of the workers and the people is that when they break

out they find a workers' vanguard, organized into a great revolutionarysocialist party, that is able to set political goals for the struggles. Without it, the battles will have only a partial character, they will be frustrated, or they will be co-opted by the bosses. The PST, the only workers' party that is challenging the bourgeoisie in the opening offered by the elections, is planting the seeds of this great revolutionary party that will lead the coming, inevitable struggles to the taking of power by the working class.

We call on the best compañeros of the class-struggle vanguard, the architects of the workers' front, to swell the ranks of the party whose task it will be to issue the call for a socialist Argentina.

Fill the Country With Committees of Workers, Youth, and Socialists for the Candidates of the Workers' and Socialist Front

Since March, the PST has opened one local a week in the main cities in the country. These fifty centers represent the base of support and the leverage with which the workers' and socialist front will be able to begin its election campaign. In these centers, and in the limited time allowed by the restrictions and the deadlines set by the statute on political parties, we have drawn up the lists of workers' candidates. Unfortunately, the restrictions and obstacles prevented us from reaching thousands of working-class, youth, and socialist fighters, who have remained off these lists and who would deserve to have been placed on them in the interests of making them more representative. But all these compa-

ñeros must now link up with the political struggle that is beginning, thereby assuming a role of enormous responsibility. Hundreds of support committees for the workers' and socialist candidates must be created factory, neighborhood, everv union, and locality. These committees will have all the autonomy they need to democratically debate positions and to decide on the form, methods, and content of the electoral campaign. These committees will be the nerves and lifeblood of the workers' front. We especially call on the working-class and student youth to form youth support committees. The youth, together with the working women, constitute the most exploited sector of the people; that is why they sparked the Cordobazos, and that is why we believe they will be able to begin, without the aid of tutors, to organize themselves into the workers' and socialist front by forming their own committees.

Enough of military and capitalist governments! For a workers' and people's government!

Free the political prisoners and those imprisoned for related social reasons; apply democratic freedoms! Downwith the repressive legislation!

For an immediate 40 percent wage increase, a minimum salary of 1,200 pesos, and a periodic adjustment of wages to keep up with the cost of living. For an end to plant shutdowns and for the nationalization under workers' control of any factory that stops production or shuts down.

Expropriate summer or luxury homes and distribute them among those who have no roof overhead. For loans to build housing amortized at a rate of 10 percent of family income.

Free medical care and medicine through nationalization of medicine, clinics, and laboratories.

Equality for women in work, wages, opportunities, and rights. Free, twenty-four-hour child-care centers. Allowances to unmarried or separated mothers equivalent to half of their wages for each child.

For control over retirement funds by the retired. Authorize the nationalization, under workers' control, of those establishments that do not pay into the retirement funds.

For a university government consisting of a majority of students and made up of students, teachers, and nonteaching workers.

Nationalize the imperialist and national monopolies; nationalize foreign trade under workers' control; repudiate the foreign debt.

For the immediate recognition of Cuba, withdrawal from the OAS [Organization of American States] and all international bodies that tie us to imperialism, and repudiation of all colonizing agreements.

For diplomatic and material support to peoples struggling against imperialism—above all to the heroic Vietnamese people—and any step toward national independence taken by the people or government of any Latin American country.

For an economic plan worked out in a Rank-and-File Convention of the CGT [Confederación General del Trabajo — General Confederation of Labor] in order to develop the national economy in the interests of the workers and the country.

Nationalize and distribute the big rural landholdings, thereby implementing a new rural settlement program.

Three Powers or One Capitalist State Power?

(Reprinted from the February 2, 1973 issue of The Militant)

[The following article, entitled "'Three powers' or one capitalist state power?," is taken from the December 20, 1972, issue of Avanzada Socialista, the weekly newspaper of the Partido Socialista de los Trabajadores (Socialist Workers Party) of Argentina. The PST, together with the Frente Obrero (Workers Front), is running a workers and socialist campaign in the Argentine elections scheduled for March.

[This article discusses one of the questions raised by some workers from Córdoba at the founding conference of the Frente Obrero, December 16, 1972. The translation is by *The Militant*.]

Some compañeros in the Córdoba delegation were opposed to the Frente running candidates for executive offices (president, governor) and for the senate. They maintained that candidates should only be run for parliament or for city council.

They argue that in the House of Deputies, for example, it is possible to form a workers opposition bloc without capitulating to the capitalist class. In the executive branch, on the other hand, no revolutionary could hold office because the purpose of those offices is to use capitalist laws and repressive apparatus against the workers movement.

Although the compañeros who subscribe to this position are sincere, this view is completely wrong. The capitalist class created the myth of the three powers. In reality there is only one state; and all its branches—executive, legislative, and judicial—are controlled by the monopoly capitalists. To accept that there are three powers, and that it is therefore correct to run candidates for one of them because it is better than the others, is to accept the propaganda of the capitalist class itself.

Revolutionaries, far from making distinctions between the presidency, the legislature, and the judicial system, must, insofar as these are capitalist institutions, denounce them all equally as guardians of the old social order. This is the socialist view of the state. The other view is a legal scheme, a tool of the capitalist class. If the workers front were to give credence to it, it would be helping the ruling class in leading the masses to have faith in the parliamentary process.

But in addition, the doubts and opposition of the compañeros do not correspond to the real and concrete conditions in which the Frente will conduct its election campaign. It is unrealistic to preoccupy ourselves today with what we are going to do with the police and the army in the event

that we win the elections.

Because of the tight control over the mass media, because of the campaign of intimidation big business and the state apparatus itself have launched, it is practically impossible for a workers and revolutionary slate to outvote the bourgeois parties.

In our country, long before a workers and revolutionary slate can get more than 50 percent of the vote, the attacks from the reactionary forces and their proscriptive measures in defense of the capitalist social "order" will necessitate a struggle for power on another front.

Although we know it is impossible to win, our participation in the elections has the objective of establishing a dialogue with our class brothers, to convince them to break with the ideas and the parties of the bourgeoisie and win them over to class struggle and socialist positions.

We facilitate that dialogue by running candidates for all the offices, and especially the executive posts, which will maximize our ability to take advantage of the mass media (radio, TV, etc.). Our presidential candidates will be the ones who can most effectively denounce and fight against the bourgeois state, including all three powers, during the election campaign.

Interview With Juan Carlos Coral

(Reprinted from the February 12, 1973 issue of Intercontinental Press)

["As the candidate for president and member of parliament for a Buenos Aires district of 'the only party that is programmatically and organizationally a workers' party,' Juan Carlos Coral of the Partido Socialista de los Trabajadores [PST-Socialist Workers party] is a well-known figure on the Argentine left and brings a long political and parliamentary experience to the present election campaign." This is the way the Buenos Aires masscirculation daily La Opinión introduced an interview in its January 23 issue with the presidential candidate of the PST.

The bourgeois daily wrote that in its opinion Coral did not have a very good chance of being elected: "Although he did not acknowledge it in so many words, the socialist candidate intimated that it will be very difficult for an avowedly Marxist party to win control of the government this March, especially when it is surrounded by giant parties that are determined not to give up any ground." But the paper conceded: "Nonetheless, basing its program on a class alternative and taking a hard attitude toward what the PST calls the 'capitulation of the Peronist trade-union leaders' - and even of the leader of the Peronist movement himself [Perón |- the sector led by Coral has won a place on the ballot and put up a slate composed 75 percent of tradeunionists, workers, and old activists." Our translation of the interview with Coral follows.

* * *

Question. In its analysis of Argentine society, the Partido Socialista de los Trabajadores stresses the class struggle between the exploiters and the exploited. How do you explain the fact that a Marxist party with such an analysis is plunging into another type of struggle, the electoral one?

Answer. I think you are mixing up the class struggle with violence. All the Marxist classics maintain that the class struggle can be waged by various methods and various means. The important thing is not to give any ground to the enemy. In the present stage, the governing class is making a temporary tactical shift to an electoral arena, and we have to make a concrete political response. Here we could recall the words of Rosa Luxemburg when she faced a similar conjuncture: "The real reason for our taking part in the parliamentary elections is so that we can extend our socialist educational work."

Q. What real chances does your party have in the March elections?

A. In a process as uneven and confused as the present one, it is impossible to make serious predictions. Moreover, the mass media have a decisive influence on forming opinion, and, with the elections only fifty days away, we have not yet had access to radio or television. We have not been able to publicize our campaign by advertisements, since we lack the financial resources. Nor have we gotten any publicity in the press, owing to a kind of self-censorship imposed by specific official directives. We have not even been able to hold street meetings, and we have run into serious obstacles in distributing the party

This kind of manipulation of the election campaign alone can distort the immediate result, but we would consider it a victory if we got only a thousand votes in the whole country, because we have consolidated a class-struggle party, we have offered the workers an independent alternative, and we have gotten a good start on the road to a workers' and people's government.

- Q. You are a person with parliamentary experience. Do you think you can go back and repeat everything you have said in your campaign from the floor of parliament?
- A. I will go back and use all the parliamentary experience you credit

me with, enriched by the workers' struggles I have participated in since 1966 [when the parliament was shut down by the junta] and especially since the Córdoba uprising. In a parliament that the bourgeoisie uses as a shock absorber for social tensions and conflicts, our deputies will be the expression of every rebellion and the transmission belt for all demands of the workers and the people. We will expose in practice the false promises of the bourgeois politicians.

Q. Your party has called on the entire left to form a Frente de Candidaturas Obreras [Front of Workers' Candidates], claiming that this was the only alternative for all those who consider themselves socialists. Is this position backed by political principle or is it simply a means of catching votes?

A. In the first place I want to make it clear that this front is an alternative not only for socialists but for all tradeunion activists prevented by the Peronist bureaucracy from expressing their demands on a political level. Our position on the Frente Obrero [Workers' Front | follows from the party's classstruggle program and its characterization of the national bourgeoisie, which we deny is an independent class able to play a consistent anti-imperialist role. Our strategy is clearly in tune with the present situation, as is shown by the fact that more than 50,000 persons have affiliated with the party [as registered voters] in recent months and that thousands of working-class candidates - who have asked for this way of reaching the public - have been included in our line on the ballot.

- Q. Can you explain what future this class-struggle alternative has in a country like ours, where most people are Peronists or "Radicales" [Progressives]?
- A. We believe that both Peronism and radicalismo are historically out-

worn experiences. Radicalismo was the response of the petty-bourgeoisie to the Argentine oligarchy at the end of the last century. Peronism was a Bonapartist experiment of the sort that prospered in almost all Latin-American countries as a result of a specific economic conjuncture in the immediate postwar period. In the specific case of Argentina, this tendency was reinforced by the errors and deviations of the old left.

But when the imperialist push got going in the 1950s and American capital began flooding into our semicolonial economies, demanding ever higher profit rates, these pressures put an end to the income-redistribution policies that served as the basis of populism. And, one after another, all the class-collaborationist and reformist left tendencies went into crisis. The bourgeois sectors allied with the technocratic-military dictatorships that assumed direct control of the state; and the workers sought roads of class struggle and revolution.

In Chile, for example, after the breakup of Ibañez's coalition the Socialist party was able, by formulating a correct mass line, to transform itself into a powerful workers' party. The start of this process was somewhat delayed in Argentina. But the Cámporas and the Ruccis [the official Peronist leaders] are already clearly allied with Lanusse, Solano Lima, and Balbin [the conservative bourgeois figures]. And at the same time, the rank and file of the Peronist movement, who started mobilizing independently with the Córdoba uprising, are looking for a socialist and revolutionary alternative.

- Q. All the candidates of the left cite the need for a workers' and people's government that could establish real authority and thereby eliminate the political pressures that oppress the country. This is the line taken by the Communist party, the Justicialists [Peronists], the Frente de Izquierda Popular [FIP—People's Left Front] and the Alianza Popular [People's Alliance]. Does this mean that your party may ally itself with one of these political sectors?
- A. It is not true that all of those groups propose such a thing. The CP calls for government by a broad democratic coalition and the Justicialists

and the AP for a multiclass front. The FIP talks about a workers' and people's government, but this is only rhetoric and demagogy, because they have already announced that in the second round they will support FRE-JULI [Frente Justicialista de Liberación - Justicialist Liberation Front or even Balbin. The absence of a workers' organization strong enough to implement the appeal for a workers' and people's government leaves an opening for certain petty-bourgeois figures to make a demagogic play on the slogan. For this reason we have refused to establish alliances with any of these parties or fronts, and we see no perspective for doing this in the future.

- Q. Your party has said that the Frente de Candidaturas Obreras is a call for defending the interests of the proletariat. The CGT [Confederación General del Trabajo—General Confederation of Labor] says the same thing about the Frente Justicialista de Liberación. Isn't there a political convergence here?
- A. Here also the deeds do not match the words. The CGT is controlled by a conciliationist bureaucracy that acts as the accomplice of the capitalists. It never called for a front of workers' candidates. It supports a slate put up by a front of conservatives, capitalists, and bureaucrats. Nor does it still present itself as the defender of the workers because it rejects class struggles and formulates abstract programs for the nation as a whole.
- Q. How would you characterize the Frente de Izquierda Popular as a competitor of your party in the elections?
- A. It is the sort of adventure you see when a few intellectuals decide to come down out of their ivory tower and try their luck in the political arena. It has all the contradictions typical of this kind of thing. In his dreams Ramos saw a socialist Perón; he woke up to find a conservative Cámpora. He dreamed of generals of the stature of San Martin; he awoke to find glorified cops. In order to find a way out of his confusion he was forced to try to transform politics into a field of temperamental artistic endeavor. For us, on the other hand, politics is a science, and as

such logical and coherent. Moreover, it is a science that we practice in a principled way, never lying to the masses in order to garner votes but always telling the truth in order to win revolutionary activists.

- Q. Before the date for certifying slates of candidates, there were reports in the press that in the Federal District your party was making overtures to the Communist party for an electoral alliance.
- A. That is absolutely untrue because the CP remains dedicated to its popular-front policy. They have not projected a class alternative but are going around with a magnifying glass looking for progressive generals, priests, bourgeois, industrialists, and ranchers. Then they are surprised when these personalities betray the program. They offer perfunctory explanations. And start all over again.
- Q. In Córdoba, your party's candidate for governor is a leader of the SITRAC-SITRAM [Sindicato de Trabajadores Concord-Sindicato de Trabajadores Materfer—the Concord Workers' Union-Materfer Workers' Union]. He played a prominent role in the Córdoba uprising. What do you think the chances of the PST are there?
- A. The same as in the rest of the country. The only difference is that in Córdoba the level of workers' struggles is high enough to enable us to run Compañero José Francisco Páez, who is almost a symbol of the present period.
- Q. How would you characterize the two main trade-union leaders in Córdoba, Agustín Tosco and Atilio López?
- A. In the midst of the all-pervasive corruption of the union leaderships, Tosco is one of the few who have not succumbed to the bureaucratic mentality and who have maintained a positive attitude in the struggle. Unfortunately he has not been able to take this to a political level but has stuck to an abstentionist or eclectic position. The possibility cannot be discounted that he will end up supporting one slate or another but certainly

not that of his compañeros in struggle. As for López, he is one of the most respected leaders in Córdoba. But he is used as a transmission belt to the Córdoba workers by Cámpora, Solano Lima, and Obregón Cano.

Q. The PST makes a distinction between parties of the workers and parties of the bosses. Could you explain which are which?

A. Political parties represent definite economic interests. So, there are parties of the bosses and they defend the various shadings of capitalist interests (the landowners, the industrial bourgeoisie, the foreign cartels). Then there are workers' parties that oppose the present property relations and forms of ownership. It is no boast to say that the Partido Socialista de los Trabajadores is the only party that is programmatically and organizationally a working-class party. There are also some vacillating petty-bourgeois parties that invariably end up supporting some capitalist formation. A case in point is the FIP, which, as I noted, has announced that it will support FREJULI or Balbín.

Q. Do you think that Peronism as a political party has made any contributions that you can take over?

A. In the historical sense, it has made no contributions we can build on. It was a by-product of the Peronist state. We do seek to carry forward the social process that led to the trade unions becoming mass organizations and to colossal advances such as the Comisiones Internas [Plant Committees] and the Cuerpos de Delegados [Councils of Workers' Delegates]. But these were achievements of the working class and not the Peronist party as such.

Q. The leaders of your party have said on several occasions that the Cámpora-Lima ticket was aimed against the working class. Can you explain that?

A. We say this because this ticket was chosen as an emergency brake on the mass mobilizations. When the Ruccis and the Corias proved impotent after 1969, the Peronists raised their "participationism" [collaboration with the government] to the political

level. The Cámpora-Lima ticket is tailored to this purpose.

Q. Whatever their standpoint, the leaders of the political parties participating in the March elections tend to agree that Perón's return to the country after seventeen years was one of three things: the twilight of a myth, an irreversible historical fact, or a popular triumph won by the mobilization of the Peronist masses. How would you describe it?

A. In the first place, let's say that it was not really a return. It was a business trip. Or, in any case, a capitulationist return, like that of Paz Estenssoro under Banzer's auspices or of Haya de la Torre during Prado's presidency. Although the trip itself was precipitated by the mass mobilization, Perón's conciliationist attitude ushered in the twilight of the myth.

Q. Do you think that the Gran Acuerdo Nacional [Great National Agreement— the coalition of national unity proposed by the military] is still in force?

A. The Gran Acuerdo Nacional, the Unión Democrática [Democratic Union of 1973, continues to operate because it is the instrument chosen by the bourgeois ideologists to assure the perpetuation of the regime through a "legal" stage. Thanks to the GAN, the heads of the armed services will keep on ruling behind the civilian façade provided by the winning candidate. No one disputes that this formula is alive and well. The only argument is among Lanusse, Balbín, and Perón over who is the father. Each one claims paternity. Perón has just boasted that he made the GAN a reality in only forty-eight hours.

Q. If your party wins control of the government, what would your political attitude be toward the following: (a) the armed forces; (b) the Catholic church; (c) the role of the trade unions; (d) education; (e) the economy; and (f) foreign policy?

A. On the armed forces: Robert McNamara has written quite correctly that the Latin American armies are the cheapest kind of armed forces for the American taxpayer. They defend American interests thousands of

kilometers from the Yankee borders without costing them a penny. This sort of thing will end under a workers' and people's government. We will impose popular control over the armed forces and stop them from being an army of occupation defending ideological frontiers. We will make them into the armed instrument of the people. Along the same lines, we call for community control of the police in the neighborhoods and small towns as the only way to safeguard their security and the interests of the working people.

The Catholic church: We have a profound respect for the personal convictions of every individual, but the state must not invest a single peso in supporting any religion.

The trade unions: The unions will play a vital role. We will begin by democratizing them in order to make sure that they faithfully reflect the will of the rank and file. We will put an end to the cancer of bureaucracy by setting the salary for officials at no more than they earn in their trade, by keeping a check on the expense accounts of delegates to conventions, and by establishing a rule that at the end of their terms—which will be limited—union leaders must return to their jobs in the factories.

Education: All education will be a state monopoly. There are a lot of people who claim to be opposed to the principles of "free trade" in the economy but who expose themselves completely by proposing to apply these principles in the field of education. We will establish free, compulsory education at the primary and secondary levels and give scholarships equivalent to their wages to workers who want to continue their studies.

The economy: In this area we will start off by raising the question of real wages, which have been cut in half in the last twenty years—in fact, in the case of some basic components of the family food budget, purchasing power has been cut by two-thirds. Therefore, we demand a minimum wage of 120,000 old pesos [350 old pesos equal US\$1] and an across-the-board raise of 50 percent. We will prohibit the flight of capital—in European banks alone, Argentine capitalists have stashed US\$8,000 million

in superprofits. We will ban repatriation of profits by foreign capitalists. We will investigate crooked business deals.

As regards the structure of the economy, we will nationalize the basic sectors under workers' control and we will start by expropriating all the big factories and estates of the monopolies without compensation.

Foreign policy: In this field we will denounce all the pacts and commitments contracted behind the people's back. We will resume diplomatic relations with Cuba. We will develop close fraternal ties with all our sister countries struggling against imperialist exploitation, and Chile first of all. We will do this with the perspective of

moving toward a socialist confederation of Latin American countries and taking up the historic tasks of San Martín and Bolívar.

- Q. From a class perspective such as your party proposes, how do you evaluate the "native" socialism that was so strongly defended by Alfredo Palacios?
- A. Socialism has developed in our country in one-sided forms. Some of these tendencies have had a class-struggle line but have been isolated from the masses and the national reality. Others, such as Palacios's "native socialism" that you mention, put the emphasis on parliamentary victories as a way of defending the coun-

try in the struggle against imperialism. We hope to synthesize both tendencies. We are a class-struggle party and at the same time we are rooted in the reality of the Argentine and Latin American working class.

- Q. Your political opponents accuse you of wanting to imitate Alfredo Palacios and of being unable to do it because you lack his ideological profundity.
- A. The opponents you refer to reveal in this way their inability to fight me on the level of ideas. For my part, I am not trying to imitate any personality. At most I try to pattern myself on the virtues of the best rankand-file socialist militants.

The Frente Obrero on the Campaign Trail

(The following four articles are reprinted from the January 29, 1973 issue of <u>Intercontinental Press</u>)

[The articles are taken from the January 12 issue of the PST's weekly newspaper, Avanzada Socialista. The translation is by Intercontinental Press.]

A Slate of 2,200 Candidates in 12 Districts

By the time the deadline arrived for obtaining official status for lists of candidates, the Socialist Workers party had put up candidates in twelve districts: the federal capital and the provinces of Buenos Aires, Córdoba, Chubut, La Pampa, Mendoza, Misiones, Neuquén, Río Negro, San Luis, Santa Fe, and Tucumán. A total of around 2,200 candidates are running for the various offices. Many of them are not affiliated with our party but are representing the Workers' Front or the Socialist Front.

In the provincial elections in Neuquén, the party is running in an alliance with the Partido Demócrata Progressista [Progressive Democratic party], which, on a provincial level, accepted workers' candidacies, voted a socialist program, and is opposing the candidacy of Manrique.

As we went to press, we still did not have exact statistical data on the number of candidates running in all districts. At the moment, we can report the composition of the tickets in the following districts:

In Córdoba, the candidate is the leader of SITRAC [Sindicato de Trabajadores Concord—Concord Work-

ers Union], José Páez, together with the leader of the teachers union in private education, María del Carmen González. Another leader of SITRAC, Domingo Bizzi, is a candidate for national deputy, and an official of SITRAM [Sindicato de Trabajadores Materfer—Materfer Workers Union], Raúl Suffi, is running for mayor of Córdoba.

In the province of Buenos Aires, the ticket consists of Jorge Mera (a leader of the bank workers and a former general representative of the workers at Banco Nación) and Adela Mayer (the first woman to be elected a delegate in the CAP). The candidate for mayor of La Plata is Alejandro Bustos, the general representative of the workers in the State Printing Works, and for mayor of Bahía Blanca, Doctor Luis Dragunsky.

In Santa Fe, the gubernatorial candidate is a telephone worker, José Martin; and for lieutenant governor, an accountant, Carlos Mayola. A construction worker, Oscar Gallo, is running for mayor of Rosario.

The candidates for the governorship of San Luis and Río Negro provinces (where the lieutenant governorship is not an elective post) are, respectively, Doctor Jorge Manzur and René Casamiquela, a teacher.

Finally, two doctors, Arturo Brandt and Vicente Díaz, make up the ticket in Misiones, where the first announced candidate for national senator is a leader of the light and power workers, Lorenzo Fernández.

In La Pampa, the candidates for governor and lieutenant governor are workers: Roberto Zapata, a railroad worker, and Leonide Romero, a construction worker.

Heading the list of candidates for municipal posts in the federal capital are Eduardo Sorans, leader of the Chrysler strike (representing the Workers' Front), Francisco Fontana (PSP), and bank workers' leader Héctor Alvarez (the Workers' Front). Heading the list of candidates for national deputy are Radamés Grano, former leader of the retail clerks, and Alberto Lissarrague, general representative of the insurance workers and a compañero of the PSP.

Two Union Leaders Head Cordoba Slate

In the cradle of the Cordobazo, the parties of the bosses are attempting to channel the votes of the workers by putting up lists of candidates that include persons who have earned reputations as "left wingers" and "fighters." They hope thereby to make the rest of their candidates palatable. Thus, the gorillas and opponents of the workers in the Radical party are running as their gubernatorial candi-

date Victor Martinez, who has a reputation as a "leftist."

Similarly, the presence of the "militant" Peronist Atilio López on the FREJULI [Frente Justicialista de Liberación — Justicialist Liberation Front] ticket is designed to get the workers of Córdoba to vote for Cámpora and Solano Lima, something it would be very difficult to get them to do with other candidates.

Nevertheless, the spirit of the Cordobazo will be present in the elections. It will be upheld by the candidates of the Workers' Front, leaders of the main struggles of the past two years.

Heading this list of candidates will be Páez, Suffi, and Bizzi—the main leaders of SITRAC-SITRAM. Without any doubt, they are part of the best trade-union leadership that we have seen in the past two years. The Front also includes leaders of the Córdoba teachers' unions that have waged important struggles this year—UEPC, ADIMAC, FADUC, and SEPPAC—as well as members of the strike committee of the public comployees, of the provisional committee of the Shoeworkers Union, delegates of SMATA [Sindicato de Mecánicos y Afines del Transporte Automotor—Union of Mechanics and Related Workers in the Automotive Transport Industry], of light and power workers, of the bankworkers, of the meatcutters, and others.

The Gubernatorial Ticket

At the head is José Francisco Páez. He is probably the most prestigious leader of SITRAC-SITRAM. In 1970, he, together with Massera, Flores, Díaz, Suffi, Bizzi, and others, won the leadership of the Fiat unions, replacing a promanagement bureaucracy.

Led by a leadership they trusted, the 7,000 workers at Fiat succeeded in halting the exploitative offensive of the European bosses.

At the same time they waged this determined struggle, they called meetings of unions and union action committees in order to form a current capable of standing up to the traitorous trade-union leaders and of sweeping them out of office. This initiative was not able to bear fruit because in September 1971 the "Holy Alliance" between the bosses, the government, and these union leaders intervened militarily in these unions, dissolved them, and persecuted and imprisoned their leaders.

Today Páez is continuing the struggle that he began by playing a very important role in the Fiat occupations in 1970 and January 1971, and in the occupation of the Ferreyra district—which was a prelude to the second Cordobazo. Today, together with Suffi and Bizzi, he is determined to reorganize his 7,000 former compañeros into a new union. He is attempting this in spite of the persecution of the repressive forces and in spite of having been arrested only days before the national convention of the Workers' Front was held.

The candidate for lieutenant governor is María del Carmen González, who is 31 years old. She has been a teacher for eleven years and was one of the main organizers of the Sindicato de Educadores Privados de Córdoba [Union of Private Teachers in Córdoba]. She is the secretary for social action for the union, which has 3,000 members. In this capacity she played an active role in the teachers' mobilizations that have occurred during recent years. An active defender of the rights of women, she has stated: "In the educational profession, most of the teachers are women, but most of the directors are men. And this must be changed."

New Forces Join Socialist Front Against Bourgeoisie

On the basis of a political document signed on January 4, the Socialist Workers party and the Federal Capital Federation of the Partido Socialista Popular [PSP—Popular Socialist party] have formed a Socialist Front.

A preamble in ten points establishes the need to struggle against the "Great National Agreement" and to form a front of Argentine socialist forces that would be "open to all who agree on a clear, class-struggle, anti-imperialist program for bringing about a socialist Argentina." The front considers it valid and essential to jointly intervene

in the electoral process (even though this is not the way in which power will be won) in order to confront the liberal, populist and reformist parties. It was decided to attempt to win other organizations to the front and to approve the policy of the Front of Workers' Candidates as the best way to oppose the various bourgeois alternatives and to raise the need for independent political action on the part of the workers.

Following the preamble, seven motions specify the nature of the front, urge that it be extended to the entire country, and set March 11, 1973, as the date when the term of its provisional leadership will expire. At that time, the relations between the participating forces and the actions they have carried out in common will be reevaluated. Both organizations will maintain their independence as far as their own activities are concerned and will put up a list of candidates with the Workers' Front. Nationally, the front will support the Coral-Ciapponi ticket.

The working out of this agreement sets an example for all socialist forces and shows that a fighting union of class-struggle and socialist forces can be achieved through the workers' candidates and the Workers' Front.

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The CP Backs a Bourgeois Slate

On Monday, January 8, the Communist party announced that it would support the Alianza Popular de Centro Izquierda [Popular Alliance of the Center-Left] in the national elections. This represents a stab in the back to the thousands of Communist compañeros who, up to now, were convinced that their party was the best guarantee of struggle against imperialism, of the independent organization of the workers, and of unity between all forces on the left prepared to struggle for socialism.

From Porto to Alende— The Same Policy

Our party has called on the Communists to join with us in organizing a strong workers' and socialist alternative in the election campaign - the only way to build what the Communist party claims to be working for: a powerful instrument for struggling against imperialism, the dictatorship, and conciliatory leaders. The CP leadership and many rank-and-file compañeros told us that "participating in the elections means swallowing the proscriptions and the GAN [Gran Acuerdo Nacional - Great National Agreement]." We said that inherent in this attitude were two dangers. Since no big workers' and socialist alliance exists, it would tend to favor the electoral formula of the dictatorship by allowing only candidates representing the bosses to run. In addition, it would inevitably lead to supporting some lesser evil discovered at the last minute.

The facts today confirm that the orientation of the Communist party was wrong and conciliatory. Beginning with the ENA [Encuentro Nacional de los Argentinos - National Forum for Argentines - whose selfimposed political limitations were designed to prevent the dispersal of the various bourgeois leaders associated with it, and whose lack of a clearly defined program aided the confusionist schemes of Porto, Cabiche, and Perón-the CP is now moving on to give unconditional support to the new "progressive bourgeoisie" represented by Alende and Sueldo. They too are aiding the conciliatory schemes of Peronism because, as they themselves have said, they will not offer an alternative to the FREJULI [Frente Justicialista de Liberación — Justicialist Liberation Front] and will consider themselves part of the same "National Movement." They have already hinted that they will support FREJULI in the second round, while "improving on its program."

The Alende-Sueldo 'Platform'

There is nothing that can lead us to view this "center-left" (!?) front as a "force with candidates whose program, approach, and record can help to build the democratic national liberation front" that can make the revolution that will take us out of a state of dependence and lead us to socialism

Their program is based on confusionism: Both Alende and Sueldo say that what they want is "National Socialism," but they obscure the fact that socialism means that the working class holds power and that the means of production are collectivized, whereas this "national socialism," which was made fashionable in our country by Perón, is in the last analysis neither national nor socialist.

The CP says that the Alianza is putting forward "acceptable, concrete demands in the people's interest, especially as regards an energetic antimonopolistic policy, the proposals on the agrarian reform, the taking of an independent international stance, and the standards proposed for organizing a stable democracy." Let's take a closer look.

Alende's "antimonopolism" was expressed in his urging, along with Frondizi, the surrender of oil resources, and in his unconditional support for the president of the "Argentine Revolution," Levingston, who was named to this post while he was working in the Inter-American Defense Commission—in the United States, of course. On the question of agrarian reform, Alende stands by the government fraud that in no way altered the ownership by the big landholders of the country's best land. As for an independent international stance, it

would seem dubious coming from the likes of Alende, who as governor supported the break in relations with Cuba, or of Sueldo, who continues to remain on close terms with his cothinker Frei, who has served as a trump card in the efforts of the reaction and the monopolies to halt the trend toward socialism in Chile. As far as upholding democracy is concerned, let's not forget that Alende was one of the most energetic defenders of the 1966 coup, that he supported the dissolving of the political parties, and that he then compromised himself with Levingston's plans to keep himself in office and put off holding elections as long as he had not organized his own official party.

Finally, the repudiation of the anti-Communist law strikes us as ironic, since at the same time Sueldo himself insists, in McCarthyite statements, on pointing out that the CP is illegal and on stressing that the Communists are supporting the Alianza "from the outside" and that they will not even be allowed to play a role in its support committees. Alende, for his part, was a traditional enemy of the Communists, whom he helped to persecute when he was in office.

Let's Form an Alliance of Those Who Want a Socialist Argentina

We call on the Communist companeros to demand that the resolution of the Central Committee of their party be corrected and that they break with this reactionary Alianza that has the blessings of Levingston and the church.

In issuing this appeal to the Communist compañeros, we insist on the fact that there will be no national liberation as long as the anti-imperialist struggle is not headed by the working class guided by the ideas of socialism and internationalism. Along these lines, we invite them specifically to join with us in organizing support committees for socialism and the workers' candidates in every factory, neighborhood, town, and city. \square

PST Candidate Fights for Women's Rights

Interview with Nora Ciapponi

(Reprinted from the February 26, 1973 issue of Intercontinental Press)

[Nora Ciapponi is the vice-presidential candidate of the Partido Socialista de los Trabajadores (PST—Socialist Workers party) in the coming elections in Argentina. The following interview with her was published in the January 18 issue of the PST's weekly newspaper, Avanzada Socialista. The translation is by Intercontinental Press.]

* * *

Ciapponi. Our party is placing a great deal of importance on the inclusion of women in its slates of candidates. This should serve as an example to all working women so that they can begin the struggle to free themselves from the double exploitation they suffer—as workers and as women.

Avanzada Socialista. Could you describe this double exploitation?

Ciapponi. We women do not enjoy the same rights as men in this capitalist society. We receive different wages for doing the same work, and the woman who works outside the home also works inside the home. In addition, there are no child-care centers paid for by the state that could lighten the task of bringing up the children of working women. Nor are there free laundries to take some of the load off their backs.

Another example is that of women who do not work outside the home, and thus when they get old they become a burden for their children and other members of their families. This happens because housework is not recognized as productive labor by the governments of the bosses, and thus it merits neither a salary nor a pension. This condemns women to lifelong dependency on the husband and other relatives.

It is common knowledge that in offices and business it is difficult for female employees to reach the position of supervisor or manager. The fact that the overwhelming majority of those involved in education are women does not prevent there being many more directors and superintendents of the male sex. Not to mention the universities (there is not even one female university rector) or technical bodies like the Atomic Energy Commission. It was not too long ago that one big daily newspaper in the capital tried to force female journalists to sign their articles with a male pseudonym. It seems that the director thought that the paper would lose prestige if it was known that women wrote for it.

A. S. What influence do these disadvantages have on the situation of women in our country?

Ciapponi. All this means that women are left totally on the fringes of social, trade-union, and political activity since they lack the means to take part in it. For example, I am a textile worker and in the years that I have been active in the union I never knew of a female trade-union leader—in spite of the fact that eighty percent of the textile workers are women.

A. S. Are there clear proscriptions against women holding union posts?

Ciapponi. No, that's not the way it works. Several factors are involved. First, time limitations, for the reasons that I already mentioned. Second, social education, which tries to convince women that they are incapable of doing any such thing. And finally, the bosses and the trade-union leaders have distorted the image of women who devote themselves to such activities. For example, it is very common for leaders who have sold out to give opportunities to women who are ready to give in to all kinds of requests.

As a result of these factors, and in order not to get involved in this kind of atmosphere, many companeras who would like to seriously take part in trade-union struggles do not decide to organize to defend their rights and to win a representative leadership for the union.

A. S. What you're saying about the situation in the unions is also true for politics.

Ciapponi. It's even worse. Women play practically no role whatsoever in politics. The parties of the bosses use them only to look after the paper or take care of the headquarters. They are only rarely found in important party posts or running as prominent candidates. For instance, of the eighteen people on presidential tickets, I am the only woman. The same goes for the provincial slates. Ours is the only party running two compañeras (in Córdoba and Buenos Aires). The reason is that just as we want a classless society, we also aspire toward equality between men and women. In a certain sense, we want to show by example that women are as capable as men of holding prominent posts and that they must be given the same right to do so; and we also want to indicate how serious our policy along this line would be if we were in power.

A. S. Would you like to say anything to working compañeras and to women in general?

Ciapponi. I want to call on them to struggle for their rights, for without this struggle socialists will be able to do very little. And one way of doing this is to back the Workers' Front, which supports the rights of women. The support committees for the workers' candidates of the Front must become a place where women can get involved in this struggle.

Militants Head Workers' Slate in Tucuman

(Reprinted from the February 19, 1973 issue of Intercontinental Press)

[The following article on the workers' candidates running in Tucumán, Argentina, in the upcoming Argentine elections was published in the January 18 issue of Avanzada Socialista, the weekly newspaper of the Partido Socialista de los Trabajadores (PST—Socialist Workers party). The translation is by Intercontinental Press.]

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In spite of the abstention of the Peronist Coordinadora [Coordinadora de Agrupaciones Peronistas—Coordinating Committee of Peronist Groups], some important working-class leaders have remained on the slates of candidates being presented by the Workers' Front. Several of them were leaders of some of the main struggles in the recent period.

The candidate for governor of the province is the at-large delegate of one of the largest groups of construction workers in Tucumán—Lorenzo Paredes. Paredes is also a candidate for national deputy, along with the teacher-activist Hugo Polti.

The slate of candidates for national senator is headed up by the vice president of the Unión de Taximetreros [Taxi Drivers' Union], Marcelo Magallanes. Héctor Lencina, president of the same organization, is running for mayor of Tucumán. This union recently took the lead in organizing an important mobilization in the wake of attacks on its drivers at night that caused the death of one. The demand for authorization to bring a companion along on night shifts and for a thirty percent hike in the nighttime rate was backed up by work stoppages and massive demonstrations.

The slates of candidates for seats in the provincial legislature representing districts in the provincial capital are made up of various frontline fighters. For provincial senators, the candidates are Armando Chaves (railroad worker) and Angel Serrano, delegate and top leader of the pottery workers' union. There has been an important mobilization in this union against the bureaucrat Márquez. The

employees at the Santa Rosa Pottery Works (where Serrano is a shop steward) played a key role in this mobilization.

The slate of candidates running for the posts of provincial deputies for the capital districts is headed up by a well-known student leader — Carlos Esteban Moya. Moya was one of the top leaders of the Tucumán uprising in November 1970, following which he was detained for several months. This is not the only time he has been arrested, since his name is on the list of leaders who are hunted down every time the army or the police decide it is necessary to intimidate the workers' and people's movement. On the same ticket, there are two activists from the Movimiento de Recuperación Sindical de Empleados Públicos [Public Employees Trade Union Reform Movement] (former Victor Villalba grouping), which is opposing the Suleta bureaucracy; they are Guillermo Herrera and Laura Figueroa. It was the strike by public employees that kicked off the second Tucumán uprising in June of last year.

Activists in various unions that have been involved in recent struggles are beginning to form Workers' Front Support Committees. The most important are those in Alpargatas, which have just engaged in a big struggle against the bosses. The citrus workers, who are in the process of organizing a union, have also formed a support committee.

But the Workers' Front does not constitute an alternative simply because its slates of candidates are full of worker and student leaders who have been actively involved in the struggle. It is also because of its program and its activity, and because of the fact that it has not hooked up with any of the representatives of the bosses, that the Workers' Front constitutes the only way out for the workers of Tucumán.

The bosses and bureaucrats on the Peronist ticket are trying to reach an understanding with the Radicals and the government, not with the exploited workers. Although the Coordinat-

ing Committee is attempting to push the struggle forward, by doing Peron's bidding it is slipping dangerously close to falling in behind types like Juri.

Finally, the Alianza Popular [Popular Alliance]—not to mention the traditional variants of the right wing—is including as one of its candidates the top bureaucrat of FOTIA [Federación Obrera Tucumana de la Industria Azucarera—Federation of Tucumán Workers in the Sugar Industry], Basualdo, who has been repudiated by the sugar workers.

Only the Workers' Front—which neither subordinates itself to nor makes any deals with the government or the Radicals, nor with Alende or Perón, and whose candidates are working-class fighters and not bureaucrats—only this Front will unflinchingly defend the interests of the workers.

The Coordinating Committee Gives In to Pressures

The calamitous state in which the Justicialist [Peronist] local in Tucumán was left when rank-and-file militants gave vent to the indignation they felt at the candidates that were being forced on them is an indication of the crisis of Peronism. The picture was completed by the congress that was to formalize the election of the candidates: It carried out its deliberations under the protective presence of two armored cars.

These were to protect persons of no less stature than Amado Juri, powerful cane grower, exploiter of workers, and former police chief, who is the gubernatorial candidate for the FREJULI [Frente Justicialista de Liberación — Justicialist Liberation Front]. But this wouldn't be anything if his running mates for other posts were not Carlos Imbaud, the former governor of the "Argentine Revolution" [the military dictatorship] during the Tucumán uprising in 1970; Eduardo Paz, the conservative, longtime follower of Patrón Costas; and Márquez,

the general secretary of the local CGT [Confederación General del Trabajo — General Confederation of Labor], who has been repudiated by his own union (the pottery workers).

The Coordinating Committee of Peronist Groups rose up in opposition to the leadership of the bosses and the bureaucrats. This Committee brings together various sectors that have agreed to confront the official leadership by putting forward a more militant position.

Both our party and the Workers' Front proposed to the Coordinating Committee that we run joint candidacies comprised of militant workers with no links to any sector of the bosses, including Peronism. In the November 8, 1972, issue of Avanzada Socialista, Benito Romano, leader of the Coordinating Committee, stated that he could not vote for any Peronist candidate who was bound to the official machine or who accepted the rules imposed by the regime. He admitted that "every day it gets harder to put up a fight inside the party."

On November 25, another important leader of the Coordinating Committee, Leandro Fote, attended the preparatory meeting of the Workers' Front. He told the gathering: "We are working for the Workers' Front within the Peronist movement because we believe that the workers are not represented in the leadership of the movement."

Unfortunately, the Tucumán Coordinating Committee did not completely break with the Peronist machine. It ended up presenting its own candidates in order to be able to promote the "candidacy" of Perón and not to break with Peronism. But in spite of their good intentions, not breaking with Peronism means not breaking with Cámpora, Rucci, and Calabró, who are the leaders of the Peronist movement and who are recognized and defended by Perón. It means ultimately ending up by not breaking with Juri and Riera, who are the ones who run the Peronist movement in Tucumán with Perón's blessing. It means falling in behind the policy of Perón, who defends the regime through the daily betrayals of the leaders whom he himself names.

In view of this situation, the Workers' Front proposes: Don't trust any boss, and vote for those of our compañeros who have most distinguished themselves in struggle. Trying to straddle the fence and to continue to invoke the name of Perón means in the final analysis endorsing the policy of an accord with all the parties of the bosses, in order to save the regime.

If there had been great workers' struggles going on in Tucumán, it is almost certain that the thousands of activists involved in these struggles would have constituted a pressure group in support of the Workers'

Front. Going into the elections with working-class fighters as candidates would have been a natural continuation of these struggles against the bosses. However, the absence of such great struggles resulted in the pressures of the Peronist machine being much stronger and in the Coordinating Committee giving in to them.

This weakness of the Coordinating Committee is, in the last analysis, a product of the weakness of the workers' struggles in Tucumán. It has the effect, against the wishes of the committee, of helping to carry out the Peronist plan of preserving the regime, and it prevents the prestige of leaders like Romano and Fote from being placed in the service of a class-struggle alternative.

In spite of this, we believe that the main thing at this time is to unite all forces in the struggle to defend our standard of living. To this end, we call on the compañeros of the Coordinating Committee to join us in the struggle to win such agreements.

But this is not all. Since they are promoting the candidacy of Perón, we believe that they should demand that General Perón issue a statement indicating his support for an immediate fifty percent increase in all salaries and for a minimum wage of 1,200 pesos [U.S.\$1 equals approximately 10 pesos], as well as a public pledge that if the Peronists win the elections, this will be their first governmental act.

Lanusse's Government at Crossroads

(Reprinted from the February 26, 1973 issue of Intercontinental Press)

[The following article, entitled "The Government at the Crossroads," was published in the January 24 issue of Avanzada Socialista, the weekly newspaper of the Argentine Partido Socialista de los Trabajadores (PST—Socialist Workers party). The translation is by Intercontinental Press.]

* * *

The military chiefs are worried. So are the bourgeois politicians and the bosses as a whole.

There is no lack of reasons for this, for the economic outlook remains bleak, in spite of the good crops. The bosses know that their plans are resting on a fragile and shaky foundation: there is no hope of solving the economic and social crisis, the state deficit continues to mount, and they have already given up any attempt to stop inflation. But what they are most worried about is the discontent that is beginning to surface in the workers' movement after a year in which the bureaucracy has generally managed to keep the lid on struggles.

The bosses need a pilot who can guide them through troubled waters, who they can have confidence will govern the country with a firm hand, and who will have the authority to negotiate with the workers' movement and to harmonize the interests of the big landholders, the industrialists, the medium-scale stockgrowers, etc. The search for this judge whose word is law has taken up the time of the bour-

geois politicians, but fear of workers' struggles is still there without any hope of getting rid of it, while the noose of economic difficulties is tightening and discontent is obvious. All this is reflected in the hard line taken in political speeches, in Lanusse's nervousness, and in the discussions going on in the army. So it is that the "pact of guarantees" for the armed forces is again being presented as an ultimatum. And the most alarmist versions talk about right-wing coups within the regime and troop movements.

The situation is a difficult one for the bourgeois order, and it will not end with the discovery of any great leader that can save it. Lanusse presented himself as this person, but the political situation and the loss of prestige the workers' struggles have brought the government appear to have "used him up"; the clever political leader for whom the bosses clamor can't be Cámpora [the top Peronist candidate]; and Balbín [head of the Radical party], who is doing a balancing act so he can remain on the good side of Peronism without breaking relations with the army, will not end up convincing the other parties and the bosses.

Nevertheless, necessity breeds impudence, and some kind of "arrangement" may be worked out. It is in hopes of doing so that they have come up with the idea of having two rounds in the March elections: Once the electoral weight of each party has been

established, the military will be able to make its weight felt by stepping in and dividing up the spoils. No candidate will get more than fifty-one percent of the votes, and this opens up the possibility that it will be the armed forces themselves who, after March 11, will propose "the man who can bring about unity and agreement"—and that they will do so with the backing of the Radicals and the Peronists. Anything to save the existing institutions. . . .

With or without a "certificate of guarantees," no bourgeois agreement is going to guarantee a stop to our starvation wages, an end to unemployment, and the salvation of the country from imperialist penetration and capitalist exploitation.

In order to bring this about, we workers must reach our own kind of agreement. We must agree to struggle for a minimum wage of 1,200 pesos [U.S.\$1 equals approximately 10 pesos] and a fifty percent hike in wages beginning with last December. and to kick the bureaucrats out of our unions. We must agree to follow the example of the compañeros of SOMISA [Sociedad Mixta Sociedad Anónima - Mixed Corporation and TENSA [Talleres Electromecánicos Norte Sociedad Anónima - Northern Electrical-Mechanical Works Company]. This is the agreement around which the Front of the Workers will be built, and we must develop and maintain it not only in union struggles but also in the political arena. If we all join together, we can do it.

Lanusse Seeks to Ban Peronist Party

(Reprinted from the March 5, 1973 issue of Intercontinental Press)

[The Argentine military government asked the courts on February 6 to dissolve the Peronist political coalition, the Frente Justicialista de Liberación (FREJULI—Justicialist Liberation Front). The front is running

Héctor Cámpora as its presidential candidate because the military regime refused to allow Perón himself to run. In its suit, the government charged that the FREJULI had violated the constitution with its slogan "Cámpora

to the government, Perón to power."

[The government also barred Perón from entering the country to campaign for Peronist candidates prior to the election, which is scheduled for March 11. It said that Perón's "conduct and aims," including his description of the military rulers as "beasts" during an interview in Rome, had prompted the government to bar his return until May 25.

[The following is an assessment by the Partido Socialista de los Trabajadores (PST—Socialist Workers party) of these restrictive moves. It is translated by *Intercontinental Press* from the February 7 issue of the PST's weekly *Avanzada Socialista*.]

* * *

Surprisingly, the military junta has initiated a court suit against the FREJULI that could lead to its being dissolved. Immediately rumors began circulating. Will the Peronist movement be banned? Will the elections take place? Will there be a coup? And behind all these questions lingers a very great concern among millions of workers: What will happen after all this?

The Electoral Merry-Go-Round

The national political scene is like a merry-go-round, whirling around on the same spot. We have seen several gyrations in the little more than a month of the new year that has gone by. The government threatened to ban Cámpora for going to Madrid without permission, but it finally decided to let him run; the Justicialists came to blows in San Andrés de Giles, and while Cámpora was promising a general amnesty, Solano [Peronist vicepresidential candidate] was playing the guerrilla; the military junta got mad and drew up the "Institutional Act" in order to control the future government; and now the Peronist candidates have gone back to being pacifists; Perón is said to have called the military rulers beasts, and Lanusse is threatening to go ahead with his ban.

The political changes that occur in the country have always affected the workers more than anyone else, and we must pay attention to what is going on. But let's not let the twists and turns of the bosses' politicians and the military make us dizzy; let's pay attention to what they do only when we ourselves are directly affected by it.

The Military Wants to Go On Controlling the Government

Didn't Lanusse say that "this is a game in which we must all be players"? Didn't the armed forces promise "fair play"? Yet the truth is that they have not let anyone play unhampered. They have done this by placing obstacles in the way of organizing left-wing parties; by coming up with a clause banning Perón; and then by imposing the "İnstitutional Act," which limits the powers of the future government and leaves the armed forces in place as the armed guardians of the presidency.

This is a reminder that the elections were not called out of any love for democracy on the part of the high command, but rather because of the fact that following the Cordobazo and the Vivorazo, they could no longer rule us with a club. They instead sought out an agreement with the bourgeois politicians in order to confuse us, to keep us from mobilizing, and to get us to stake all our hopes on the elections and the old capitalist politicians. The military men do not plan to go back to their barracks after March 11. They have already said that they will continue to make sure that the future government guarantees the "law and order" of capitalist exploitation.

And if anything more were needed to prove this, we already have it in the fact that the army and air force generals and the admirals believe they have the right to determine what can and cannot be said during the election campaign!!!

What Is Peronism Doing About the Military Maneuvers?

We have had, and we still have, very deep differences with Perón and Peronism. But in spite of our disagreements, we are ready to join all the Peronist compañeros in repudiating the maneuver that is being aimed at them because we have always been and will continue to be defenders of the democratic rights of all the workers, whether or not they share our views. We have already done this many times in the past. But with the same honesty with which we defend their right to campaign for the candidate of their choice, we tell the Peronist compañeros exactly what we have all seen: Up to now, the Peronist movement and Perón himself have systematically refused to stand up to the government by mobilizing the workers. Thus they let Lanusse veto the candidacy of Perón, and when the latter came back to the country it was with "a pledge of peace" that he kept by meeting behind closed doors with all the enemies of the people and refusing to hold any mass meeting. More recently they did everything they could to prevent the workers from embarking on a struggle for our wages under the pretext that "the elections will solve everything."

Those who have been most hurt by these vacillations are the Peronist workers. We call on them to reflect on these precedents so that they will understand that it is only by engaging in our own struggles that we will force those in power to respect our demands.

Mobilize Against Bans and Restrictions

The military and the bosses work out their political deals behind the backs of the people, and it is hard to see where they will end. It is not out of the question that the threat to ban the FREJULI might be nothing more than another attempt to pressure the Peronist movement into "cleaning house" and getting rid of the movement's most combative groups. But the possibility also exists that this is all part of a solid agreement between the military and Perón according to which the latter would be assured of a role in a future "shared government" in exchange for "swallowing" the ban. The advantage for the Justicialist chief in such a solution is that it would allow him to avoid shouldering the tremendous responsibility of confronting the government in its present state of crisis and would in addition leave him with his hands free to look after the internal tendencies in the Peronist movement.

All these suspicions are only aggravated by the spectacle of the leadership of the FREJULI continuing to refuse to appeal to the people for support. Sánchez Sorondo has made a glowing defense of the armed forces and has called on them (the armed forces!) to save democracy. And Cámpora preferred to place himself in the hands of "the honest men of the courts."

Be that as it may, one thing must be clear: Only the massive mobilization of the workers can insure the people of their democratic rights, especially those guaranteed by the constitution.

In order to accomplish this, our party considers it more important to call on all parties that claim to represent the people (starting with the Peronist movement), the CGT [Confederación General del Trabajo — General Confederation of Labor], and the workers to

join forces to fight against any ban being implemented than it is to analyze the whys and wherefores of this or that speech by Lanusse or Perón. But even if the Peronist movement and the other political forces continue to put a brake on the struggles of the people, the Socialist Workers party will go on fighting together with the workers as we did in Panam, SOMISA, and Banco Nación [the National Bank], and with the same determination we will defend the interests of the workers in the electoral arena.

Interview With PST Candidate in Argentina

(Reprinted from the March 12, 1973 issue of Intercontinental Press)

[The following is an interview with Jorge Mera, a former leader of the bank workers' union who is the candidate of the Argentine Partido Socialista de los Trabajadores (PST—Socialist Workers party) and the Frente Obrero (Workers Front) for governor of Buenos Aires Province in the March 11 elections. The interview is translated by *Intercontinental Press* from the February 14 issue of the PST's weekly, *Avanzada Socialista*.]

* * *

Question. You have been stating [during a tour of the Buenos Aires area] that our party has already won the elections, no matter what vote we receive.

Answer. That's right. I am referring to the fact that committees of support to the Workers Front have sprung up all over the place—Tucumán, Misiones, Córdoba, Santa Fe, Buenos Aires, in neighborhoods and in factories; that many workers are making their homes available so that committees can function; that in conjunction with this, our party has opened up a massive dialogue with the workers and we are being attentively listened to; and, finally, that we are present in the front lines of all the struggles that break out.

Just think of it: It was our front that spread the spark of the struggle against the trade-union deduction, one of the antibureaucratic battles of the moment; that had a decisive influence on the events at SOMISA [a major steel factory]; that is encouraging the heroic struggle at Panam [a plastics factory in Tucumán].

All this shows that we are a national force that is emerging from the heat of the struggle and that is beginning to be recognized by broad layers of the working class. This is the reason that we are taking part in the elections. Considering the fact that this has occurred within the space of only a few months, we can say that we have already won.

Q. To what do you attribute this success?

A. A few days ago, two of our compañeros met with a top Peronist union leader in order to ask him for official information regarding a particular struggle. They suggested that his union call a meeting of political parties in order to urge them to reach concrete agreements on wages. With surprising candor, the union leader said No, because today Peronism is for taking control of the government and does not want to enter into agreements of any kind, since the country is in ruins. If Perón succeeds in obtaining important credits in Europe, then they will see what kind of wage policy they will pursue.

Q. In other words, this leader was admitting, in fact, that Peronism is going to continue exploiting the workers more or less the way the other governments of the bosses and the military have done.

A. Exactly. This is why the Peronist leaders do not want the people to mobilize around wage demands. Rucci went so far as to say that there should not be any struggle now for higher wages.

Q. Just the opposite of what we are doing and saying.

A. That's right. We are calling for struggling right now and for getting organized in the Front's support committees. It is true that the country is in ruins, but for this very reason we must confront the causes of this ruin—the bosses and imperialism, as well as the leaders who have betrayed us. We must do this by attempting to establish a workers' and people's government.

Q. Do you think the working class agrees with our approach?

A. What is sure is that in spite of what the Peronist bureaucrats and Perón himself are saying, the working class is struggling. Thus you have the impressive wave of struggles that is going on—and I might add that in every one of these struggles, we are being listened to and our ideas are being picked up.

Q. Could you give any examples?

A. All kinds. There are many cases in which workers who do not know us, and with whom we are not in direct contact, are taking up and using our positions, or including our slogans in their demands.

But let me give you an example from last week. The steelworkers in the Workers Front were out leafleting SIAM, which is a very Peronist factory, in opposition to the union deduction. The first day, the workers didn't say a word. But the next day our compañeros came back again and this time the workers lined up to get leaflets and to talk.

Q. How then do you explain the fact that the polls of the bosses and the government give us somewhere around 140,000 votes?

A. Leaving aside the fact that you can't have much faith in these polls since they are carried out for political purposes, there is nevertheless a certain logic in this figure. The Front and our party have provided a nucleus for the best of the workers' and popular vanguard and have headed up the recent struggles. As a result the working class pays attention to us and takes a friendly attitude toward us.

But this is not enough to guarantee us an avalanche of votes. There are two extremely powerful factors that prevent this from happening. One is the massive propaganda facilities of the regime that are put at the disposal of all the bourgeois parties—

from the Nueva Fuerza [New Force] to Alende, with the FREJULI [Frente Justicialista de Liberación - Justicialist Liberation Frontl and the Radicals in between - but that are denied us. The other is that the majority of the working class still has faith in Perón. That is, Peronism on all levels under Perón is already corroded, but most workers still believe that he personally will be able to make things come out all right. If the Peronist movement comes to power and does what the union leader I spoke about earlier says, then the experience of the working class with Perón will come to an end.

Q. Thus this figure of 140,000 votes that we are supposed to receive seems

reasonable to you?

A. If 140,000 working compañeros -many of them union or neighborhood leaders - vote for a workers' and socialist program, for a plan of struggle, and for an organization that exists throughout the entire country, it will be an indication of the enormous strength and power of this new organization of the workers' and people's vanguard. But I call for us to go beyond this limit set by the official statistics. Let's continue to move forward with the Workers Front. Let's continue to form new committees. Let us continue to press on with our struggles and call for a vote for the workers' and socialist candidates.

The Frente Obrero in a Workers Upsurge

Campaign Joins Wage Struggle

By FRED HALSTEAD

BUENOS AIRES, Feb. 1—This is a very special time of year in Argentina because almost everyone who works for a living—from a steelworker to a maid in a private house—is thinking about a wage increase. It is the time when virtually every union contract in the country is renegotiated, and more than 90 percent of workers in Argentina belong to unions.

Inflation last year was 65 percent, and the employers are offering wage increases of only 15 percent.

Since a military coup removed Argentina's last elected regime in 1966 the labor contract problem has been handled by the military dictatorship. It has imposed settlements by decree and cut the workers' buying power by about one-fourth in the last 10 years.

Last year the settlement was imposed Jan. 1. It called for an increase of 12 percent with a little more later, making an average of around 20 percent. This year, faced with rising militancy by the workers, the government extended the deadline to Jan. 15, after which the workers would be free to strike legally. The deadline was later extended to early February.

In spite of this, in the last two weeks of January there have been general work stoppages in two major cities—Córdoba and Tucumán—and stoppages or strikes in a dozen major industries and hundreds of plants and other places of work.

(As the words are used here, a stoppage, or paro, is a technique to put on heat in the negotiations. It is called for a specific amount of time, and work resumes whether a settlement has been reached or not. A paro usually lasts a few hours or a day or two. A strike, or huelga, is a showdown, called for an indefinite period of time until settlement.)

The result has been agreements in the major industries ranging from 25 to 40 percent in immediate increases with smaller amounts to come in June and toward the year's end.

These agreements are not enough to make up for inflation over the entire year—much less for the two years the government has decreed these contracts should last. But they are far higher than generally anticipated, and they do mean an immediate increase in buying power relative to the last few months.

This exceptional level of union activity comes in the midst of Argentina's first national election campaign in 10 years. This is not coincidental. The ruling class here, as in the United States, knows that elections tend to sidetrack mass struggles. Indeed, it is in an attempt to deal with a rising level of mass struggles here in the last few years that the military dictatorship has called these elections.

Eight of the nine parties with enough support to be considered national are going along with the game. To listen to their campaigning you would hardly know there was a struggle over wages. In general they tell the workers to be calm in the plants, to wait for the election to solve their problems, and to use their energies to get out the vote. The Peronist party—whose main strength is the union bureaucracy—is particularly strong in this advice.

The one exception is the Partido Socialista de los Trabajadores (PST — Socialist Workers Party).

Open letter to workers

As wage negotiations began, PST presidential candidate Juan Carlos Coral sent an open letter to the Confederación General del Trabajo (CGT — General Confederation of Labor), the all-inclusive federation of Argentine unions controlled by Peronist labor bureaucrats. The letter was also addressed to Argentine workers in general. It points out that most parties are asking for workers' votes with the claim that they represent workers' interests, but that promises are vague and specific proposals lacking.

Therefore the PST proposes: 1) A general increase in wages of 50 percent and a minimum wage of \$120 per month. (The present minimum is \$64 per month. An auto worker gets about \$75.) 2) Nationalization of all the monopolies and big businesses. (At least half the parties, including the Peronists, claim to be for "socialism.")

The PST letter calls on the workers to demand that the CGT convoke a public assembly where all the parties can be asked to adopt this program and pledge that if elected they would carry it out. Finally the letter pledges that whatever comes of this suggestion, the PST will maintain this position before and after the election and will fight alongside the workers for increases of this magnitude in the current contract negotiations.

This letter has been printed in large posters and pasted up all over the country. I can testify that they are much in evidence in all the areas I have visited in the last week.

The next phase of the PST election intervention into the wage fight was to have PST candidates go directly to places of work—including where the candidates themselves work—to offer the campaign's assistance in the wage fight.

This is not a small undertaking. There are now more than 2,300 candidates using the PST ballot status through an organization called the Frente Obrero (Workers Front). This is an electoral front of working-class and socialist candidates and their supporters, which uses the PST ballot status although not all are PST members.

The Frente Obrero provides worker leaders in the plants and barrios an opportunity to run for office on the basis of independent working-class political action against all the capitalist parties. The 2,300 figure is more than twice what Frente Obrero leaders estimated they would have when I talked to them at their founding congress last

Dec. 17.

Sometimes the PST and Frente Obrero candidates simply talk to groups of workers at the plant gates or cafeteria. Often they go inside to speak to assemblies of the workers called to discuss the contract negotiations. In some cases the appearance of the candidates is instrumental in the convening of such assemblies. This is an important contribution because the Peronist labor bureaucrats resist allowing the workers to have these traditional assemblies.

In many cases PST-Frente Obrero candidates are present during the stoppages taking place inside offices or plants.

So far they are the only candidates offering concrete support to the wage fight.

Jorge Mera, PST candidate for governor of Buenos Aires province, for example, spoke to several thousand steelworkers at the Somisa plant in San Nicolás during a 50-hour stoppage there last month. Mera is a former bank clerk and a well-known activist in the bank workers union.

I saw him speak on TV together with the other candidates for the same office the night after he had participated in a stoppage at a major bank in Buenos Aires. He invited the other candidates to join him in this activity. Those on camera at the time were visibly disturbed by the suggestion.

Candidates are not the only PST campaigners who are involved in this activity. I visited a headquarters of the PST on the northwest side of Buenos Aires and saw them sending out teams to talk to workers at plants in the area. This is the La Plata local (after the street its office is on), which is in a blue-collar district where there are a number of small factories. One of the teams was present at a textile plant when a spontaneous walkout occurred over the layoff of six workers.

The workers were milling around not knowing where to meet—the union bureaucrats had declined to offer the union hall—when the PST campaigners invited them to use the PST head-quarters. They accepted gladly and were on the way there when a union bureaucrat showed up declaring he had obtained the union hall after all.

They held their meeting at the union hall and afterward several came to

the PST office to form a Frente Obrero group in the factory. The walkout ended after a day and a half, with all six laid-off workers being reinstated.

In general the PST-Frente Obrero campaigners are quite deliberate about what they are doing in taking the campaign to the workers. They offer the workers whatever assistance the campaign can provide in their immediate struggle. The offer is almost always well received by the workers, if not by the bureaucrats.

The socialist candidates tell the workers that the PST cannot solve their problems for them. They must organize themselves to do that, and the PST and the Frente Obrero will help them get organized. Then a committee of the workers is chosen from among the volunteers and a time and place set for the committee to meet to begin organizing around the particular problems in the plant. These committees usually also support the Frente Obrero campaign, but it is hoped they will continue after the election.

Another PST headquarters I visited, on Callao Street not far from downtown Buenos Aires, is in a commercial area. (There are seven locals of the PST in Buenos Aires proper right now, and 20 more in the greater metropolitan area. The number increases steadily.)

At the Callao local, work is directed mainly to banks, a major post office, the telephone exchange, dock workers, hospital workers, and to a neighborhood of improvised tin shacks called a barrio de miseria. (Ordinary workers cannot usually afford to rent regular apartments in a central city area here.)

The PST has 70 members in this local now, plus a high school youth group of 15 and some 100 sympathizers who do some activity. The local is five months old and has grown rapidly since the founding of the Frente Obrero in December.

The physical setup of the headquarters is typical of the dozen or so I have seen in various places in Argentina. It is on the second floor of a building that looks about 100 years old and in only a modest state of repair. It was once a rather luxurious apartment building, judging from the large rooms, high ceilings, and long patio open to the sky. Inside are five

rooms and a kitchen, where coffee and *maté*, the traditional drink made of leaves, are available.

The largest room, big enough for about 30, is used for meetings. There are two offices, but only one phone, and a room for materials including buckets of paste and paint and brushes for painting slogans on walls.

Walls at the sidewalk are much more common in Argentine cities than in the United States, and they are not monopolized by advertising companies. I have seen many large PST election signs painted on walls here. All the parties do this, and there is an agreement—which is rarely violated—that if a party paints a wall white and leaves its signature, the wall belongs to it for the campaign.

There is no such etiquette for pasted posters, however, and you have to be at it constantly to keep your posters visible. This makes it possible to change the content of posters frequently to keep up with events, and the PST uses this to good effect in the current union struggles.

A small room in the headquarters contains two mats on the floor for tired activists to use for an occasional nap. This is a virtual necessity because they have a very long day. Many are up at 5 a.m. to get to distributions in front of work places for the first shift, then to go to work themselves, then return at 6 or 7 in the evening for meetings and activities until around 11 p.m. Every Saturday night they have a party, sometimes with a guitar player, or if there are a lot of youth, with rock and roll records.

I asked one of the young women there how they kept up the pace. "It is our first chance for open legal activity," she said, "and we must make the most of it. Besides it is not so hard to run when you can see so much progress so quickly."

There was only one candidate there when I visited: Josepha Dufort, a 35-year-old woman who serves diet meals in a nearby hospital. She is a candidate for Buenos Aires city council from the Barrio de Pompeya.

At another headquarters on Donato Alvarez Street, a group of youngsters explained how they covered the area assigned to the local. They work in small zones, with three people assigned to a team for each zone. They

sell the party newspaper Avanzada Socialista (at 10 cents), sell bonds supporting the campaign (at 20 cents), paint walls with slogans, paste up posters, visit each factory in the zone at least three times during the campaign, and go house-to-house in the workers' areas.

Said one young man: "The bourgeois parties tell the workers to vote for them and nothing more, and they use the election to defuse the mass struggle. We use the election campaign to increase the organization and mobilization of the masses and the contacts of the party with the masses, and to aid in their struggles. We go to factories, remind the workers that they have a right to general assemblies to discuss the contract, and so on. In the neighborhoods, we encourage the workers to organize on their own behalf."

I watched this process at a Sunday afternoon meeting called by the PST in the Barrio Raphael Castillo, which is part of the district of de la Matanza in Buenos Aires. This was the party's first public meeting there in the process of setting up a local in the barrio.

Raphael Castillo is more than an hour by bus from downtown. It is not a barrio de miseria, but an area where most workers own their own homes, which they have built themselves on small lots. The main street is paved, but not the side streets where the small brick houses are. Here and there I could see a family and friends building a house. It is traditional for friends to spend a Sunday this way.

Electricity is supposed to be supplied to the lots, but a well must usually be dug for water.

A barrio meeting

A sound truck was used to announce the meeting. At first it was planned for the open air, but the police forbade this so it was held in an empty storefront rented for the day in case of that eventuality.

The beginning of the meeting was a little painful. People came slowly and hesitated outside until urged to step in. Three workers started the meeting for the PST. One was a construction worker, about 40. Another, about 20, works at the nearby Chrysler plant. The third, about 30, was a strike leader there until fired recently. Now he too works in construction to feed his large family. They spoke one at a time, talking about workers' problems, asking what the problems are in the barrio, finally succeeding in getting the audience into the discussion.

The problems began to pour out: no lights in some areas, only one badly crowded school, none at all if you lived a little farther out, bad water, an ambulance service that doesn't care about the barrio, lack of medical care in general, union c ficials who refuse to put up a fight for the workers, and so on.

As the discussion proceeded, a group of about 30 adults made up the core of the meeting, with 50 in attendance overall, plus some younger children. A party worker took names of volunteers for committees to deal

with the various problems. Somebody volunteered a place for future meetings. Then Nora Ciapponi, the PST vice-presidential candidate, spoke, or rather she talked, sitting on a rough plank held up by bricks.

She laid it on the line: The barrio's problems can't be solved easily. We can't solve them for you. The other parties make promises. We say you've got to do it for yourselves. You have the power if you organize. If you don't get together to solve the problems, they won't be solved. We'll help with that and be in the front line with you like on the wage fight. It's bigger than this barrio. You need a workers party to defend your interests.

She outlined the various concrete struggles taking place around the country, the position of workers, of women, of youth, of political prisoners, and described the policy of the Peronists and others in refusing to support them. She explained the need for nationalization of both the foreign and native capitalists, "who have sold out our country and robbed us. We don't owe them a dime."

She ended on a note that I appreciated: "This is not a small meeting. It's bigger than what you had before. There are people like you all over the country—all over this barrio. Get to them. They'll listen, just like you did."

They gave her a big hand and the meeting ended on a high note.

Later I asked one of the PST organizers what she thought of the response. "Fair," she said. "We should have another local here soon."

(Reprinted from the February 23, 1973 issue of The Militant)

(The following four articles are translated from the January 24, 1973 issue of Avanzada Socialista)

Chronology of the SOMISA Strike

On Friday [January 12], two opposing worlds coexisted, separated by the impeccable lawn of a golf course. On one side, the Colonial Hotel—holdout of the oligarchy and customary lodging of José Rucci [Peronist head of the General Federation of Labor] when he visits his division—was barely stirred by the aides of [Somisa steel company] president, General Chescotta. Chescotta had come to speak with the 8,000 steel workers on the other side, who had taken over the plant.

Somisa was rising up over a problem that we feel in every factory: the domination and goon tactics of the union leaders and their inability to defend our rights against the bosses.

How STASA was born

Exploitation, unsanitary conditions, and low wages have prevailed in Somisa for years. One compañero, who shovels 14,000 kilograms during his shift and earns 480 pesos [about 48 cents] a day, explained to us on Friday, as he marched with a picket that traveled around the city seeking support for the strike:

"We struggle against the sellout leaders of the UOM [Unión Obrera Metalúrgica — Metalworkers Union] to replace them with new compañeros. If they betray us or are not capable of improving things, we'll get rid of them too. But we can't go on this way."

For the past two years, the Somisa workers have been trying to combat the ineffectiveness of the UOM and have demanded the right to form a new organization to represent this specialized branch of the steel industry. That is how STASA (Sindicato de Trabajadores Siderúrgicos de Argentina—Argentine Steelworkers Union) was born—a union that brought together the best activists in the plant, gained growing support from the rest

of the workers, and led the most important activities inside the factory.

The company had no choice but to take a cautious attitude toward this new development, which although not legally recognized, gained recognition among the workers. Instead, the steelworkers bureaucracy of Eechi and Rucci constantly attacked the STASA activists with their goons. The dam finally burst on Wednesday [January 10], when an armed gang attacked three compañeros from STASA: Valdivia, Primavera, and Urqueaga. The latter's blood-stained shirt became the flag for the struggle that broke out at dawn.

The conflict

To the cry of "Out with the UOM goons!" and "For the recognition of STASA!," a group of activists of the Tocho and Palanquilla section began calling for a strike. Little by little, they were joined by every other section, and then by the workers on the other shifts, until all the workers were inside the plant.

In a magnificent display of unity, courage, and combativeness, they remained there until Saturday [January 13] morning holding permanent meetings, and gained the support of the foremen of ASIMIRA and the IBM technicians.

'Is father coming?'

At 8 p.m. on Friday, the army and the police, which had been stationed nearby, made known their intention to vacate the plant. A meeting was then held silently attended by some 500 relatives who had brought provisions. The workers voted to stay in the plant and to resist the troops' charge. On the other side of the gate a four-year-old boy who was playing with a poster condemning the goons asked his

mother: "Is father coming?"—"No. He is staying inside and we're staying outside."

The repressive forces didn't dare

The troops never came. The workers' determined unity frustrated the intended attack and forced the authorities to maintain an extremely cautious approach. Management called the STASA leadership to negotiations and agreed, along with the police and military authorities, to arrange a meeting between the workers and General Chescotta.

The following morning, Chescotta agreed not to take any punitive measures of any kind and to act as mediator before San Sebastián and [Argentine President] Lanusse. The workers decided to end the strike, maintaining their stand of no collaboration, and to call on Somisa to conduct negotiations with the minister and the president.

These compañeros have won a very important victory in their first battle. They have successfully tested a tool of organization and struggle. All the workers recognize STASA and its magnificent group of courageous activists as the new undisputed leadership.

Their firmness and determination have forced the government to pause for negotiations. That pause must be taken advantage of to complete the process of internal organization, choosing delegates in every section who will constitute a powerful framework for the battles to come.

Avanzada Socialista fraternally salutes the companeros, pledges its support to the struggle for the formal recognition of STASA, and calls upon them to use the same method to wring out of the bosses and the government a just settlement and a solution to the old problems that plague Somisa.

Luis Gomez: Strike Leader, Workers Front Candidate

"Let the socialist mayor speak!" Hundreds of times that chant was repeated during the days of continuous meetings inside Somisa. That is because Luis Gómez is not only the soul and nerve of the struggle; he is also the candidate for mayor [of Buenos Aires] of the Frente de los Trabajadores.

His name is clearly identified with this strike, as well as with the long battle for union democracy and for a militant organization to improve the terrible working conditions at Somisa.

He went into Somisa eight years ago. And with the same determination with which he had tamed colts in the countryside, he has been fighting against the union bureaucracy and the bosses. He was a delegate from Tocho and Palanquilla [factory committee] and later a member of the Internal Commission [executive committee of the factory committee], from

which he was removed by the UOM bureaucracy. For the last two years he has been organizing STASA [the rebel union at Somisa].

His campaign on the ticket of the Frente de los Trabajadores—like that of Díaz Jordán, the Ramos brothers, and other outstanding activists at Somisa—is at the disposal of the struggles of the workers and popular masses.

San Nicolas Workers Show the Way Forward

The Somisa workers occupied the plant for two days, condemning the cowardly assault of the trade-union goons and demanding the legalization of the new union. There were other motives behind the strike as well: low salaries, unsanitary conditions, lack of dining rooms.

These workers, who suffer the same problems as the rest of us, have shown that unity and combativeness force the bosses, the government, and the repressive apparatus to retreat, and that the only way out of the swamp of hunger and misery is through struggle.

At a time when the entire labor movement is asking itself what to do about that swamp, the compañeros at Somisa have given us the answer with their valiant strike. Let us listen to their just battle cries; let us applaud their decision; let us discuss

their correct and just demands in the factories; let us support their struggle for workers democracy and for the recognition of their union; and let us be ready to fight all together, in the same way they did, for a 50 percent general wage increase and 120,000 pesos [about \$120 per month] minimum salary, retroactive to December 1, 1972, and for a sliding scale of wages, to be adjusted every two months.

Socialist Candidate Joins Workers in Occupied Plant

The National Commission of the Frente de los Trabajadores [Workers Front] spoke to the Somisa workers over a telephone they had taken control of to inform them of its initial solidarity actions.

- Jorge Mera, candidate for governor [of Buenos Aires province] of the Frente Obrero and the Partido Socialista de los Trabajadores [PST—Socialist Workers Party], was on his way to San Nicolás to organize support from there.
- Another compañero was on his way to Córdoba to inform SMATA [a rebel auto union in Córdoba] and compañeros Páez and Tosco of the strike. (As a result, a meeting of SMATA of 3,000 workers learned of the strike through a message from the Frente de los Trabajadores and unanimously resolved to solidarize with it.)
- In Buenos Aires, the printing and distribution of 20,000 leaflets and 10,000 posters asking for solidarity state-

ments and actions was under way.

- In San Nicolás, the Frente was at that point beginning to organize neighborhood committees for the task of collecting provisions and forming a city-wide organization of workers and popular masses in support of the strike. In addition, propaganda in support of the strike was being disseminated through leaflets, newspapers, radio, and TV.
- Friday, 8 p.m. 500 women send food through the gates. 3,000 workers are meeting. Barrionuevo, secretary of STASA, is reporting on the ultimatum sent by Colonel Carro. He is interrupted by an announcement: Jorge Mera and a national delegation of the Frente de los Trabajadores have arrived and are waiting outside. The meeting is informed. The visitors are received with an ovation.

Barrionuevo, Valdivia, Gómez, Ramos, and other *compañeros* from STASA go outside to meet them. Mera

expresses solidarity and reports on the actions being carried out. The delegation is invited to come in and received with embraces and applause.

Díaz Jordán, one of the candidates from San Nicolás of the Frente de los Trabajadores, said: "We are proud to meet you at the barricades." Thousands of surprised and curious workers see, for the first time, a political leader and a candidate for governor as one more worker participating in the meeting in a disciplined way.

8:30 p.m. — The meeting decides to resist the army's imminent attack. Mera asks to be allowed to stay alongside the *compañeros*, despite the fact that he does not work at Somisa. Two hours later, when the government withdraws the ultimatum and begins negotiations, Mera leaves to help from the outside and utilize the platform and propaganda openings of the Frente de los Trabajadores to help the strike.

Luis Gomez Tells How Workers Shut Down Plant,

(Reprinted from the March 9, 1973 issue of The Militant)

By Fred Halstead

In January the SOMISA steel complex in San Nicolás, Argentina, was shut down and occupied by the workers for 64 hours. The main organizer of this action was a 40-year-old, sixfoot, 200-pound steelworker named Luis Gómez, who is also the candidate for mayor of San Nicolás of the Frente Obrero (Workers Front). Frente Obrero candidates appear on the ballot under the name of the Partido Socialista de los Trabajadores (PST).

Gómez is not a member of the PST, but is one of hundreds of worker leaders throughout Argentina who have taken advantage of the PST campaign to run for office themselves.

I was able to interview Gómez at his home February 2. Here is how he told the story of the SOMISA strike, which was sparked by the beating of three organizers of a new union at the plant by thugs working for the Peronist union bureaucracy:

On January 18, eighteen of us entered the plant at 5:45 a.m., about 45 minutes before shift change. We started talking to workers in the section where we knew we [the rebel union] had the most strength, then went to other parts of the plant telling workers to stop

and come to that section. We had about 300 there in a short time. With these we went out on the street where the buses pass through the plant and put a big machine shovel there to stop the buses bringing in the first shift workers.

All the workers on the buses joined the stoppage. We just got on each bus saying, "Compañeros, you are now invited to join the movement for a steel union." Then we had 1,500.

We opened the road to let the buses leave the plant empty, telling the drivers to spread the word. We then marched to the far side of the factory with all 1,500, talking to workers on the way. By 6:45 we had 2,500. Finally we went to the administrative offices with about 3,500 workers. By 7:45 all work at SOMISA had stopped.

So there we stayed, near the administrative building for 64 hours and held the plant. . . .

The plant director talked to us. He is a general in the army. He demanded that the workers leave the plant before negotiations. But the workers answered no. A federal judge ordered the stoppage ended or he would call out the army. The workers paid no attention.

But on the third day federal police and army troops appeared with machine guns, tear gas, and everything of that type. The workers were sitting down when I saw the troops advancing. I called for everyone to stand up.

We had an Argentine flag, which the workers in the front, facing the troops, held up. We started singing the national anthem. I shouted to the troops, "Shoot if you must, but you will be spilling Argentine blood on the Argentine flag." Then the troops stopped.

The commander, Lieutenant Carro, came over to talk. He said "Señores workers, I also am the son of a modest worker, and I understand your struggle. I've always considered myself a worker, and with tears in my eyes I ask you to get out of the factory. I have never spilled Argentine blood and I don't want to now."

This man, who appeared to be some mother's son but obviously is not, then made a solemn promise—"on my honor as an officer"—that if everyone left quietly there would be no reprisals, no one would get fired.

I wanted it in writing, but there was some disagreement among the committee and we had to end the walkout and leave. We had barely gotten home when 13 of us received telegrams saying we had been fired.

How Socialist Campaign Aided Plastics Strike

San Miguel de Tucumán February 11

Argentina's industry is largely centered around the four biggest cities: Buenos Aires, Rosario, Córdoba, and San Miguel de Tucumán. Of these, San Miguel de Tucumán, with 350,000 people, is the smallest and the most depressed.

A province in the foothills of the Andes, where sugar is the main crop, Tucumán is crowded at harvesttime with migratory workers who are left without jobs when the crop is in. Then they move on or try to get jobs in the city, and the general effect is to bid wages down. But prices are just

as high as in Buenos Aires, where wages run about 20 percent higher.

One feature of the campaign of the Partido Socialista de los Trabajadores (PST — Socialist Workers Party) is that the party has placed its campaign resources and candidates at the disposal of workers involved in struggles, particularly in connection with the national union contract negotiations. (These negotiations have been going on in this country since the end of the year and are now mainly completed.)

One inevitable result of this policy is that a group of workers may make such a request when they are in deep

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trouble in a showdown fight with an intransigent employer and when a victory in the struggle—or even a positive outcome—is by no means assured. Any revolutionist with more than passing experience with the labor movement has faced this kind of situation and knows the heartache it can involve.

So it is with the strike of some 400 workers at a plastics factory called Panam just outside this sweltering capital city of Tucumán Province in the north of Argentina. And so it is with Carlos "Chino" Moya, sometime student, sometime packinghouse worker, full-time PST member and profession-

al revolutionist, who is a PST-Frente Obrero candidate for the provincial legislature. Chino drew the assignment of working with the Panam strikers when they asked for help.

Chino and some other PST campaigners had gone to the plastics workers' union hall in the course of normal campaigning before the strike began. The first reaction of the workers was reserved. They listened, but they were cool.

The workers had had a one-hour work stoppage January 3. The employer was intransigent during negotiations, refused to consider demands relating to conditions in the plant, and threatened repression

Elementary demands

The workers' demands were really quite elementary: that the company adhere to health and safety laws, live up to the rule requiring an allowance of one quart of milk a day per worker in industries with excessive heat and fumes, raise all wages that are below the legal minimum, and end the "military" atmosphere of supervision.

The company reacted to the work stoppage by firing 35 workers and enough for production. suspending 150. The workers respond-

practical actions of support. They put began paying attention. out press releases in the name of the party supporting the strike and calling Province-wide stoppage on all other political parties to do the same. (PST press releases are published in the daily press here as a matter of course.) Since most of the to put on a more militant face in the other parties claim to represent the workers, this put a certain pressure on them.

The PST and the Frente Obrero also called on the CGT-the all-inclusive general CGT work stoppage in the federation of Argentine unions - to support the strike. These calls were strikers. published in the daily press in Tucumán. The Frente Obrero orga- vated by crystal pure feelings of nized collections to provide funds for working-class solidarity. For one the strikers. In addition, PST mem- thing, many of these bureaucrats are bers on the student committee that themselves candidates for the Peronist runs the cooperative cafeteria at the party in the current election campaign, local university proposed that the caf- and the Panam situation was proving for the duration of the strike. The pro- them with all the publicity it was posal was adopted.

The strikers received no financial CGT. Indeed, they had been advised by representatives of the national union leadership to go back to work.

On the twelfth day of the strike, when it was clear the boss was determined to break it, the workers came to the PST-Frente Obrero campaign for help.

The PST did not pretend it could itself offer substantial material aid, only that it could help the strikers organize themselves to put pressure on broader political circles and the rest of the labor movement.

Chino proposed the following: that a committee of the Panam strikers be organized to direct the strike; that a strike bulletin be published regularly by this committee; that collections be organized throughout the area to get money for the strike; and that the strike committee demand aid from other unions in the area and the CGT itself. All the proposals were adopted and implemented. The workers coopted Chino onto the strike commit-

In addition, organized picketing was begun. It had to be abandoned, however, because the police forbid it and stationed men to arrest any strikers found in the area of the plant. In spite of this, the strike was fairly solid, with only about 10 percent of the workers entering the plant - not

With the increased publicity and ed with a strike beginning January 9. more efficient organization of the The PST took certain minimum strike, the rest of the labor movement

In Tucumán a section of the Peronist union bureaucracy has been trying recent period. They control a bloc of 26 unions in the provincial CGT, and this bloc supported the idea proposed by the strike committee of a province in support of the Panam

This move was not entirely motieteria be open free to Panam strikers something of an embarrassment for

In addition, this whole affair was aid from their national union or the taking place during the national contract negotiations for a general wage settlement. The bureaucrats were under pressure from their own ranks to put on some pressure in this regard. A provincial work stoppage would save face on all these matters.

The proposal was adopted by the provincial CGT, and on January 26 a four-hour general work stoppage in the province of Tucumán took place.

The Panam bosses hung tough, but by this time the provincial government was feeling the pressure. The ministry of labor ordered a truce in the Panam strike, during which all the workers would return to work and negotiations would begin over the various disputed matters. The strikers obeyed this order, but the employers refused to allow 21 of the fired workers to return. The strike resumed, and from then on the central issue was the retention of these 21, which includes the leaders of the strike and the most militant workers.

A second general work stoppage throughout the province, this time for 30 hours, was called for February 2. It too was carried out, but the Panam bosses still refused to budge.

I arrived in Tucumán on February 9, as the strike was beginning its second month. In the meantime the national wage contracts had been largely completed. Even the plastics industry had settled for an immediate increase of 35 percent, with another 10 percent next July. Panam agreed to pay this but not to hire back the 21.

The CGT bureaucrats were obviously not so concerned with the fate of these 21 militants, whom they don't control anyway. Though they called the two work stoppages in the province, they did not use them to mobilize direct mass pressure on Panam, instead telling the workers to stay home. Neither the CGT nor the national plastics union gave one dime to the Panam strikers.

Thus it was that by the time I arrived the Panam strikers — around whom the whole class struggle in Tucumán had centered for a time-had no money to pay their rent or other household

The little money the strike committee could collect on its own was barely enough to feed the families who couldn't make the long trip to the university cafeteria. Slowly, one by one, the strikers were beginning to drift back to work.

Faced with this situation, the committee had some difficult decisions to make. If they could just hold out long enough, the CGT would be forced to move again. But if they couldn't hold the ranks firm, the drift back to work could become a flood. The strike would be lost and the company would bar all the militants, not just the 21.

Maybe it would be better to seek a compromise settlement right away to save some of the militants in the plant. This could only be at the sacrifice of the 21, for whom at best they could get some compensation pay.

I didn't envy them this decision, but an orderly retreat is better than a rout, and the future situation in the plant would depend on leaving some militants inside.

Chino introduced me to a leading delegate from the plant, Juan Alberto Vidal, 26, who is also the recording secretary of the plastics workers union in Tucumán. This is not a paid position, and Vidal works in the plant as a machine operator for \$56 a month. (The legal minimum in Buenos Aires is \$64.)

Vidal works with hot plastics in temperatures of 100 degrees and with noxious fumes. A self-educated worker who has studied law at night, he expressed great interest in the copy of *The Militant* I showed him and in conditions in the United States. "We would like to learn from your technology," he said, "without absorbing your alienation."

He is not a member of the PST, and I don't know if he supports the party's election campaign or not. In this regard he said simply, "We struck alone. Now many groups support us—student groups, different tendencies, different political parties. We accept this, all under one banner, winning the strike. The PST was the first group involved unconditionally, without insisting we adopt their politics."

Vidal, who is one of the 21, is more optimistic than Chino, who tends to look behind every move of the labor bureaucrats for an ulterior motive.

Student cooperative

One night I attended a meeting of the student cooperative, held at their cafeteria, where the Panam strike would be discussed. A few of the strikers stayed for the meeting, which was after the nighttime meal.

This cooperative is a gain made in the Tucumanazo, a student-worker uprising in 1970. (The food, incidentally, is far better than the fare in most North American student cafeterias. The cooperative is run entirely by an elected committee of students.)

The walls of the cafeteria were covered with slogans, many of them advocating armed struggle. Virtually every variety of student left tendency was represented in the slogans, including the left Peronists.

When the point on the Panam strike began to be discussed it became clear a number of the students had the knife out for the PST. "Political election campaigns are a farce to make the people sleep." "Censure the PST because they are not giving the strikers a combat perspective." "Change the collection box perspective to the gun perspective." These were some of the remarks.

Chino was boiling mad. His face muscles showed through the skin as he spoke making a defense of what the PST had done and appealing for practical support to the strike.

A big, sleepy-eyed striker with an open shirt and a two-day beard took the floor and addressed the students: "We welcome your support to help win the strike. We are not interested in your squabbles here being brought to the union hall. Many tendencies come. All are welcome to help win the strike."

A student interrupts: "What do you propose to do in the strike?" The striker replies: "We're asking you to help collect money to help win the strike. All tendencies are welcome. But don't bring your squabbles. There is a large strike support meeting tomorrow night. You are all welcome to attend."

Another student interrupts: "You say everyone is welcome, but I was thrown out of the union hall."

The striker replied, slowly and deliberately, "I'm telling you you are welcome to help win the strike, but not for any other reason. All the politicians have tried to do their politicking with us. We welcome them to help win our strike not to bring their politicking. You are welcome. Please excuse any worker who said mean things to you. But do not bring your squabbles to the union hall."

A long repetitive discussion ensued. At one point a student said, "Don't tell me you don't have politics in the union hall. You had a vice-presidential candidate there." (Nora Ciapponi, PST candidate for vice-president, had spoken to a strikers meeting a few

days earlier.)

The sleepy-eyed striker replied: "Everyone is welcome. We wish all the vice-presidential candidates had come to support the strike. She came to support the strike. If you come to support the strike, you are welcome. But please don't bring your squabbles to the union hall."

At one point a student accused the PST of being "anticommunist," and a fight broke out. A pitcher of water crashed against the table, and I retreated to the far corner of the cafeteria. There I met the sleepy-eyed striker, who had done the same.

The next night I attended the strike support meeting in downtown Tucumán. About 250 people were there, perhaps 100 of them strikers, some students, and a number of members of other unions in the area. Representative of several important unions in the area gave verbal support.

A member of the strike committee read messages of support in the order in which they had been received. Virtually every political party in the area had by this time sent a message. The PST was first.

A representative of the national plastics workers union spoke at some length, pledging an all-out fight and a possible nationwide strike in the plastics industry until Panam settled. Repeatedly he stated that the national union "can't be bought off and has not sold out." I think his attitude was a little like Shakespeare's character who "doth protest too much."

Chino spoke for the PST, and when he got up to go to the stage the strikers gave him a big hand. Representatives of some of the students groups also spoke, but they didn't attack each other or the PST, just supported the strike and gave their own positions in positive terms. Apparently the sleepy-eyed striker had finally gotten through.

The next day news came that the CGT had called a special council meeting on Panam for later this week. The strike committee will try to hold on. As I left to write this article, Chino was trying to round up cars so that each striker's family could be visited personally to boost morale.

The SOMISA Strike and the Growth of a Class Struggle Leadership

By Nahuel Moreno

(Reprinted from the March 9, 1973 issue of The Militant)

I have wanted to write an article explaining to leftists in other countries the importance of the current electoral process to the Argentine revolutionary movement and to our Trotskyist party, the Partido Socialista de los Trabajadores. Suddenly, in SOMISA, the most important steel factory in the country, a strike and occupation take place.

Nahuel Moreno is a leader of the Partido Socialista de los Trabajadores (Socialist Workers Party) in Argentina. He has been a leader of the Argentine Trotskyist movement since the 1940s.

We can say, without fear of exaggeration, that the strike and occupation shook Argentine politics from top to bottom; it laid bare all the perspectives and programs of the parties that claim to represent the radical labor movement. Let us look more closely at what took place.

The trade-union movement

The Argentine labor movement is solidly and massively organized within the trade unions. Although there are no official statistics, it is estimated that about 90 percent of the proletariat is unionized. There is a law that specifies the recognition of only one union for each industry and only one tradeunion federation.

The unions are colossal bureaucratic structures, similar to the European and American ones. The law allows them to charge compulsory union dues, which are automatically deducted from the workers' salaries and wages. At the same time, each trade union controls the medical and social services for its members, which enables it to handle sums of money running into the millions and to build a bureaucratic apparatus of great proportions. The union of office workers, to give one example, has 2,000 to

3,000 paid employees. The same is true of all the big unions.

When the national bourgeoisie, along with imperialism, rid itself of Perón's government in 1955, it also tried to crush the Argentine labor movement and its trade-union organizations by imposing a government similar to the one the Brazilian masses are now victims of. But the labor movement's resistance defeated those plans and forced the exploiters to change their tactics: Instead of destroying the workers organization, they sought to control it and prostitute it by corrupting its leadership.

This tactic has given the bourgeoisie better results. We say "better results," and not complete success, because within the traditional trade-union movement of the last 30 years in Argentina, a type of factory committee system has emerged and survived. These are the internal commissions and delegates' bodies, which allow the rank-and-file workers to express themselves and organize mass mobilizations of the working class, which have repeatedly kept the regime in check.

The strongest of all the Argentine unions, both numerically and organizationally (it has 350,000 members), is the Metalworkers Union, the UOM (Unión Obrera Metalúrgica). This union includes all the workers who work with metals, except the auto workers, who have their own organization. There is a long-standing dispute between the two unions over who will organize certain factories whose products are related to the automobile industry. The steel industry-from light industry, which produces fans or blenders, to the semi-light industry, which makes refrigerators, to the heavy industry, which makes steel is affiliated to the Metalworkers Union.

The steelworkers consider themselves part of another industry, like the auto workers do, and refuse to continue belonging to the Metalworkers Union. They have organized their own steelworkers union, with its base among the workers of SOMISA, the military steel factory located in San Nicolás, a port near the city of Buenos Aires.

This action by the steelworkers flows from general considerations related to production and industry, but there is also a more concrete reason behind it: the bureaucratic character of the UOM and particularly of its San Nicolás section.

This section is the private domain of the CGT's [Confederación General del Trabajo - General Confederation of Labor] secretary, José Rucci. This is a man who has the total confidence of the government and of Perón, who is a friend of the Spanish Falangists, and who is linked to a fascist organization led by one of the most conspicuous members of the Argentine oligarchy, Anchorena. Rucci publicly prides himself in being a deadly enemy of the left and of Marxists. He travels in luxurious automobiles, surrounded by bodyguards recruited from the underworld and armed to the teeth.

A little over a month ago an incident took place that adequately portrays him. Rucci ran into a left Peronist union leader at the international airport. When the latter's followers begun shouting "traitor" to Rucci, the bodyguards responded by opening fire on the group of opponents. In San Nicolás he has imposed a terrorist regime. About 100 bodyguards with carte blanche from the police persecute activists who oppose the bureaucratic leadership of the union.

The strike breaks out

The vast majority of steelworkers have been asking the government to recognize the new steel union (STSA—Sindicato de Trabajadores Siderúrgicos de la Argentina) for more than a year. They have gotten no response, despite the fact that they complied with all the formal requirements.

On Tuesday, January 16, Rucci's thugs found three of the new union's leaders talking on the telephone and

took advantage of the opportunity to beat them up. On Wednesday the SOMISA factory burned with rage. But the workers took no action since there was no recognized leadership in the factory to propose a concrete course of action. On Thursday morning, the candidate of the Frente de los Trabajadores [Workers Front] for mayor of San Nicolás, comrade Luis Gómez, returned to work and initiated a work stoppage in his section.

Soon, under the leadership of our party's candidate, the strike spread and the 8,000 workers occupied the factory and refused to leave. The blood-stained shirt of one of the compañeros beaten by the bureaucracy's thugs became the banner of the strike. The strike's demands were: Thugs out of the factory! For the recognition of the Steelworkers Union!

This is, as far as we know, the first strike and occupation directed against the army itself in the last several years. It should be pointed out that the army is the owner of the factory, the boss, since SOMISA is a military factory, managed by the military.

The army responded with threats: it surrounded the factory with troops and ordered the workers to vacate it under the threat of using force. The workers' response was unanimous: They surrounded the plant with explosives and threatened to blow it up if the army came in. The army did not go in, and the government and military had to resort to the courts: first setback.

The federal judge and the police tried, in a moderate tone, to explain to the strikers that their action was against the law, against the Penal Code, and promised that "if they left peacefully nothing would happen to them." But the workers were not familiar with codes and continued to occupy the plant.

At this point, the head of Fabricaciones Militares [Military Manufacturing], General Chescotta, came rushing to the scene to guarantee the workers that they would be received by the ministry of labor and that their demands would be heard for the first time: second setback.

No way. The workers would not respond to their bosses' boss. The situation called for none other than General Sanchez de Bustamante himself-who is, along with Lanusse and

Lopez Aufranc, one of the three most prestigious and highest-ranking generals of the Argentine army-to go to San Nicolás: third setback.

Sanchez de Bustamante gives his word and promises to solve all the problems. The workers who were occupying the factory become divided: the leadership of the Steelworkers Union is of the opinion that they should accept; comrade Luis Gómez, that the demands must be won before leaving the factory.

The workers who support the union leadership, exhausted by several days of the factory take-over, leave the plant without awaiting the decision of the meeting. Those who remain demand a guarantee that no punitive measures will be taken against them. This is given to them and they also leave.

Impact of the strike on public opinion

The mass media gave great importance to the strike. Compañero Gómez appeared on television networks throughout the country as the leader of the occupation, since he was the official spokesman for the workers and the representative to the press.

To cite just one example, the daily La Nación, the New York Times of the Argentine press, in its January 29 issue, pointed out that the worker leaders of the occupation were: "Luis Moisés Gómez, ex-member of the Radicals [Radical Party] and present candidate for mayor of San Nicolás of the Partido Socialista de los Trabajadores; Alberto Cano, Radical; Francisco Díaz Jordán, former priest and member of the Partido Socialista de los Trabajadores; Estanislao Parra Puente, president of the Commission of Bolivian Residents in San Nicolás; Miguel Arias, José Antonio Cartelli, Juan Andrés Citriano, Jorge Xvan Huesa, Ebe Nilda Peralta, and Ricardo Gonsáles; all these without political affiliation."

Like La Nación, many other organs of the oral and written media highlighted the figure of Luis Gómez, one of our party's 2,300 candidates.

Perón was exiled from the country for 17 years. The mass mobilizations of the working-class movement popularly known as the "Cordobazo" or the "Rosariaso" [after the cities where these uprisings took place] shook the bourgeois order. They forced the bourgeoisie and imperialism to allow bilization of the working class. Perón's return and concede to holding

elections. Since 1969, as a result of the rise of the working-class movement, our country's capitalist regime has entered a crisis that has forced all the sectors of the bourgeoisie to unite. Perón's return was agreed to as part of this joint plan of the exploiters to derail the workers' struggles and channel them into the parliamentary process and the bourgeois elections. To better serve the national bourgeoisie, Perón poses as an opponent of the government while reaching all kinds of agreements with the military behind closed doors.

The class struggle has the advantage, among others, of exposing where each person stands. The SOMISA strike unified the entire bourgeoisie, both Peronist and anti-Peronist.

La Nación, a rabidly anti-Peronist newspaper, points out in its lead editorial of the week that this strike was very dangerous because it was led by class-struggle tendencies. Perón, who never in his 17 years of exile condemned a strike or a terrorist act, broke his silence and sent a recorded message denouncing those who led the factory occupations as "a group of agents provocateurs" (Mayoria, January 27 — daily organ of the Peronists).

The strike and our party's election campaign

Our party is proud of its analysis and of its intervention in the elections. The [PST] congress [held last December] and the Executive Committee pointed out that the bourgeoisie and imperialism had to be prevented from using the elections to derail the imminent workers' struggles.

We predicted that there would be a new wave of mobilizations and that we had to use the elections to become part of these struggles, not to turn our back on them. We also pointed out that our call for the formation of a workers front for the elections would serve to bring together the vanguard of the trade unions. It would raise this vanguard to the political level so that it could return to the union level armed with a correct political line.

We underscored, at the same time, that the struggle for better salaries, against hunger and misery, and against the trade-union bureaucracy would be the central axes for the mo-

Three months ago, our party did

not have a single activist or sympathizer in San Nicolás. For more than 20 years we had wanted to become part of the labor movement in that city, but it had been impossible. The military always screened new workers who went into the factory, taking advantage of the fact that it is an agricultural area, without a working-class tradition. One could only get in with recommendations from priests or military people.

Our analysis, our line toward the elections, and our program have given us the opportunity to open a large headquarters; build a committee of the Frente Obrero with more than 60 activists and trade-union leaders;

build a Juventud Socialista [Socialist Youth group], whose last meeting was attended by 120 young people; put forward an electoral slate with the most recognized militant workers; appear in the pages of the bourgeois press and in local radio and television; and actually lead the occupation of the factory.

One of the party's main leaders, Jorge Mera, leader of the Bank Employees Union and candidate for governor [of Buenos Aires], participated in the occupation as a member of our party. He was the only candidate who intervened and was allowed by the workers to enter the factory.

We think it is important that the facts of the strike and occupation of the factory by the steelworkers of San Nicolás be made known. We insist on this because other key developments in the class struggle in our country, such as the general strike to free our political prisoners in Mar del Plata [see The Militant, July 7 and 14, 1972], were only reported in a few revolutionary newspapers and organizations around the world. One may or may not agree with our politics, but the strike and occupation of SOMISA cannot be ignored, the way the only general strike to free political prisoners in the country was ignored.

Socialists Seek to Win Over Peronist Workers

By Fred Halstead

(Reprinted from the March 16, 1973 issue of The Militant)

Buenos Aires

On the north side of this city there is a public square called the Plaza Italia. It is the center of an area with a zoo, exhibition halls, and moderately priced sidewalk cafés where the waiters never tell a customer nursing a beer or a coffee to move on. It is a place where on a summer evening a lot of ordinary people pass by.

Last Saturday night (February 24) I watched a modest bit of history being made in this square. Under a statue of Garibaldi, the Italian revolutionary, the Partido Socialista de los Trabajadores held the first outdoor election rally to take place in the city of Buenos Aires since 1963.

According to the daily paper Clarin, more than 2,000 attended.

One reason this was the first in 10 years is that there hasn't been a general election in Argentina since 1963, the last elected government having been overthrown in 1966 by a military coup.

The second reason is that although the general ban against outdoor meetings was lifted last month in connection with the elections scheduled for March 11, the PST was the first party to actually carry out an outdoor rally in the capital city. (Another of the nine national parties here, the Partido Socialista Democratico (social democrats) scheduled such a meeting recently but canceled it when no crowd gathered.)

Some of the other parties have had rallies in the capital, but only indoors. The Peronists, whose rally was the biggest so far, rented a football stadium. They filled the field but not the seats.

Bigger than expected

The size of the PST rally was beyond the expectations of the organizers. It was not a city-wide event for which all the PST branches in the city mobilized, but a sort of trial run organized by the Chacarita and Callao branches of the party, two of the seven in the capital proper.

Much of the crowd were people who were in the area, heard the loudspeaker, and came to listen out of curiosity.

It was not difficult to tell the committed party supporters from the new-comers because the party people made up a more or less organized cheering section while the others stood quietly, not joining in the chants, and only occasionally responding with cheers

or applause when a particular point struck home. It seemed to me that often this point was a criticism of the Peronist trade-union bureaucracy or even of Perón himself.

This is important because most of the workers in Argentina consider themselves Peronists, and I was told this is also the case with many of these newcomers to the PST rallies. Clearly there are still widespread illusions in Perón, but there is also disillusionment, and the workers are willing to listen to a well-reasoned argument backed up with facts.

It is important to note that these criticisms of Perón by the PST speakers are never abstract, never shrill. They always begin with specific incidents that have occurred recentlylike the denunciation by Perón of the organizers of the SOMISA steel plant occupation or the failure of the Peronist leaders to support workers in specific struggles now taking place with employers. They are aimed deliberately at cracking away the rankand-file Peronist worker from Perón, the Peronist party, and the privileged, class-collaborationist trade-union bureaucracy.

Peron calls for class peace

The criticisms center around the theme that the rank-and-file Peronist workers and trade-union militants have been suffering persecution, losing struggles, and waiting for 17 years for Perón to solve their problems. But when he returned to the country last December for the first time since 1955, it was not to help mobilize the masses for struggle but to meet with the other bourgeois leaders and plead for class peace.

"Class peace!" the PST speakers would say. "When the standard of living of Argentine workers has been cut in half in those 17 years and when inflation is now running double the wage increases. Class peace! When for the first time in our history hunger is a fact of life for the workers, here in Argentina where we used to boast that at least there was no hunger!"

The PST campaigners constantly repeat that the elections will not solve the problems of the workers or the crisis facing the country, that only the mobilization of the workers fighting in their own interests as a class can solve their problems, and only a socialist revolution can resolve the national crisis.

The PST election campaign, it is constantly repeated, is not for the purpose of gathering votes for March 11, but for the purpose of gathering together militants who have been struggling against the bosses and the labor bureaucrats in the mass struggles that have been generally on the rise since 1969.

The election campaign is being used to create a pole of attraction for the vanguard elements of the working class in these struggles and to get them organized politically on a class basis.

That is the real meaning of the PST's offer to these militants to use the PST's ballot status to run for office and the formation of the Workers Front for this purpose. The Workers Front is not simply an electoral form, though these elections are a golden opportunity to build this "workers pole" and to deepen the influence of the PST.

Class consciousness

The opportunities are much greater here than they are for the revolutionary socialist election campaigns in the United States. The main reason for this, of course, is the much higher level of class consciousness of the Argentine workers and the highly charged political atmosphere in the prerevolutionary situation facing the country.

But in a purely technical sense also, the campaign here offers opportunities for reaching broad masses that are simply not available to socialists in the United States.

While Argentina is a military dictatorship, and has been since 1966, there is not as much thought control at the moment as there is in the United States. There are some features of Argentine political life, during these elections at least, that are far more democratic than in the United States.

For one thing, the daily press regularly reports the activities of all nine national parties, including the PST. Since the PST is more active than some of these, and is making news more often, its press releases and statements are actually regularly printed in the daily papers. The same is true of the slick magazines. I have seen dozens of major articles in these publications on the PST campaign or PST candidates.

This contrasts sharply to the United States, where the thought-control is so pervasive that such magazines generally refuse to even mention any parties except the Democrats or Republicans.

The campaign is also regularly covered on radio and TV, particularly in smaller cities where the visit of a national candidate of the PST, or even of a provincial candidate, is often covered as the important news it is.

In addition, the PST candidates often appear together with the candidates of the other parties. Contrast this with the U.S., where the Democrats and Republicans usually refuse to appear with socialist candidates or to debate them.

Also, the union movement is much more a central part of life and of news coverage in Argentina than it is in the U.S. When PST and Workers Front candidates are involved in these struggles this is often objectively reported in the daily press here. This never happens in the U.S.

To be sure, the big bourgeois parties, including the Peronists, get far more coverage than the PST and buy great amounts of advertising, but relatively the situation is much worse in the U.S.

In addition, the tradition in past Argentine elections is that certain campaign expenses are paid by the government. This is also true of this campaign.

For example, each national party receives about 15 passes for unlimited travel on airlines and trains within the country for the duration of the campaign. This means the main candidates and speakers do not have to schedule tours from one city to the next closest one, and so on, to save fares, but can hop from one end of the country to the other at will, making all important rallies, visiting strike scenes and important union meetings, offering solidarity and making contacts among workers involved in struggle.

The PST takes advantage of this to move around not only the presidential and vice-presidential candidates, but also important rank-and-file worker leaders like José Páez, the auto workers leader from Córdoba who is a candidate for provincial governor, and Luis Gómez, leader of the SOMISA steel plant occupation who is the Workers Front candidate for mayor of San Nicolás. Their campaign appearances are nationwide, not just local.

Dictatorial regime

On the other hand, the dictatorship is very much in evidence. Not only the government, but the army itself, has representatives sitting in on all major union negotiations. Constitutional guarantees are suspended, on the excuse that there are some urban guerrilla groups operating in the country.

Persons may be, and are, arrested and held indefinitely without trial. Not only those accused of guerrilla activity, but sometimes simply active unionists are arrested in this manner. José Páez and even the head of the CGT, the union federation, in Córdoba, Agustín Tosco, who is not a member of the Peronist party, have been jailed in this manner until mass pressure forced their release.

The Communist Party is outlawed, and arrests of union militants, including Trotskyists, have been made under this law, though no one has ever been convicted under it. The treatment of political prisoners accused of guer-

rilla activity, or simply of associating with those so accused, is extremely harsh to say the least.

The PST is sharply critical of the use of tactics of individual terror or of the substitution of the armed actions by small groups for the mobilization of the masses. At the same time it is the only party in the elec-

tions to campaign consistently for a general amnesty for all political prisoners, including the guerrillas, and to offer its platform at rallies to representatives of the families of political prisoners.

The PST also campaigns against the proscription of the Communist

Party, although the party that the CP supports in the elections, the liberal capitalist Alianza Popular Revolucionaria, does not.

In general, the military government here is not popular and at the three PST rallies I have attended the greatest applause comes when the speakers expose the military.

Rally Projects Road to Workers Power

By Fred Halstead

(Reprinted from the March 30, 1973 issue of The Militant)

Buenos Aires

The windup election rally of the Partido Socialista de los Trabajadores was held in Plaza Flores here Saturday, March 3. The Buenos Aires daily Cronista Commercial reported that 12,000 attended. My own estimate was more like 7,500 at the height, with perhaps 10,000 having attended at one time or another, since it went on for hours. It was a very impressive turnout for a revolutionary party.

I approached the place by car and on the way noted several buses and even an open truck full of PST supporters going to the rally, waving red flags and throwing out handfuls of leaflets as they rode.

At the site itself, a loudspeaker played a record of "The Internationale" as the crowd gathered in the twilight. The plaza has a long open space in the center overhung by trees. These provided perches for some of the Juventud Socialista Avanzada (Socialist Youth Vanguard), the youth group associated with the PST.

The site was decorated with red flags and banners hung from trees and a statue or held on tall poles. Many of these advertised the presence of groups from various neighborhoods and workplaces in the metropolitan area.

Others bore slogans: "Support the workers, not the bosses"; "Freedom For All Political Prisoners — For a General Amnesty!"; "For a Social-

ist Argentina"; "Don't Vote Boss, Military, or Sellout Bureaucrat, Vote Working Class"; "Support the Citroen Strikers"; and so on.

In addition to banners of the PST and the Workers Front there were signs from several smaller socialist groups that are supporting the PST campaign and using the ballot status of the PST to run some of their own candidates for local offices. These include the Party of Labor and the Popular Socialist Party of Buenos Aires.

The first speaker was Nilda Carbon, 22. She derided the ideas of a spokeswoman for Nueva Fuerza, a rightist party, who had said that in Argentina it is not necessary for women to fight as women, only to stand behind their men.

"Not necessary to fight, when we are half the population? Not necessary to fight when they pay us less than men for the same work? Not necessary to fight when they are attacking the family allowances? [Workers here are supposed to receive a stipend each month for each child in the family, and the government is cutting this back in some industries that employ many women.] Not necessary to fight when we are doubly exploited—as workers and as women?"

She continued: "But we are not pets to walk at the heel of their masters. We are equals, and we fight for equality. We fight alongside our male comrades to build workers power and make a revolution to do away with a society of exploitation of human by human and build a society of the free and equal."

Since this was the windup rally in the biggest city, several speakers from other places in the country had come. One of these was "Chino" Moya, a PST candidate from Tucumán who has been working with the strikers in the Panam plastics factory there. Before he spoke I caught his arm and asked him how things were going in the hard-fought strike [see the March 9 World Outlook for an account of this strike].

"They're still holding out," he said.
"The strike is solid now, but it's a difficult situation."

When he spoke the crowd took up a chant: "Panam, Panam, there is exposed the GAN." (Gran Acuerdo Nacional, Great National Accord. This is the understanding between the military dictatorship and the capitalist parties, including the top Peronist leaders, to return to elected constitutional government in an attempt to maintain "class peace.")

Luis Gómez, the leader of the occupation of the SOMISA steel plant, spoke next. He read the statement by Perón saying that the SOMISA occupation had been organized by provocateurs and infiltrators.

"That's right," he said, "eight thousand workers infiltrated the plant because the bosses and the union bureaucrats provoked us."

As the rally proceeded I noticed a great variety of literature being sold, mostly by PST members, but also by other groups. PST supporters circulated around the edge of the crowd taking names of those interested in further activity.

Jorge Mera, PST candidate for governor of Buenos Aires Province, developed a theme in his speech that I have heard over and over again from PST speakers in this campaign the story of the mass struggles that have shaken Argentina since the first city-wide semi-insurrection in Córdoba in 1969, known as the "Cordobazo." It is these struggles that have shaken military regime, caused the removal of one reactionary dictator, General Ongania, and forced the regime to attempt to stop the upsurge of the masses through a return to elections.

"But the elections will not solve the problems of the masses," said Mera. "It is necessary to continue the mass struggles, and they will continue because the crisis cannot be resolved by the ruling class, not even through the Peronists if they come to power in these elections.

"Our task is to gather the vanguard of these struggles together and to construct a revolutionary party that can assure that the struggles can advance to turn the Cordobazo into an Argentinazo."

As usual, this evoked cheers and chants of "Workers to Power!"

Marita Gonzáles, a teacher from Córdoba and candidate for vice-governor of Córdoba Province, spoke next, in clear, loud tones. "Argentine women," she said, "are among the most exploited persons in the country. It is not just exploitation. It is slavery, compañeros [in Spanish, it is clear this is addressed to men The women who work in offices are paid 30 percent less than men, and the bosses and bureaucrats think the women are there to adorn their offices."

She listed some of the jobs generally held by women, and the wage always much lower. She described the role of the women teachers in the "glorious Mendozazo" (another semi-insurrection, in Mendoza in April 1972).

The Workers Front candidate for senator from Buenos Aires, Enrique Broquen, who is 75, spoke on Vietnam: "There is no national socialism this is a slogan often used by the Peronists] because imperialism is international, capitalism is international, production of the means of life itself is international, and it is impossible to construct socialism in one country.

"The class struggle is international and it is necessary to coordinate with revolutionists in other countries. A center of the international class struggle has been the struggle in Vietnam. The struggle of the Vietnamese people has weakened imperialism and allowed the upsurge of revolutionary struggles in other lands.

"Unfortunately, international solidarity in Vietnam hasn't been sufficiently effective because the Soviet and Chinese bureaucracies have given very conditional support. We suspect that Nixon's trips to Peking and Moscow served to negotiate secret agreements over Vietnam. The lack of enough aid to the Vietnamese has forced Hanoi and the PRG to sign an accord that is no more than a truce. The pact stops the bombing and that is good. But its terms also stop the reunification of the country on the basis of a socialist revolution and that's bad.

"It permits the Saigon clique to survive with continued U.S. military support and makes aid to the NLF from North Vietnam more difficult. What is more, the pattern is set for imperialism to make international settlements against the revolutionary peoples in countries who struggle for other socialism.

"Compañeros, as we build this great movement of the Argentine revolution, let us never forget our international needs and obligations. They are part of us, we of them. Without this we cannot win. With it, we can build a world society worthy of humanity."

The chairman introduced José Páez, a leader of the Cordobazo and of the auto workers sitdown strikes that followed it, and the PST candidate for governor of Córdoba Province. He got a tremendous cheer as he took the platform and said: "We come to bring the Cordobazo to Buenos Aires."

He described the union struggle that led to the mass meeting called by the CGT (the union federation) out of which the Cordobazo precipitated, the defeat of the police, and the tem-

"The local forces of repression were overcome by the workers. But at that moment, then, the workers had to take power or lose it. We had no unified organization, and were confined to one city. To take power we need a national Cordobazo and we need a party, a revolutionary party. That why we are here, to build that party."

The crowd took up the chant: "And come, and come, and come, compañeros, for here we are forming the great party of the workers."

"We are not here to get votes," Páez continued. "The bourgeoisie is going to get the votes. They control the process, and the illusions are still deep. But we are going to build the party. The military has put conditions on this election. [The regime demands that each party pledge to respect five points if it is elected. Among these is that there shall be no general amnesty for political prisoners.] But we say, five points, ten points, no points, we are for general amnesty!" The crowd gave him an ovation.

By this time it was well into the night and one would expect the crowd to thin out. But as Nora Ciapponi, the vice-presidential candidate, who was next, spoke, the crowd increased.

In this talk Nora cited some facts of imperialist intervention in Argentina. For example, "Recently the papers reported that the International Monetary Fund had refused to lend money to the Argentine military government if it didn't raise the railroad fares by 40 percent. This is one small demonstration of the real cause of the inflation in our country, an inflation that is already robbing the workers of the last raise and will wipe it out in another month.

"And it is the same imperialists who steal the copper in Chile and the oil in Venezuela, who used to steal the sugar in Cuba. And it is not the 'patriotic' national capitalists who will expel imperialism. This was demonstrated in our own country by the Peronist government, by that of Torres in Bolivia. . . . It is only the workers with revolutionary parties that can definitively expel imperialism.

"In our continent we must make close ties with socialist Cuba, creating a socialist federation with Cuba and porary control by the workers of the all the Latin American countries. We

must follow the example of Che as a revolutionary internationalist. As the oppressed, we have no country. We have the same enemy in common, imperialism and the national governments that are its junior partner."

Finally came Coral. His voice was hoarse from all the speaking he had been doing in the previous few days, but he was still a polished orator, one of the best I've ever heard. He speaks clearly, simply, in language and images the newest person in the audience can understand, developing concepts that leave the most experienced with a feeling they have learned something.

Coral said: "We are not part of any agreement with the other parties in this election because we have nothing in common with them. No longer is there a place for 'progressive' capitalists, nor for alliances of the 'center left,' nor for priests of the 'third world' [in Argentina this phrase signifies neither capitalist nor communist]. The national capitalists do not exist as an independent class in our semicolonial countries.

"We are not in the Europe of the

eighteenth century, but in revolutionary Latin America in the last of the twentieth century. From the railroads and packinghouses to the thermonuclear generators and modern steel plants, all have been introduced here by imperialists of whom the native capitalists are junior partners and unconditional instruments. There is therefore only one social sector with the capacity to fight consistently for national liberation: the working class.

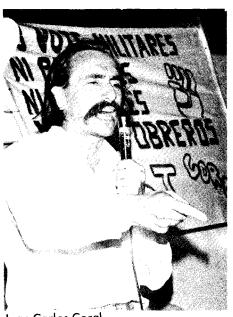
"We denounce the Communist Party and other sectors called 'leftists' who bog down the revolution creating false illusions about intermediate stages of revolution under the hegemony of the capitalists, intermediate national stages to complete the bourgeois democratic tasks and free us from imperialism. Only the working class with socialist banners is capable of leading the struggle to free us from imperialist exploitation and from all forms of capitalist exploitation."

This concept enters into the everyday swim of political discussion here, so conscious are the ordinary people of the exploitation of their country by foreigners and their agents.

All the parties must have an answer, of some kind, to this question. After a careful development of the ideas, Coral takes on the central political problem facing revolutionaries in Argentina - the illusions of the masses in Peronism as a solution.

Coral continued: "The mass of Peronist workers-for 17 years made hungry, persecuted, jailed, tortured waiting for the return of Perón to produce another 17th of October [October 17, 1945, when a mass mobilization saved Perón from a reactionary plot backed by the U.S. | that would permit them to defeat the reactionaries and the bosses. But instead of a revolutionary general to head the revolution, there returned an old vegetarian lion to negotiate with the enemies of the working class, creating the Great National Accord programmed by the military.

"Perón returned negotiating over his passport with embassies and chancelleries. We ask: Did Fidel Castro negotiate his passport with Batista when he decided to return to Cuba, to plant himself in the Sierra Maestra, and to construct the first socialist republic of the Western Hemisphere?"



Juan Carlos Coral

PST vice-presidential candidate Nora Ciapponi speaking in Cordoba.





Jose Paez

Aftermath of the First Round

Argentine Revolutionist Discusses Peronist Victory

By Fred Halstead

(Reprinted from the April 6, 1973 issue of The Militant)

Buenos Aires

MARCH 13 - The Frente Justicialista de Liberación (FREJULI-the Peronist electoral front) won a smashing victory in the elections held two days ago. With the votes of only 808 precincts out of 54,654 still to be reported, the election board gave the results as follows:

Frente Justicialista de Liberación, 5,995,943 (49%).

Unión Cívica Radical, 2,596,082

Alianza Popular Federalista, 1,797,-158 (14.7%).

Alianza Popular Revolucionaria, 870,333 (7.11%).

Alianza Republicana Federal, 332,-641 (2.72%).

Nueva Fuerza, 256,106 (2.09%). Socialista Democrático, 112,273 (0.91%).

Socialista de los Trabajadores 76,-555 (0.62%).

Frente de Izquierda Popular, 61,-731 (0.50%).

Besides this, 125,162 blank ballots were cast; 43,601 were voided as improperly made out; and 35,385 were challenged. The total vote was 12,-288,819.

These figures were less than previously announced, the board of elections announcing that a large error had been discovered in the earlier computations.

The Unión Cívica Radical decided not to challenge the Frente Justicialista de Liberación in a second round. Thus the presidential candidates of the Peronist front, Héctor José Cámpora and Vicente Solano Lima were declared elected. In a speech broadcast nationally late in the evening of March

12, the military dictator General Alejandro Agustín Lanusse said that his regime would abide by the decision of the voters. If the military holds to this promise, Cámpora will take office May 25.

As to the meaning of the election results, I can offer the following opinions as voiced in an interview granted to me by Arturo Gómez, organizational secretary of the Trotskyist Partido Socialista de los Trabajadores (PST - Socialist Workers party).

Question. What is the significance of the Peronist vote?

Answer. It signifies a repudiation of the government by the working class and a significant part of the middle class. The working class hasn't considered any government since 1955 when Perón was toppled from power to have been in its interests. But the Peronists received a much higher percentage of votes in the current election than in the 1963 national and 1965 regional elections. This vote indicates, or registers, a radicalization of the middle class, a disaffection by these strata from the government. A big section of the middle class voted for the Peronist front.

Q. What about the Alende-Sueldo vote?

A. The Alende-Sueldo vote dropped considerably from that which Alende received in 1965 in running for governor of the province of Buenos Aires. It was also lower than the vote actually take power?

received by Sueldo's Christian Democrats. Also the Communist party did better the last time it ran in 1961. It appears that these so-called centerleft forces lost a considerable part of their traditional supporters to parties further to the right. On the other hand, they picked up some votes from the more radicalized sectors of the middle class.

Q. What is the significance of the PST vote?

A. We have had no previous electoral experience that we could use as a basis for comparison. But considering where we were a year ago, there is no doubt that we gained among sectors of the workers vanguard and among the youth, that is, among those who have broken with all the bourgeois options, especially Peronism.

In absolute numbers we made some modest gains that cut into the Peronist movement. These were class votes, working-class votes. It is clear also that a significant number of Peronist workers split their ticket, voting FRE-JULI for the presidential slate, and for the PST for lesser offices, such as deputy. The great majority of the workers, of course, did not cast a class vote, but voted for FREJULI. But in my opinion this was less a vote for Peronism than a vote against the present government. The PST was the only party on the left that increased its ranks in this period.

Q. What will happen if the Peronists

A. First, regarding the "if." It seems reasonably clear from what Lanusse said last night that the armed forces will accept the experiment of a Peronist government. I think we are entering a period similar to that in Chile with a populist, nationalist, bourgeois government.

But there are certain important differences from the situation in Chile that make things more complex here. First, the great weight of the Argentine working class and its very high level of union organization. Second, the absence in Argentina of a mass working-class party. Unlike Chile, there is no mass Communist or Socialist party here. The Argentine workers are still caught up in a bourgeois party, Peronism.

But there is no doubt that the workers now expect things to change in their favor.

Q. Do you think that this will lead to an immediate period of upsurge in the workers' struggles, or the opposite—an immediate period of lull as the workers wait, expecting the new government to solve the problems they face?

A. In the short term this is guesswork. It is very difficult to say what the pace of developments will be in the immediate future. But in the long run, the upsurge will continue, since the elections do not eliminate the crisis that forced the military to opt for an electoral maneuver. Remember, they didn't do it because the achievement of stability permitted them to relax. They did it precisely because the situation became increasingly unstable under the old regime.

Probably in the coming year, even though the Peronists got more votes than ever, the crisis of Peronism will deepen because its influence among the workers will become more and more undermined. In the past seventeen years, while it was proscribed, the incapacity of Peronism to satisfy the elementary needs of the masses could not be demonstrated. The masses will continue to struggle as before, but now they will confront a Peronist government.

For example, the week before the election, the workers at the Citroen auto plant here in Buenos Aires went on strike because twelve union activists were fired. A sector of the activists

in the plant are Peronists; and some of those who were fired are Peronists. Now, they have talked with one of our comrades about sending a delegation to see Cámpora [the president-elect]. This proposal will be taken up at the next assembly of the strikers. It is an example of how important sectors of the workers who voted for FREJULI are already making demands on the incoming government.

Yesterday, that is, the day after the elections, the Citroen workers held a meeting in which the union bureaucrats proposed suspending the strike while waiting for the Ministry of Labor to rule in favor of the workers. At the same time, one of the top bureaucrats of the national union attacked our comrade, saying that the voters had repudiated the PST and its troublemakers in the plants by voting overwhelmingly for the Peronists, as the union bureaucrats had told them to do.

Our comrade answered by pointing out that the situation that had caused the strike had not changed and that the union shouldn't have any confidence in the government with respect to solving the problems of the workers.

One of the fired workers, a Peronist, took the floor to say that he believed the workers had won a victory in the election, but that now things could not be left as they were; they must be changed completely. He accused the bureaucrat of being as bad as the Ministry of Labor. Instead of telling the workers to hold tough in their strike as the only way to win, the bureaucrat had told them to have confidence in the government. The assembly took a vote. It was against the bureaucrats. And they decided overwhelmingly to stay out on strike.

Our party will accompany the masses as they go through this experience, and we are in a much better position to do this because of the gains we made during the election campaign.

Q. What did the PST actually gain in its campaign?

A. First, we came out of it with a national party that is now well known, that has cadres and branches throughout the country in the major centers as well as many minor ones.

Second, we tightened our ties with the workers through our campaign activities. We now have more members in all the major centers of antibureaucratic struggles in the unions to continue the work already begun, such as the Chocón construction workers' struggle in Neuquén, the SOMISA occupation, the SITRAC-SITRAM in Córdoba, among the bank workers, at Chrysler, etc. Leaders of all these struggles, and many more, were candidates of the Workers Front and Socialist Pole.

Third, we were able to increase the circulation of our paper, Avanzada Socialista, from 8,000 at the start of the campaign to 25,000 on the eve of the elections.

Fourth, we began the campaign last year with ten local headquarters. Now we have seventy.

Fifth, of those who applied for membership in the PST during the campaign, we have accepted 1,500 as probationary members.

Q. What will happen now with the Workers Front?

A. The perspective of the Workers Front is to continue to participate in the struggles of the workers and to help give an impulse to the mobilizations of the working class. The Workers Front began as an electoral opportunity for workers who wanted to use the PST ballot status to run for office. But it was more than that, since these workers are leaders of the antiboss and antibureaucratic struggles. Some workers who voted Peronist are now joining the Workers Front as an instrument in the class struggle. We will encourage this.

Far-Left Vote in Argentine Election

(Reprinted from the April 2, 1973 issue of <u>Intercontinental Press</u>)

"There were three choices in the electoral spectrum Sunday [March 11] that expressed a clearly left-wing vote: the Partido Socialista de los Trabajadores [PST—Socialist Workers party] (Coral-Ciapponi); the Frente de Izquierda Popular [FIP—Popular Left Front] (Ramos-Silvetti); and the blank ballot. These won the vote of the antiparliamentary left," wrote Carlos Sommi in the March 13 issue of the Buenos Aires daily La Opinión.

His analysis is limited, as might be expected from a bourgeois journalist, to a discussion of the number of votes the left received and ignores other achievements of a revolutionary election campaign that might not be clearly reflected in a vote total. While this limitation makes his analysis superficial, it is nonetheless significant that a major bourgeois daily devoted space to a separate analysis of the far-left vote.

"Obviously," Sommi wrote, "the left also gave a lot of votes to the Alianza Popular Revolucionaria [APR - Revolutionary People's Alliance, led by Oscar Alendel (which had the official support of the Communist party) and the Frente Justicialista de Liberación [FREJULI — Justicialist Liberation Front, the Peronist coalition]; but in both these cases, the vote was not entirely an expression of left-wing sentiment, at least not from the ideological point of view. Leftists who voted for the APR were essentially voting for an antimonopoly program; those who voted for the FREJULI supported the most important alternative for change - more for what Peronism represents than for its ideological positions."

The three left options, Sommi noted,

received some 2.5% of the vote, or about 300,000 votes.*

"Coral, who got around 100,000 votes, based his preelection campaign on a point of principle: He presented himself as the only antiboss and antibourgeois alternative and promised a social revolution if he should win control of the government. He backed up this thesis by including workers as candidates for numerous elective posts and a woman on his presidential ticket.

"It is obvious that this strategy did not catch on in the working class—not even in a minority layer of it—and the Partido Socialista de los Trabajadores received the traditional support of intellectual groups or of long-time socialists who remain loyal to the old party, and in this case were opting for one of its many offshoots.

"The electoral experience of the Partido Socialista de los Trabajadores clearly indicates that the Argentine working class continues to remain completely unresponsive to the aweinspiring plans that the intellectual Marxist sectors might offer them—all the more so in an electoral conjuncture that by its very nature represents the opposite of their apocalyptic proposals. This explains why the PST did not even get the votes of the nuclei of workers who at this stage of

*Sommi's vote totals for the PST and the FIP are somewhat higher and his total of blank ballots somewhat lower than subsequently announced by the board of elections, which indicated that a large error had been discovered in the earlier computations. The revised total for the three options Sommi is considering would be just over 260,000. For a complete breakdown, see *Intercontinental Press*, March 26, p. 323.

the process are not very enthusiastic about Peronism.

"The Frente de Izquierda Popular, for its part, received barely more than 70,000 votes for its presidential ticket and was one of the great losers of the election. Its scant showing is much more telling than that of the PST, since it demonstrated that it had a broader party apparatus than the group led by Coral. But unlike the latter, the FIP did not try to offer any kind of clear alternative that could catch on in the electorate, especially among the working class.

"It ran as a pro-Perón but anti-Cámpora force—a completely unrealistic approach since the public has not seen even the slightest hint of a split between the former president and his candidate. . . .

"The total number of blank ballots was also a surprise: around 120,000, which is much lower than usual. Since this kind of category includes votes coming from various sources, we can be sure that the antiparliamentary left's call for a blank vote was not observed even by sectors belonging to it; by themselves, they make up a larger number than this figure. . . ."

The left, Sommi said, "speculated on possible popular disillusionment" with FREJULI and APR tickets that appeared to be substitutes for one another. "Nothing like this happened, and it was precisely these two sectors—especially the Justicialist movement—that took in the votes of sectors of the population around the antiparliamentary left."

Rucci Stung by Coral's Attack on Peronists

(Reprinted from the March 26, 1973 issue of Intercontinental Press)

[The following telegram was received March 8 by Juan Carlos Coral, the presidential candidate of the Trotskyist Partido Socialista de los Trabajadores (Socialist Workers party). It was sent by José Rucci, the leading Peronist trade-union bureaucrat in Argentina, following a television speech by Coral. Among other things, Coral attacked the political positions of the Peronist movement. The fact that a figure of Rucci's prominence considered it necessary to make a rather lengthy reply, which was given considerable publicity in the press, indicates the impact of the PST electoral campaign among the rank and file of the Argentine labor movement.

* * *

Out of consideration for the millions of workers I represent and in order not to give any appearance of a guilty silence, I have decided to answer you. At the conference of the Confederación General Económica [General Economic Confederation] you once again made it your business to talk about the national leadership of the union movement, calling its heads bureaucrats. Likewise, you had insulting

things to say about the Peronist movement that were in the same vein as some recent remarks by Ernesto Sanmartino [a reactionary politician who supported the 1955 military coup against Perón and who opposes the current elections from an ultrarightist position].

This kind of coincidence started back in 1955 when power was usurped from the people. Enemies of the people can come in various hues but they can never change their stripes. I would remind you of your record and that anyone who for political gain sets himself up falsely as representing the feelings of the workers is either a cheap liar or a servant of the very interests he claims to be fighting, whose watchword is "divide and conquer."

Never forget that the old game of winning elections by campaign dice games, barbecues, and concerts is a thing of the past and that the workers have long memories. They know who their enemies and the allies of their enemies are, and that even though a party of such elements may illegitimately style itself a workers' party, it is far from being an organization of the workers and their allies. In

the current process of institutional normalization [moving from a military dictatorship to an elected government], it is no use to pretend to be something; you must actually be something. And your contribution in playing politics puts you among those who are nothing.

Although you - and like you, I repeat, Ernesto Sanmartino - persist in disregarding it, the workers' movement, organized in unions from the ranks up, has been struggling for some time for the liberation of the people. This struggle is conceived within the framework of a perfectly clear political strategy that has the full support of everybody in the CGT [Confederación General del Trabajo -General Confederation of Labor]. This strategy is summed up in the platform of the Frente Justicialista de Liberación [FREJULI - Liberation Front for Social Justice, the Peronist electoral front], whose candidate for the highest office is Dr. Héctor J. Cám-

Signed: José Ignacio Rucci. My credentials are that I am a worker chosen by the Argentine workers' movement to be the general secretary of the CGT. I don't know what yours are.

Argentine PST's Declaration After the March 11 Elections

(Reprinted from the April 16, 1973 issue of Intercontinental Press)

[We have translated the following article from the March 28 issue of Avanzada Socialista, the weekly organ of the Argentine PST (Partido Socialista de los Trabajadores — Socialist Workers party).]

* * *

Dr. Cámpora has just given a speech in which he drew a sharp dividing line—up till May 25 the regime will govern; after that the people.

May 25 will undoubtedly bring a change in the orientation of the government and in its personnel. What we doubt is that it will mark such a hard and fast dividing line as Dr. Cámpora says.

Is the oligarchy going to be wiped off the map, or the military men who have been installed in power since 1966? Will they withdraw totally?

The same day Dr. Cámpora gave his speech, the daily La Opinión published a report about a group of Peronist architects. Asked what they intended to do in the way of building housing under the new government, they took a much more cautious line than did Dr. Cámpora. This they answered, would depend on the "conditions" they were subjected to.

The cautious response of these Peronist architects was based on one clear fact. Every compañero knows that the reactionaries are not ready to abandon the field. They seem just now to have decided to turn over the government but not to disappear from the scene.

What are the conditions?

From the very moment that General Lanusse took over the government and launched his plan of "institutionalization" [return to constitutional forms of rule], a web of conditions began to be built up that will surround the new regime. Laws were passed regulating political parties. It was decreed how many members and what statutes they must have; what requirements they must meet to continue; and what candidates they should run (as a result of this Perón was disqualified for all practical purposes). The constitu-

tion was changed, altering the life of the government and the system of election. All the antipopular repressive legislation was broadened, widening the powers of the armed forces in all areas. And finally five conditions were set for handing over the government, establishing who the judges were to be, what role the military was to play in the next cabinet, and what political prisoners could or could not be released.

And this web of conditions was prepared well in advance. In some cases, the precaution was taken of putting them into the constitution. In others, they were simply announced to the country. And these restrictions were complemented with another that didn't have to be put in writing—the military power will remain in the hands of the same leadership that has been ruling since Illia was ousted.

The military must not rule after May 25!

We have pointed out many times that we do not consider that Cámpora's coming to power means a real workers government, and so this is not our government. But we insist just as strongly that the will of the masses must be respected, and in this case power must be turned over to Cámpora without any conditions. Dr. Cámpora, What constitution are you going to swear allegiance to?

The question of whether or not the new government is going to submit to these conditions or rebel against them will be posed from the very moment Cámpora takes his oath of office. The act is symbolic. Cámpora will have to swear allegiance to a constitution into which many of the conditions noted have just been incorporated.

What will Cámpora do in this situation?

This same question was put on a television program to the Peronista Youth leader Furman. And the compañero made a first step toward giving an effective answer when he said that we would have to look for some way by which the people could establish a new constitution, a consti-

tution where no article or clause would be imposed by some small special group.

For a free and sovereign constituent assembly!

In order to achieve this, in order to sweep away the reactionary web entangling the new government and totally reorganize the country, a constituent assembly must be called, whose members are chosen in completely free elections in which the parties and candidates run under conditions that are equal for everybody.

This constituent assembly will determine what kind of courts, as well as what kind of social, political, and economic organization the majority of people want. In it, the Peronists, Socialists, Radicals [populist liberals], Communists, and other groups will all put forward their views. This way the only ones imposing conditions on the government will be the workers, who make up a majority of the population, and not the oligarchic minority and imperialism.

The workers must throw out the conditions!

The working class has given its verdict in electing Cámpora. Today we must see that it is respected, by getting the workers to throw out the conditions imposed by the Junta Militar [Military Council]. Cámpora must explicitly reject the military government's "five points" and declare that he will call a free and sovereign constituent assembly.

By mobilizing and fighting, the workers must force respect for their decisions and their rights. Right now, this means making sure that Cámpora comes to power without any conditions. Later on it will mean pushing him to carry out his election promises and the economic and political measures needed to achieve national and social liberation.

Let us prepare ourselves for great battles! Only the mobilization of the workers and popular masses can throw out the conditions demanded by the oligarchy and impose liberation!

Argentine PST Calls for Casting Blank

Ballots in Second-Round Elections

(Reprinted from the April 16, 1973 issue of Intercontinental Press)

[Although the Radicals, who came in second in the March 11 general elections in Argentina, agreed to accept the election as president of Héctor Perón's representative, without a runoff election, secondround votes are slated for other offices in local areas where no candidate received a majority. One of the most important areas where such elections will take place is Córdoba, the site of two workers' uprisings in the last four years. The PST (Partido Socialista de los Trabajadores - Socialist Workers party), which built a united ticket of revolutionary socialists and class-struggle activists in the first round, presented its position on the second-round elections in the March 28 issue of its weekly paper Avanzada Socialista. Our translation of this article follows.

* *

Since there is no working-class option in the second-round elections, the PST has decided to call on the workers to cast blank ballots. In this issue, we give grounds for this developed by the socialist compañeros in Córdoba.

On Saturday, March 17, a provincial plenum of the PST decided in favor of casting blank ballots, since the only choice was between the Radicals [populist liberals] and FREJULI Frente Justicialista de Liberación — Liberation Front, Justicialist Peronist electoral formation]. And the Peronists were putting up Obregón Cano, who comes from a conservative background; and Atilio López, a leader of the UTA union, who despite his militant talk, made a deal to sign the 30 percent contract without putting up a fight.

Last Sunday the Córdoba Workers Front met to adopt its position. There was a great deal of interest in press circles about what it would be. As we went to press, word had still not reached us. But before the meeting we talked with José F. Paéz [an indepen-

dent militant trade-unionist], who told us: "My personal position and the one I will uphold in the meeting is that in the first round we offered a revolutionary class-struggle alternative. But in the second round, the cards are on the table and we no longer have an alternative. Since there is no choice that reflects the interests of the working class, we must cast blank ballots, and continue raising our slogan of no vote for the military, no vote for the bosses, and no vote for the betrayers of our struggles."

In supporting a blank vote, our compañeros in Córdoba prepared an open letter to the left currents. Various tendencies and groupings have sprung up under the stimulus of the Córdoba uprising and in the absence of a revolutionary party that could be a strong unifying force. They have achieved a certain weight in the worker and student vanguard.

On the first round, these groups were divided among five different positions: casting blank ballots, casting a ballot outlining a socialist program, voting "red," abstaining, and a counter vote. There were, in turn, three or four variants of the first two positions. One of the class-struggle leaders who supported casting blank ballots was René Salamanca, the secretary of SMATA [Sindicato de Mecánicos y Afines del Transporte Automotor del Automóvil - Automobile Mechanics and Related Transport Workers in the Automobile Industry] in Córdoba, who is now under attack from the central leadership of his union.

The several variants of casting a blank ballot or dropping slogans in the ballot box were surpassed in all the working-class neighborhoods by the vote for the candidates put up by the PST.

For the second round, these tendencies hint that they will support FRE-JULI. It was in answer to this that the PST in Córdoba addressed the following open letter to these tendencies.

Compañeros of the left, let us unite behind a class-struggle position.

Thousands of worker and student activists are looking to the revolutionary left for a clear and correct position. This heroic vanguard that has come toward the left, fighting in hundreds of battles, needs to unite politically against the bosses, the government, the bureaucracy, and the reformists. It needs a revolutionary party. This is the prerequisite for winning the confidence and respect of the masses. Likewise, it is a precondition for leading to victory the mobilizations that are inevitably coming under the future bourgeois populist government.

Unfortunately, the elections have shown that on the whole the revolutionary left in Córdoba was not up to these demands. In the name of socialism and revolution, it committed opportunist and sectarian errors, proving incapable of putting up a united alternative or distinguishing what should have been a political action against the bourgeoisie from a mire of pedantic debate among small circles.

In the first round, this failure was due to the fact that the different groups fell into sectarianism and did not support the only class-struggle alternative in the elections—the Workers Front.

Now in the second round, these groups are in danger of making the same mistake, only this time falling into opportunism and supporting FREJULI.

Where does this leave a worker activist who follows their changes in course?

To understand the gravity of this error, let's put ourselves in the uncomfortable position of a class-struggle shop steward at IKA, who has followed your advice in the elections. On the first round, you told him to cast a blank ballot based on a reformist program of minimum economic

and political demands, or to drop a paper in the ballot box describing the theoretical way of building communist society. If the compañero worked up the courage to argue for his position in the shop, the way he planned to vote would cut him off from political dialogue with the rest of the workers. But when the second round came, this compañero would have to advise voting for FREJULI. His friends would listen to him sardonically and say: "So, now you've finally come down out of the clouds." But the more political ones could not help asking: "What kind of political principles have you got?"

The pathetic role this comrade played would not have helped to expose the electoralist trap, to orient the workers to confront the bourgeoisie, or to strengthen a party. Nor would it have put him in a better position with respect to the masses or done anything to promote propaganda for socialism.

The methodological and social explanation for these changes in course.

Behind these shifts that have cut off so many revolutionary militants from reality lies the impressionist method common to intellectual and student sects.

In the first round the phenomenon that "made an impression" was the trade-union mobilizations of recent years. For many the revolution was already here, or at least the masses had become revolutionary-minded and lost their electoralist illusions. This confusion led to the activity of all these groups being colored with naive workerism.

In the second round, what managed to "make an impression" was the avalanche of Peronist votes. And if this confusion continues, many of these groups can go over lock, stock, and barrel to supporting the bourgeois and Peronist bureaucratic apparatuses. Along the way, "the antiparliamentarist consciousness of the masses," the "revolution," and "building a workers party," will be buried, until they are dug up again for a new change in course.

Marxists have defined impressionism as the result of a false social out-

look foreign to Marxism. It is the method of intellectuals and students put in political leadership but lacking the tradition and training of working-class revolutionary Marxism. This is the case of so many groups in Córdoba that have grown up in the last two or three years as fan clubs around an agitator or aspiring theoretician who claimed to be pointing the way for "building the party." All of these groups are blocking the process of uniting the vanguard into a solid revolutionary Marxist party that can seek to take the leadership of all the trade-union mobilizations and the entire political process the masses are experiencing.

But the present rise of the masses is opening an extremely rich perspective for the revolutionary left. It is everyone's obligation to put aside their individual interests for the sake of serving the masses.

We call for taking the opportunity offered by the second-round elections to cement united action around a class-struggle, revolutionary position

Argentine PST Statement on Kidnappings

(Reprinted from the April 16, 1973 issue of <u>Intercontinental Press</u>)

[The following article appeared in the April 4 issue of Avanzada Socialista, weekly newspaper of the Argentine PST (Partido Socialista de los Trabajadores — Socialist Workers party). The translation is by Intercontinental Press.

[In addition to the English translation, we are publishing the Spanish text of the article. This appears below.]

On Sunday night [April 1], Rear Admiral Aleman, the ex-chief of naval intelligence, was taken from his home. He was the adviser of Captain Patrón [Boss] Laplacette when the captain was the military supervisor of the CGT [Confederación General del Trabajo — General Confederation of Labor] in 1955-57. According to La Razón of April 2, the ERP [Ejército

Revolucionario del Pueblo — People's Revolutionary Army] is the guerrilla group responsible for the event. In the interior of Aleman's apartment, slogans were painted such as "People's Justice for Trelew" (*La Razón*, April 2.)

On this occasion, our party reiterates the position we expressed at the time of the Sallustro kidnapping and other guerrilla actions. We are firmly convinced that actions like these do not help the workers and people's movement. Completely divorced from the masses and their concrete struggles as these acts are, they may do harm to individual bosses and military officers, but they have little effect on the regime. Those who executed Aramburu thought that they had dealt a decisive blow to the plans for "institutionalization" [the attempt of the military dictatorship to find constitutional formulas for maintaining bourgeois rule], which were beginning

to be cooked up at the time, since he was to be the presidential candidate that would preside over the process. With Sallustro the story was the same. Are the FIAT workers any less exploited today? Has nobody replaced Sallustro in his role as overseer?

Our party was one of the first to denounce the massacre in Trelew. We did not hesitate to do this at a time when a decree of the dictatorship prohibited — and still prohibits — mentioning this and other acts of savage repression. But with the same force we said that the only way we would get an end to the murders and torture and impose a just punishment on the persons responsible was through the struggle of the masses.

At this time the struggle against the monstrous apparatus of repression left by the dictatorship centers around mobilizing to win full and total amnesty, repeal of all repressive laws, and

investigation and punishment of crimes like Trelew. If we can get the workers and people to mobilize for these demands, there is no doubt that they can win them. Guerrilla actions do not contribute anything to this. To the contrary, at this time actions like the Aleman kidnapping or the

bombing of the Ministry of the Navy can be exploited as provocations to reinforce military "conditioning" and to provide excellent pretexts for blocking full amnesty and keeping the repressive laws.

Our party will continue to defend the imprisoned guerrillas. But at the same time, we will also continue to point out the political sterility of their methods. Not only are these ineffective means of struggling for civil liberties, but—what is graver still—they are ineffective means for freeing the Argentine people from capitalist exploitation.

New 'State of Emergency' in Argentina

By Gerry Foley

Intercontinental Press May 14, 1973

"There will never be any conflicts or struggles among the organizations they [the guerrillas] belong to. They are all of the same type regardless of the political bodies they claim to support because they all take their inspiration from the same corrupting ideology and take their orders from the 'Internationals' of materialism. . . .

"I call on God to awaken the conscience of this nation, to send His consolation to the admiral's wife and children, and to grant eternal repose to our comrade fallen in the struggle, as well as the assurance that with our determination renewed we will wipe this tiny band of assassins off the beloved face of Argentina."

Admiral Carlos Guido Natal Coda's speech at the grave of Admiral Hermes J. Quijada was televised throughout Argentina on May 1, the day after the high-ranking naval officer was shot dead in his car by a commando team from the Ejército Revolucionario del Pueblo 22 de Agosto (The August 22 Revolutionary Army of the People). Quijada was the official charged with trying to justify the murder of sixteen guerrillas at the Trelew airport in Patagonia on August 22, 1972.

Coming less than one month after the ERP kidnapping of Rear Admiral Francisco Agustín Aleman on April 2 and the shooting on April 4 of Colonel Héctor Alberto Iribarren, chief of intelligence of the Third Army Corps, by the Montoneros, a Peronist guerrilla group, the assassination of Admiral Quijada was made into an occasion of "national mourning."

The military orators took the opportunity to make threatening

speeches. The most violent was Rear Admiral Horacio Mayorga of the naval air force. Unlike his colleague Coda, he was not content with railing against "materialist ideologies" but made thinly veiled thrusts at the president-elect, who has said that the guerrilla movements were the response of the people to violence from above.

"Our freedom is gravely threatened by guerrillas who have infiltrated into a group of people that tolerated them and offered slick explanations justifying them as a response to some alleged violence from above, and now is showing signs of not being able to control them."

Mayorga deliberately raised the specter of a rightist coup: "Faced with the elimination of Admiral Quijada, it is hard to avoid giving in to the momentary temptation to establish order in the country first, before handing it over, to hand it over only when it is really swept clean of murderers, demagogues, poseurs, and purveyors of deceitful phrases, people incapable of building but only of killing, perverters of a violent youth whose prisoners they have now become."

The rear admiral of the naval air force even seemed to make a direct threat against the air force, the service reputedly most committed to a return to constitutional rule. Mayorga promised to uphold the "freedom espoused by those who have already died, murdered for being servants of a state that wants peace, being simple admirals or defenders of order."

Mayorga said he could offer the deceased admiral nothing "in the name of his beloved naval air force but the sky teeming with his planes, a sound-minded youth of commissioned and

noncommissioned officers who want to open up horizons of peace and not graves for good men, and an immaculate naval spirit with eyes fixed on high."

The naval officers who dominated the ceremony showed their belligerence in other ways:

"Angry navy officers, demanding stiff measures against left-wing terrorism, shouted insults at President Alejandro Lanusse, an army general, when he appeared today at the wake of a retired navy admiral assassinated by guerrillas," Associated Press reported May 1.

"Other officers refused admittance to former President Arturo Frondizi, who gave his support to the Peronists in the last election," the Montréal daily Le Devoir noted May 2 in an article compiled from AP and AFP dispatches. "The former president was reportedly thrown to the ground by the officers in the course of the brawl that followed."

Furthermore, the fanatical outbursts of the ultramilitarist Argentine naval officer corps threatened to take a more serious form. Elements in the Council of Admirals called for a return to strict military rule, according to the May 2 issue of La Opinión. The liberal Buenos Aires daily wrote:

"Yesterday the Council of Admirals held prolonged discussions, the terms of which, of course, have not been revealed. Nonetheless, it was possible to find some leaks that help us to understand the most significant features of the meeting.

"The emotional impact on the naval chiefs of the assassination of Admiral Hermes Quijada had created a certain climate in which the most diverse reactions could be noted. Some of these were translated into concrete proposals, including the following: postponing handing over the government to the constitutional authorities until order is restored in the country; imposing martial law; reestablishing the death penalty decreed during the Onganía government and repealed by Lanusse; and subordinating all security services, above all the police, to the military commands."

Despite the threats and violence at the Quijada funeral, La Opinion reported May 2 that "the pressure for a coup seems to have been stopped." Nonetheless, the military government ordered a severe crackdown, which while probably calculated to soothe the nerves of the most rigid and excitable elements of the officer corps, might also have been intended to strengthen the high command's position in negotiating for guarantees and a favorable division of powers with the newly elected civilian government.

"In a mood of barely controlled anger, regional military commanders took complete power today in the capital and in Argentina's five largest provinces, where a state of emergency was put into effect," Jonathan Kandell reported in the May 2 New York Times.

"The crisis was created by a small highly effective group of Trotskyite guerrillas who on Monday morning gunned down a retired rear admiral, Hermes Quijada, the former chief of staff of the armed forces.

"The guerrillas, known as the People's Revolutionary Army, are believed to number fewer than 1,000 active members with no organized political base. They have become an uncontrollable third force in the country—after the military and the Peronist Government-elect, which is scheduled to take power on May 25."

Moreover, it was not clear how far the military intended to carry its stateof-emergency provisions.

"There has been no indication whether the state of emergency will be lifted after the Peronist Government takes power.

"But an army general, Tomás Sánchez de Bustamante, one of the highest ranking officers, underlined the severity of the measure by announcing that special military courts would be created with the power to convict and decree the death penalty for killers of active or retired military and police personnel."

According to the May 2 La Opinión, six regions - the city and province of Buenos Aires; Santa Fe; Tucumán; Córdoba; Bahía Blanca; and Mendoza — came under the decree. Military courts set up under these regulations are empowered to conduct "brief" trials and their sentences cannot be ap-They can impose two pealed. penalties. The following offenses are punishable by death: kidnapping; assaults on members of the security forces resulting in death or harm; unauthorized fabrication, acquisition, supplying, or possession of arms, explosives, military ammunition, materials or apparatuses capable of releasing nuclear energy, or inflammables, toxic materials, or asphyxiants. This penalty also applies to those accused of complicity in the commission of such acts.

Assaults on military personnel that do not result in harm or death are punishable by fifteen years in prison. In both cases, these penalties are to be imposed regardless of age or sex.

In addition, the state of emergency regulations impose a strict ban on any reporting of guerrilla activities without prior authorization by the military commanders.

From the political standpoint, the most important provision is the ban on all public demonstrations or gatherings except for sporting events and "spectacles." This regulation would prevent supporters of the new government from mobilizing active support for Cámpora in his game of jockeying for position with the military. If the Peronist leaders are going to limit the role of the military in the new government, they will have to make their main moves now while their popular authority is maximal.

On the other hand, the right-wing Peronists reportedly hope to get support from sections of the armed forces. When Cámpora was summoned back from Spain after the Quijada shooting for "discussions" with the military chiefs, he insisted, according to Washington Post correspondent Lewis H. Diuguid in a May 3 dispatch from Buenos Aires, that both the naval and air force representatives be present at the same time.

"The air force," Diuguid wrote, "is thought by many Peronists to be their insurance against yet another of the military coups that have punctuated the last 40 years of political history here. It is not coincidental that no air force officer has been the victim of the various terrorist groups.

"Campora was counting on the presence of Air Force Commander Carlos A. Rey to fortify his effort at subordinating in some measure the military to the civilian authority. Gen. Rey has said publicly that the naming of service commanders should be the task of the president.

"This position conflicts with statements by army officers who want the chain of command left intact and internally selected service chiefs automatically included in the cabinet."

Diuguid saw the guerrilla offensive as aimed primarily at the most rightwing branch of the armed services. "The navy is considered the most tradition-bound, and the most virulently anti-Peron. This assessment apparently is shared by the Trotskyite People's Revolutionary Army, which has concentrated its campaign against the navy."

The Washington Post correspondent did not take account of the fact that it was a naval unit that carried out the Trelew massacre in which several members of the ERP were killed. According to a report in the Argentine press, the ERP has pledged to execute four naval officers for every guerrilla slain.

Other reports suggested that the ERP's action against the two admirals was only a small part of a much larger plan. "Circles linked to the bar in Buenos Aires say that the Ejército Revolucionario del Pueblo circulated last week a long list of persons condemned to death for various reasons," the Buenos Aires weekly *Panorama* reported in its April 12 issue. "The number of persons condemned is said to exceed seventy. In a communiqué attached, the ERP allegedly says that the executions will be carried out before the end of June."

It is the left wing of the Peronist movement that seems to have the most to lose from the military's crackdown. Even before the shooting of Quijada, Perón ousted the leader of the leftistinclined Peronist youth, Rodolpho Galimberti.

When Galimberti told a high-school students' meeting on April 21 that "the revolutionary tendency [of the Peronist movement] proposes to create a popular militia," a storm was touched off in military circles.

"So uneasy was the army about the announced plan," David F. Belnap reported in the April 28 Los Angeles Times, "that Maj. Gen. Alcides Lopez Aufranc, chief of the general staff, advised every garrison in the nation that the army would tolerate no such thing."

The general's message said: "The army opposes and will not allow any kind of armed organization in the country except the traditional armed forces." The text was made public at midnight on April 27.

On April 30 Perón asked for Galimberti's resignation. The ousted youth leader explained that he had not been talking about an armed militia but "voluntary work brigades."

"Rodolfo Galimberti's head is the first to fall for the sake of the great national pacification," the ANSA wire service quoted a Peronist figure as saying. The dispatch in the April 30

weekly edition of the Buenos Aires paper La Nación said the same Peronist sources reported that other heads had already fallen or were about to fall.

The harsh crackdown on open political activity, coming in the midst of fears of a rightist coup, threatens to paralyze the more radical of the Peronist rank and file, while giving the right wing a tailor-made excuse to crack down on the "hotheads." Following Perón's line of conciliating the military, Cámpora promised Lanusse, according to a March 4 dispatch by Kandell, that his government would not tolerate guerrilla attacks on the armed forces. The New York Times correspondent quoted a Peronist official as saying: "We cannot appear to be siding with the military at this point. But you can be sure that if the guerrillas continue their attacks after May 25, they will be isolated and crushed."

While complaining about the heavyhandedness of the military and expressing some fears about the intentions of rightist elements, leading Argentine liberal commentators seemed to discount the possibility of a coup. Among other things, there have been leaks (reported in the April 12 Panorama) about a special report circulating in the armed forces concerning an ERP plan for a campaign to "prevent the normalization of the country." This sounds like an argument by the military chiefs that a return to a "gorilla" dictatorship would only play into the hands of the armed groups.

In any case, the majority of the officer corps seems still firmly committed to its course of compromise with the Peronists, and it still seems to be getting all possible guarantees and pledges from "el lider." Despite the touchiness and primitivism of sections of the military, a return to direct dictatorship does not seem yet to be in the interests of any major force.

Why Argentine Bourgeoisie Backs Campora

Intercontinental Press

May 28, 1973

[The following article analyzes the plan for economic development and social peace worked out by the Argentine bourgeoisie and labor bureaucracy. The plan, which is championed by Peronist President-elect Héctor Cámpora, has helped to rally the bourgeoisie behind the new Peronist government, making the likelihood of a military coup to prevent the new government from taking office on May 25 increasingly remote.

[The article was published in the May 9 issue of Avanzada Socialista, the weekly newspaper of the Argentine Partido Socialista de los Trabajadores (PST—Socialist Workers party). The translation is by Intercontinental Press.]

* * *

Why is it that the navy came to agreement on turning over the reins of government to the Peronists? Why is it that the forces of reaction have not used the killing of Quijada as an excuse to stage a preventive coup? Why is it that a party like the Radical party, after eighty years of fol-

lowing an independent course, is flailing about between completely contradictory pronouncements, while the great Radical minstrel, Balbín, has completely silenced his guitar?

Secret of the Present Strength of Peronism

It might perhaps be thought that the forces of reaction have no other choice than to go along with Cámpora because of the six million votes he received. This, however, is not the case. More than once we have seen the results of elections or decisions of the people trampled underfoot.

The Peronist movement has taken up the economic plan of the CGE [Confederación General Económica—the national employers' organization] and the CGT [Confederación General del Trabajo—General Confederation of Labor] and has won the support—and even the enthusiasm—of all sectors of the national bourgeoisie.

A few months ago, Argentina's bosses were flailing about in desperation. The spoliation of Yankee impe-

rialism had them by the throat. At the same time, the workers were dealing blow upon blow. The bosses as a whole saw no way out of their predicament and had lost any trace of optimism about the future.

It was in this context that the CGE and the CGT drew up their common plan, the only one with a chance of acceptance, inasmuch as Yankee imperialism was not prepared to revise its policy toward the Argentine bourgeoisie. North America is not interested in pouring capital into Argentina to transform it into an imperialist submetropolis. Consequently this road - which is defended here by Alsogaray and Krieger Vasena-remains closed for the time being. The only alternative was the Peronist plan, which consists of bringing capital from Europe and attempting to do so under less extortionate conditions than those imposed by the Yankees in the past, and also of protecting local industry and reactivating the economy. All this has been crowned by an agreement on social peace with the leaders of the CGT.

The plan was accepted by the tradi-

tional oligarchy, whose old strategic allies, with whom it dealt in the past and with whom it will deal as long as it exists, are in Europe. Today there is not one Argentine bourgeois who does not agree that this plan is the first step toward regaining lost grandeur and that it opens up a period of great and glorious business ventures.

The oligarchy thinks it will be doing business on a greater scale than ever; the middlemen for foreign investment are rubbing their hands and traveling to various world capitals in anticipation of setting themselves up as "agents." The bourgeoisie has regained its optimism about the future. This is the real reason for the strength of Perón and Cámpora.

A government official put it this way to a journalist from Cronista Comercial: "Suppose a military coup to prevent the transfer of power were successful. Can you tell me how they would go about forming a government in that case?"

This statement is a recognition of the fact that no important sector of the bourgeoisie would give its backing to the authors of a coup. This is the reason that Rear Admiral Mayorga, after making provocative gorilla-type statements, issued a press release saying he had been "misinterpreted." This is the reason that the military junta is now negotiating the "five conditions" it presented to Cámpora, which only a short time ago were still regarded as binding.

Peron's Policy and Balbin's Silence

This is the same key to explaining the policy of Perón. By removing Galimberti [from his post as head of the Peronist Youth] and humbling Abal Medina [general secretary of the Peronist movement], he has helped strengthen the CGE-CGT sector, which is what the Argentine bourgeoisie wants. And Perón is even going outside the FREJULI [Frente Justicialista de Liberación — Justicialist Liberation Front, the Peronist coalition] to call on all sectors, especially the Radicals, to back his plan. This was shown by

Deputy Lastiri's speech at the opening of Congress.

The UCR [Unión Cívica Radical— Radical Civic Union finds itself at a real crossroads and in danger of experiencing a split. It is in complete agreement with the economic plan of the Peronists. But if it lets what it stands for become blurred with Peronist positions, as was already done by Pugliese, Jáuregui, Troccoli, and the Radicals in Córdoba (who issued a joint statement with the FREJULI), then it will be liquidating the political future of the party. On the one hand, if it does not support the plan, it will be forced to reach an agreement with the most reactionary forces, with Yankee imperialism, as Mathov is demanding. On the other hand, if it does support it, it will be destroying any possibility of becoming a new electoral alternative for the bourgeoisie four years from now. It is this contradiction that has driven Balbín into complete silence.

The CGE-CGT Plan Is Doomed

But all the euphoria that the Argentine bosses are displaying now that they believe they have come to the end of their dark tunnel is not going to last long. The CGE-CGT plan, too, will end in failure.

The European monopolies are no better than the Yankees. Clashes with them are inevitable.

But whatever the rate and the time at which these clashes occur, the CGE plan is doomed to failure, since there is no possibility of achieving an independent development of the country on the basis of the domestic market without breaking with the oligarchy and imperialism.

No independent development of the country will be achieved without certain basic measures being taken that neither the bosses of the CGE nor any other bosses want to take, such as a break with imperialism in order to keep imperialist profits in the country, expropriation of the oligarchy in order to develop agricultural production, planning the economy under the control of the working class, and inte-

grating the economy with that of the socialist and liberated countries of the world. As long as these measures are not adopted, the country will experience crisis after crisis. And these measures will only be adopted by a government run directly by the workers.

At best, the CGE plan might bring about a brief respite, but those who will be implementing this plan are condemned to exploit the workers. If the bosses want to amass wealth, the only source from which they can obtain it is the sweat of the wage earners. This iron law will also hold true under Cámpora.

This is why they make such an effort to involve the bureaucrats and traitors of the CGT. The latter will be playing a very important role for the bosses during the next few months. They will be saying that there is no need to struggle, no need to come to blows, no need to get one's back up, but rather that it is necessary to help with reconstruction. They will be saying what Rucci [head of the CGT] said: "We are not going to demand that the new government grant us wage increases."

But it is the workers who have the floor—the workers who brought down Onganía and Levingston, who stole the elections from Lanusse, who voted for Cámpora (not so that he could implement the exploitative CGE-CGT plan, but so that they could get an increase in wages and see their worst problems solved). The workers will not be long in making their voice heard.

They are continuing to struggle for their rights, and will continue to do so, because the bosses of the CGE will continue—despite the backing of Cámpora—to inflict hunger and exploitation upon them. And when all the workers join the struggle, this plan—the only one the bosses now have to offer—will inexorably collapse.

Massive Demonstration as Campora Is Sworn In

Intercontinental Press

June 11, 1973

"It was a fiesta day," Le Monde's correspondent wrote from Buenos Aires May 25, the day the Argentine military handed the government over to the Peronist president-elect. "No one could resist the infectious joy of the hundreds of thousands of Peronists roaming through the avenues of the city. . . .

"When the sun came up, the Plaza de Mayo, the administrative center of the city and the site of the presidential palace, was already thick with people. Youths had spent the night clustered around palm trees and the public benches in the midst of a cacophony of 'bombos,' the big native drums.

"With the first light of dawn on May 25, columns of trade-unionists began to form on the historic esplanade, soon spilling over into the Avenida de Mayo."

This massive popular outpouring was the culmination of an upsurge throughout the country in the weeks preceding the military's formal surrender of power. Its size and force, unexpected by the ruling circles, seem to have significantly changed the terms of the deal between the Peronists and the dictatorship that led to the restoration of constitutional government. The balance the military had hoped to maintain between the elected government and the armed forces command was badly upset. The overwhelming tide that was running against the generals was symbolized, among other things, by some hasty changes in the program for the day.

As the retiring dictator, General Alejandro Lanusse, handed the new legally elected President Héctor Cámpora the symbols of office, the immense crowd surrounding the presidential palace took up the shout: "Go to it, Granddad" [an affectionate term for Cámpora]. Inside the chamber itself, a young priest from the slum areas took up the shout.

"Then the audience began singing the martial song that had been banned for eighteen years," *Le Monde*'s correspondent wrote. "The government had changed hands, and the measures of the Peronist song were hardly stilled when Cámpora swore in the ministers of his cabinet, all civilians. The defeat

of the military was complete."

The Gran Acuerdo Nacional (Great National Agreement) vanished in the midst of an overwhelming repudiation of the military dictatorship.

"The military had hoped that by setting the date for the ascension of the new government on May 25, the national holiday and the occasion of a big parade, they could get the people to applaud them, forgetting the past in the name of a reconciliation of all Argentines. This hope was dashed. Cámpora had to take his leave of the outgoing president and Lanusse's two other junta colleagues at the helicopter that took them to their respective homes. In view of the turn that events had taken, the armed forces decided to call off the parade scheduled for that afternoon."

The great popular mobilization gave Cámpora the power to force a humiliating surrender by the military on the point probably closest to their hearts.

"Only one military man had a smile his lips Friday [May 25]," Le Monde's correspondent noted. "That was Jorge Raul Carcagno, the new commander in chief of the army. In abandoning their political functions, the generals Lanusse and Rey, as well as Admiral Coda, gave up their posts as the commanders of their respective services. They had long foreseen such a possibility and had named their chiefs of staff to succeed them in the interim period. But Cámpora did not pay any attention to this last decision, and one of his first decrees was to name three new commanders. The appointment of General Carcagno, one of the youngest field generals, who was promoted to his rank only last year, forced the retirement of eight of his colleagues, including General Alcides López Aufranc, Tomás Sánchez de Bustamante, and Jaime de Nevares. It is Lanusse's 'camarilla,' his 'clique,' that is leaving, that seems to have been purged."

After the threats and pressures from right-wing military circles in the last weeks before Cámpora's inauguration, the generals had to entrust the job of saving capitalism in Argentina entirely to a demagogic Peronist gov-

ernment for the time being. The retreat of the military from the political arena was matched by a retreat of the repressive forces. After trying briefly to control the more exuberant elements in the huge crowd, the police withdrew.

"A revolutionary climate reigned in the Plaza de Mayo," Le Monde's correspondent reported. "The Peronist youth had entirely taken it over, raising enormous banners hailing the 'special formations' [guerrilla groups] - the FAP [Fuerzas Armadas Peronistas - Peronist Armed Forcesl, the FAR [Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias — Revolutionary Armed Forces], and above all the Montoneros [named for the partisans in the war of independence]. The star of the ERP [Ejército Revolucionario del Pueblo - Revolutionary Army of the People appeared here and there.

"Everybody, Peronists, Marxists, nationalists, and Trotskyists, chanted at the top of their lungs: 'Si Evita viviera, sería Montonera' (If Evita [Perón] were alive, she would be a Montonera). Violent clashes occurred between excited young people and the police, who reported suffering several serious casualties. The acrid odor of tear gas still floated in the air when the helicopter transporting Campora landed on the roof of the Casa Rosada [the presidential palace]. The police had disappeared, leaving the field clear for the leaders of the Peronist vouth."

If the breadth of the popular upsurge enabled Cámpora to impose his terms entirely on the military in the matter of dividing up powers in the new administration, it also placed full responsibility for running the country in the hands of the new government that was taking office in a climate of great hopes and self-confidence on the part of the masses of the people.

The problems that may face the new government were exemplified by the government workers strike that occurred a little more than a week before the inauguration in San Luis, a city of about 40,000 in the far northwest of Argentina.

"On May 14-15, on two consecutive occasions, more than 2,000 public em-

ployees in San Luis entered the government building and hung out a huge banner: 'The Casa de Gobierno is occupied,'" reported Avanzada Socialista, the weekly paper of the PST [Partido Socialista de los Trabajadores—Socialist Workers party] in its May 23 issue. "As far as we can remember, this is the first time such a thing has happened in our country, and it shows the extraordinary combativity of the compañeros, who are sick of every kind of brush-off and humiliation at the hands of the authorities."

Avanzada Socialista praised the mobilization of the government workers in San Luis as pointing the way for all sections of the workers in the period opened up by the retreat of the capitalist class from open dictatorship and repression:

"In their exemplary struggle, we think that the San Luis workers used the methods that should be employed by the working class to gain its objectives. In the first place, they got a democratic organization, and their decisions were taken in rank-and-file assemblies. In the second place, they did not rely on the promises of the present authorities or those who will take office on May 25; they trusted only in struggle and in concrete deeds. In the third place, they were able to put such pressure on the Peronist leaders, the government-elect and the

CGT [Confederación General de los Trabajadores — General Confederation of Labor] as to gain support from them in deeds and not words. And finally, by their example, they were able to gain the support of other sectors of the population (including even the police, who refused to repress them)."

The outgoing governor refused to take up the demands of the workers on the grounds that the public employees union and the governor-elect had asked him not to make any changes and to leave such problems to the incoming regime.

The workers refused to wait. They called an assembly that was attended by 2,000 persons, including the local secretary of the CGT, Albarracín.

"Our party called on Compañero Albarracín to convoke a membership meeting of the CGT," the PST weekly reported, "in order to decide on measures to back up the public workers. He agreed, promising to do so the same day.

"Then, the compañeros marched in a ten-block-long demonstration . . . and when they reached the Casa de Gobierno, they entered and began this first historic occupation. . . .

"The governor, Señor Blanco Moreno, went to the police station in Puente Blanco and ordered the chief, even threatening him with a gun, to clear out the Casa de Gobierno; but

he refused. Blanco Moreno went to the government building on foot because his chauffeur refused to drive him the last few blocks, which were totally occupied by public workers and a hostile population."

Blanco Moreno appealed to the army to intervene. But it was decided only to call for a "peaceful evacuation." The workers agreed to leave, and then held a new mass assembly, where they received promises of support from the students, as well as public workers in other towns.

In the meantime, a delegation sent to the governor returned. Blanco Moreno had reiterated that it was up to the new governor to settle the matter. The PST introduced a motion to send a delegation to the Peronist headquarters. It passed.

"But they couldn't find anybody," reported Avanzada Socialista. "The entire Peronist leadership in San Luis had disappeared. And so they decided to call a new demonstration." At the mass rally, the announcement came that the government had capitulated. "Some 2,500 companeros marched through the streets, shouting: 'We Won.' 'Fight and Win, Workers to Power!' . . .

"Later a spontaneous rally developed in the Plaza Pringles in which May 16 was declared 'the day of the Puente Blanco workers.' And they were right. That day, the workers ruled San Luis."

Peron Opens Attack on 'Trotskyists'

By Gerry Foley

Intercontinental Press June 18, 1973

"'Get the Trotskyists!' This is the watchword in the Peronist ranks and among the government's allies," correspondent Philippe Labreveux reported in the June 6 *Le Monde*. "Hardly had ex-President Juan Perón sent out the word from Madrid, where he is preparing for his final return, than the trade unions, the youth groups, and several other organizations of the national Social Justice Movement launched a chorus of virulent attacks against 'extremists' of all stripes."

The blast from "el lider," according to Labreveux, was part of an operation aimed at curbing the guerrilla movements and the left wing of the Peronist movement and harnessing them to the new government. Such

attacks obviously set the stage for asserting tight control of the mass movement and for isolating the more militant opposition groups.

The immediate target of Perón's attack was apparently the ERP [Ejército Revolucionario del Pueblo — Revolutionary Army of the People], which refused to go along with Cámpora's call for a truce and has expressed its determination to continue its commando operations.

Perón made a statement referring to "Trotskyist provocateurs," according to the May 30 issue of the Buenos Aires daily *La Opinión*. He did so in response to reports in a Spanish monarchist magazine that far-left groups had participated in an attempt

early May 26 to storm the Villa Devoto Prison in the Argentine capital. Two youths were killed when prison guards opened fire on the crowd; one was a Peronist. The leadership of the Juventud Peronista (Peronist Youth) blamed members of the ERP, among others, for provoking the incident.

In a news conference June 8 in Buenos Aires, however, leaders of the ERP denied that their organization was involved in the attack on the prison. In the June 9 issue of the Buenos Aires daily *Clarin*, their statements were summarized as follows:

"The ERP had absolutely nothing to do with the attempt to take the Villa Devoto Prison in the early morning of May 26. They claimed that

the shots came from inside the prison and from a cellblock. They do not exclude the possibility of an attempt to force the door of the prison, but they don't know what the source of it was."

Furthermore, the four spokesmen—Roberto Mario Santucho, Jorge Benito Urteaga, Enrique Haroldo Gorriarán, and Jorge Molina—denied that the ERP was Trotskyist:

"The ERP is not Trotskyist. It has an anti-imperialist and socialist program, and includes Marxists, Peronists, and Christians. Of its members, 38 percent are workers, they said.

"The Partido Revolucionario de los Trabajadores exercises leadership and defines itself as Marxist-Leninist. It was linked to the 'Fourth International' but 'we have moved away." [Emphasis in original.]

Another guerrilla group that has continued its operations since the election is the August 22 ERP, a split-off from the ERP. The August 22 ERP, however, has given political support to the Peronists. It called for a vote for Campora and the other Peronist candidates in the March 11 elections. (For a translation of their statement on the elections, see *Intercontinental Press*, March 26, 1973, p. 348.)

Since the elections, the ERP and the Peronist guerrilla organizations have tended to diverge. "The Peronists, while they have not failed to point up the contradictions existing in the FREJULI [Frente Justicialista de Liberación — Liberation Front for Social Justice], have obviously closed ranks around the elected authorities," a commentator noted in the May 29 issue of La Opinión.

In his article in the June 6 Le Monde, Labreveux stressed the ties of the Peronist and non-Peronist organizations in the preelection period. "But for conscientious guerrillas, reconversion is not easy, and all the more so because the Peronists of certain clandestine groups and the Trotskyists of the ERP have carried out joint actions and, it is believed, help each other, particularly by supplying arms and money to cells that need them without making any ideological distinctions.

"It seems improbable, therefore, that the Peronist guerrillas will turn over their arms to the government and abandon clandestinity." Nevertheless, the centrifugal pressures seem to be very great. The Peronist guerrilla groups, the Montoneros and the FAR [Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias — Revolutionary Armed Forces] held a press conference the same day as the ERP. The spokesmen of the two organizations, Mario Eduardo Firmenich for the Montoneros and Roberto Quieto for the FAR, took a stern and threatening tone toward their non-Peronist erstwhile comrades in arms.

"We tell the ERP," Firmenich said, according to the June 9 Clarin, "that in our country you have to accept the historical experience of our people, which is Peronism." Both spokesmen said that they had invited the ERP to reflect and to test their position with the masses.

The Clarin report continued: "They said that if the ERP or any other organization calls for revolutionary unity, 'it must realize that the only unity possible is around the Peronist movement.' But they did describe as 'so-called commands' those groups that are attacking the ERP from a McCarthyite position."

But more importantly, Firmenich and Quieto stressed that their organizations "form part of the Peronist movement, whose leader is General Perón. Therefore, we follow the strategy formulated by General Perón." So, it is hard to see how anything but a head-on collision is possible between the Peronist guerrillas and the ERP, which announced its determination in its news conference to continue the fight until the "final triumph," the "socialist revolution." The latter is clearly not part of the "strategy formulated by General Perón."

The Peronist guerrilla spokesmen said, however, that they hoped the ERP would follow the path of the August 22 ERP. "The position of the August 22 ERP indicates that it is on the way to linking itself more and more closely to our movement."

The statement of the two Peronist groups, according to a June 8 AP dispatch, included a vow to "destroy any guerrilla groups that opposed the Campora Government." But no such pledge was mentioned in the *Clarin* report.

Attempts to isolate the non-Peronist guerrillas have taken many forms; however, some of them having the distinct air of provocations.

"The confrontations between the

guerrillas and the Peronists was marked for the first time by violence," the New York Spanish-language daily El Diario-La Prensa reported in its June 8 issue, "when a bomb exploded last night on the grave of a guerrilla belonging to the Ejército Revolucionario del Pueblo..., Víctor Fernández Palmeiro, who died as a result of wounds received in a shoot-out when he assassinated Rear Admiral Hermes Quijada April 30.

"Shortly before the bomb exploded, a Peronist group burned an ERP flag in front of the parliament building."

A UPI dispatch in the June 6 El Diario reported: "A group calling itself the Peronist 'Comando Supremo de Seguridad' [Supreme Security Command] announced yesterday that it had kidnapped twenty-one 'prominent' communist leaders and threatened to kill them unless the leftist Ejército Revolucionario del Pueblo . . . , which is apparently divided, sets free all the persons it still holds."

Despite this announcement, the dispatch noted, the Communist party in Rosario, where the kidnappings were supposed to have taken place, has not reported any of its members missing. It is not clear, though, how broad the organization's definition of "communist" is. Since its threat was aimed at the ERP, it is evident that not just Communist party members are meant.

International pressure is obviously being put on the Cámpora government to liquidate the guerrilla activity as soon as possible.

After the latest kidnapping of a British industrialist, a UPI dispatch in the June 8 El Diario quoted the queen's ambassador as saying: "If law and order are not secured, I think that many will not be encouraged to come to this country. I hope the government creates an atmosphere of tranquillity." Since the Peronist government has announced its intention of attracting European capital, it seems unlikely that it would take such an expression of impatience lightly.

But the Peronist leadership has its own urgent domestic reasons for isolating and eliminating "extremists," and the guerrillas are the indicated place to start. As Labreveux noted in his June 6 article:

"Perón's offensive against the Trotskyists, and more broadly against the 'extremists' in his own movement who advocate the establishment of a socialist regime, has been favorably received in those trade-union circles that are favorite targets of the guerrillas, considered by them to be 'traitors to the working class.' José Rucci and the leaders of the CGT [Confederación General del Trabajo—General Confederation of Labor] are beginning to raise their heads. Once again they feel protected and even favored by Perón, who sent them a warm message of support last week on the occasion of the special convention of the labor federation.

"This meeting, scheduled several months ago and to which were invited about sixty foreign delegations, was obviously designed to boost the prestige of the Argentine CGT, 'one of the best organized and most experienced in the world,' according to Perón. All of a sudden, the trade-unionists are declaring themselves more vigorously than ever 'not Yankees and not Marxists, but Peronists.' This is true to such an extent that the Cuban representative Agapito Figueroa, who proposed paying homage to Ernesto Che Guevara, was hissed, and he found himself unable to finish his speech."

At the present time, the CGT bureaucrats are especially anxious to silence criticism from the left.

"Strengthened by Perón's support, the leaders of the CGT are now going to be able to conclude the negotiations initiated with the CGE [Confederación General Económico—General Confederation of Business] and José Gelbard, the minister of finance, with a view toward establishing a 'social truce' and launching a plan of economic stabilization. This austerity program will seek to assign the sacrifices necessary for straightening out the country's finances. But freezing

prices and, to a certain extent, wages threatens to provoke serious discontent, or at least disappointment. If it had not been for Perón's endorsement and the assurance that he will neutralize their enemies, the tradeunionists would doubtlessly have hesitated to expose themselves to new pressures from their rank and file or attacks from the 'extremists' while the memory of the assassination of Dirk Kloosterman, general secretary of the automobile workers union, is still fresh in their minds."

With the great popular hopes invested in the new regime and the massive and enthusiastic support it is enjoying in its first days, the Peronists are in a position to exert strong pressures against the guerrillas. Perón's triumphal return, planned for June 21, when his supporters predict he will be met by two million people, will offer an excellent occasion for attacking any groups el lider considers dangerous to the new regime of "peace and progress."

Furthermore, Perón has been giving some thought to the problem of isolating the non-Peronist left groups within mass mobilizations. In his remarks on the violence at Villa Devoto, he said, according to the May 30 La Opinión:

"Although some incidents occurred such as those mentioned, it was a great day [when the government took office]. However, this is a good experience for the future, because we must keep in mind the objective of controlling such groups in new mass gatherings."

Labreveux speculated, moreover, about pressures from other sources on the non-Peronist guerrillas to moderate their attitude toward the new government:

"It is not excluded that the Cuban leaders, who have just renewed diplomatic relations with Argentina, have recommended prudence to the principal strategist of the Trotskyist guerrilla movement [Santucho]."

Nonetheless, the ERP pledged in its June 8 news conference to continue operations "against the armed forces, counterrevolutionaries, foreign exploiters, and Argentine capitalists." It noted, moreover, that "the causes of social exploitation and the political-economic dependency have not disappeared or even been touched by the new government."

The day before the news conference, however, the ERP released retired rear admiral Francisco Aleman, whom it had held for sixty days. Two days previously it had released its other captive, police commander Jacobo Nasif, held for forty days.

"A communique of the leftist group said the officers were freed after it was ascertained that political prisoners liberated by the new Peronist government of President Campora were in good health," a June 7 AP dispatch reported. "The leftists also issued a letter in which Aleman admitted responsibility for certain misdeeds."

On the same day that Aleman was released British а industrialist. A. Lockwood, was kid-Charles napped. However, it has proved impossible so far to ascertain whether Lockwood was taken by guerrillas or by common criminals. It remains to be seen, then, whether the ERP is continuing its former activities. Likewise uncertain is whether Perón and his followers will broaden their attack on "Trotskyism." The next few weeks should clarify the terms of the conflict.

PST Opposes 'Social Truce' in Argentina

Intercontinental Press

June 18, 1973

The Peronists invited all the Argentine parties to a second meeting in the Nino restaurant in Buenos Aires on May 22. The first meeting took place shortly after Perón's arrival in the country before the elections and was closed to the press. The PST (Partido Socialista de los Trabajadores—

Socialist Workers party) refused to attend this gathering on the grounds that it was opposed in principle to secret political negotiations. The party agreed to participate in the second, since it offered the possibility of discussing the future of the country in the presence of the press and therefore

in front of the Argentine people. The PST set forth its positions in an editorial statement in the May 23 issue of its weekly paper, Avanzada Socialista.

In the first place it hailed the Peronists' promises to restore political democracy:

"We agree fully with the proposals to guarantee and broaden the liberties and rights granted by the constitution, involving full respect for minorities.

"We hold this position not because at this stage we find ourselves temporarily in a minority. In the revolutionary left, our party is distinguished by its adherence to profoundly democratic principles, which lead us to struggle uncompromisingly for liberation from authoritarianism in all fields, against bureaucratic domination in the unions, imperialist domination of the nation, and capitalist exploitation of the society."

The first step toward the establishment of democratic liberties, the statement said, should be full amnesty for all the political prisoners and complete restitution to workers victimized for their trade-union activities.

Next, the statement called for broadening the area of political democracy:

"We think that in order to extend democratic freedoms changes must be made in the constitution and sanctioned by the sovereign will of the people, that the constitution must be made into an adequate framework for the period of transition to socialism. Calling a constituent assembly is, therefore, one of the most urgent tasks of the new government."

To reverse the decline in the buying power of the workers that occurred under the military dictatorships and conservative governments that followed the overthrow of Perón, the PST called for an immediate across-the-board raise of 50,000 old pesos [about US\$50], and a minimum wage of 150,000 old pesos a month, as well as a sliding scale of wages to compensate for inflation.

Instead of relying on European capital to replace U.S. capital, the PST maintained, the only way to develop the country is through the develop-

ment of an internal market by raising the living standard of the workers and through internal saving. This requires establishing a state monopoly of foreign trade and repudiating the foreign debt which now totals US\$7,000 million.

"This debt has been contracted by illegitimate or dictatorial governments that had no right to mortgage the future of the entire nation. Strict currency control and nationalizing the banks and foreign trade . . . will enable us to stop the foreign monopolies — both European and American — from draining off the national wealth of the country and the labor of the workers with impunity as they are doing now."

The statement also called for nationalizing the foreign monopolies. But it stressed: "The workers must be the ones to supervise their functioning. Administration by state-appointed functionaries has proved totally inefficient."

At the Nino meeting, Juan Carlos Coral, the presidential candidate of the PST, repeated these demands, and added:

"We must forcibly repatriate the \$8,000 million that has been taken out of the country through the looting of foreign entrepreneurs and Argentine financiers; we must block the monopolies from shipping any profits out of the country."

The PST also demanded a deepgoing agrarian reform to solve the problem of four decades of stagnation in the rural economy.

Although the PST statement promised the party's support for all positive measures by the new government, a pledge that was repeated by Coral at the Nino meeting, it expressed basic criticisms of the regime inaugurated May 25.

"If the class alliance advocated by the Peronists led to the great defeat of 1955 for the working class and the country, the cycle may be much shorter this time." The favorable international conditions for Argentine national capital achieving a certain freedom of maneuver within the framework of the imperialist system no longer exist, the statement explained. In fact, this time the very conservative forces that originally opposed Perón's reforms are supporting the new government and especially its call for a "social truce."

"Our doubts about the process that began on May 25 are motivated by class feelings and are only the political expression of the doubts of the workers, who see that the same institutions, parties, and personalities that opposed Perón in 1946 and overthrew him in 1955 and collaborated with the succeeding regimes are today supporting Dr. Cámpora and acclaiming his recent appeal."

The PST warned emphatically against any "social truce."

"Political instability, social tensions, struggle, and violence are the results of the economic system we live under. Therefore, we cannot agree to any truce with the Sociedad Rural [the big landowners organization], the CGE [Confederación General Económica -General Business Federation, the Unión Industrial Argentina [Argentine Manufacturers' Association, or the monopolies, unless they stop exploiting the workers and the country. Hence our position and our advice to the workers must be brief and to the point: Don't let down your guard while the oligarchy and imperialism are still intact. And this means fighting for the profound structural changes that alone can bring peace to the society."

In his speech at the Nino, Coral pointed out that only a government directly representing the workers would be able to implement consistently the basic changes the PST calls for.

Positions Taken by the Political Parties During May 22 Meeting With Campora

The following is an interview with Nahuel Moreno, a leader of the Argentine Partido Socialista de los Trabajadores (PST - Socialist Workers party), on the May 22 meeting in the Nino Restaurant in Buenos Aires called by President Héctor Cámpora and attended by all the country's political parties. The interview was published in the May 30 issue of the PST's weekly, Avanzada Socialista. The translation is by Intercontinental Press.

Question. What was the stand taken by the various organizations at the Nino Restaurant?

Answer. On the one side, there were the pro-Peronists or out-and-out servile forces like Alende, Ramos, Sandler, and, though he voiced greater concern, Sueldo. All they did was praise the sound judgment, the wisdom, and the profundity of Campora and Perón.

The newspapers said that they raised objections or made criticisms, but we saw no opposition, only ad-

On the other side, there were the sectors that put forward ideas. Aside from Campora, these were the Radicals, Thedy, Bravo, the Sapag, the Communist party, and our party.

bourgeois parties?

A. The Radicals put forward a consistent, bourgeois-type position, underlining the need for democratic free play so that the bourgeoisie could work out its differences and paralyze the violence that is going on. They claimed that this has been the position of the Radical party for years.

Thedy, along with Bravo, maintained that unity and a truce on social and political struggle were indispensable and that the organizations on which national unity would be based had to give credit to important sectors of the armed forces that deserved it, that is, Lanusse.

Sapag called for federalism, which would serve the interests of the bourgeoisie in the provinces.

From the point of view of the right, these were the most enthusiastic supporters of the truce and Campora's five points.

Q. What about the left-wing forces?

A. On the left (and this must be Q. What was the position of the clear in view of the false reports that appeared in the bourgeois press), both the Communist party and our party rejected the five points and the truce.

> The Communist party put forward its traditional position of national unity with the progressive bourgeoisie, which it calls only "progressives" because it can't bring itself to call them by their real name. Still, it must be said that within this general approach, without beating around the bush, it did in fact reject the five points and, basically, the proposals on a "truce" and those for "national reconstruc-

Our party's position is clearly laid out in the document that we issued and in the speech by Compañero Coral.

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The Córdoba uprising on May 29, 1969, was the culmination of a series of explosions in the provincial industrial cities of Argentina that were touched off initially by brutal government repression of a student protest.

The pitched battles in the center of the Argentine automotive industry marked the beginning of the end of the military dictatorship, showing the capitalists unmistakably that the policy of naked repression had failed to intimidate the workers and students and was creating the conditions for a generalized revolutionary explosion. The junta set a conciliatory course, which led it, after a new uprising in Córdoba in August 1971, to decide to turn power back to a civilian gov-

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"How could the direct beneficiary of the process opened by the Cordobazo make such a crying oversight?" the May 30 issue of Avanzada Socialista asked in a special supplement on the anniversary of the rising. The weekly organ of the PST (Partido Socialista de los Trabajadores - Socialist Workers party) continued:

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as the CGT [Confederación General del Trabajo - General Confederation of Labor], the Juventud Peronista [Peronist Youth] itself, and the capitalist parties. None has marked the anniversary by proposing militant demonstrations.

"Their call for a 'social and political truce' is contrary to the meaning of the Cordobazo struggle. Anyone who is for this truce cannot be for the Cordobazo. Anyone who is for unity with all the sectors of exploiters cannot identify with this anniversary, much less with the meaning of the Cordobazo."

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The Cordoba uprising had nonetheless been celebrated, stressed Avanzada Socialista, by the spontaneous militancy demonstrated in Buenos Aires when Campora took office, bringing the mass upsurge that started in the provincial cities at last to the Argentine capital itself.

In Córdoba, the anniversary could not go uncelebrated, and demonstrations marked a still rising militancy and political consciousness.

More than 20,000 workers and students gathered in a rally at the corner of Arturo M. Bas and the Boulevard San Juan. From 10:00 a.m. groups from the various trade unions began showing up.

"Just after 12:30, a SMATA [Sindicato de Mecánicos y Afines del Transporte Automotor — Union of Automotive Machinists and Allied Trades] contingent arrived, with 2,500 compañeros marching behind red flags and pictures of Lenin, Trotsky, and Mao carried by the left tendencies.

"At about 1:00 we saw the demonstration coming from Ferreyra with 1,500 more companeros. There were the flags of the Sindicato de Perkins [Perkins Plant Union], SITRAC [Sindicato de Trabajadores Concord — Concord Plant Workers Union], an immense PST banner, and the banners of the Frente de los Trabajadores [Workers Front] and other trade-union and political tendencies."

The most impressive sign of growing worker militancy was the participation of workers of the Concord and Materfer plants. These workers walked out of their plants "in spite of the armed opposition of the Unión Obrera Metalúrgica [Metalworkers Union]. which is the union recognized in both plants by the government but not by the workers. At Concord the strike was led by a new council of shop stewards, which ousted by force the council imposed by the bureaucracy. On Tuesday, a new mass assembly had to choose between two conflicting motions: The first was to march to the rally; the second was to stop work for just half an hour. The first won by a very large majority.

"At Materfer, the activists faced up determinedly to the armed goons of the Union Obrera Metalurgica, shut down the factory, and led their companeros in the march to the rally.

"The column formed up at Perkins, where the people took the lead, stopping buses, trucks, and cars to transport the workers to the rally, which was about five kilometers away. All these vehicles came covered with banners and flags."

Cuban President Dorticós was the

keynote speaker. He was greeted with "an indescribable clamor." As Fidel's representative evoked the memory of Che Guevara, "a Cuban and Argentine revolutionist," the crowd shouted: "Cuba va del brazo con el Cordobazo!" (Cuba marches arm in arm with the Cordobazo.)

Responding to the mass of workers, Dorticos said: "Yes, compañeros, Cuba marches arm in arm with the Cordobazo; Cuba followed it very closely and was aware of its great importance for the working class and the people in general." Cuba's official representative added: "I want everyone here to swear to continue the fight against imperialism until we wipe it out."

A different kind of reception was given to Atilio López, a cool one, although he is one of the most popular lieutenants of Perón in the union movement. In the first place, he was expected to make some important announcements but as it turned out he had nothing to offer. In the second place, he tried to convert the rally into a mere celebration of the new government's taking office: "Today is a day of joy because we can say that four days after coming to power the people's government has set out on the road to liberating us."

Representatives of the guerrilla organizations spoke, but the speaker for the ERP [Ejército Revolucionario del Pueblo—Revolutionary Army of the People] was met with whistles from the Peronists, who tried also to drown out what was said by singing their party songs.

The speech of René Salamanca, general secretary of SMATA, a leftist union independent of the Peronist bureaucracy, was also jeered by the Peronist party faithful. Salamanca called on the workers to remain mobilized until national and social liberation were won.

But when a representative of the conservative labor group, "The Sixtytwo Organizations Loyal to Perón," tried to speak, the class-struggle union tendencies and the left joined in a chorus to drown him out.

A Peronist deputy who promised that the newly elected representatives would carry out their promises was met with shouts of "Que cumpla el diputado, que cumpla el concejal, si no la clase obrera los va a hacer cagar." ("The deputies and councilmen had better keep their promises, or else

the working class will make them crap in their pants.")

Although the ceremony was supposed to end with the rally, about 4,000 participants led by the classstruggle unionists from Perkins and the left marched to the center of the city. When they reached the downtown area, they were addressed by a woman member of the PST, who told them that one of the accomplishments of the Cordobazo was its having opened up the way for the development of the class-struggle union tendencies, which was started by SITRAC-SITRAM. The latest continuation of this process, she said, was the rise of the new leadership at Perkins, and she called on these leaders to address the crowd.

* * *

On the day after the anniversary of the Cordobazo, the bureaucratized Peronist union federation, the CGT, opened its convention. The PST issued the following statement:

"This convention is the opposite in every way of what was represented by the rebellion of the people of Córdoba in May 1969.

"The Cordobazo changed the history of the country, ushering in a new stage of struggles that won concession after concession from the capitalist system and the military dictatorship. This convention will only try to limit the workers mobilizations and make a deal with the bosses, represented essentially by the Confederación General Económica [General Business Federation].

"The Cordobazo had at its head the most self-sacrificing fighters of the working class and of the people, and it meant the direct exercise of democracy by the masses who occupied the city. In this convention, the most select bureaucrats in the country, undemocratically appointed and for the most part repudiated by the workers, are meeting to discuss an agenda unknown to the workers.

"The Cordobazo was an example, an impetus, and a road to which all the exploited must turn. This convention of the CGT is the synthesis of all that we have to eradicate in the workers movement—bureaucracy and antidemocratic methods.

"This is why the CGT did not call for commemorating the 1969 rebellion nor dedicate this convention to the memory of those who died in it. The mobilization of the working class will lead sooner or later to returning the CGT to the workers, and then the memory of these fallen companeros will permeate the building on the Azopardo [CGT headquarters] as a continual call to struggle."

May 25: Buenos Aires Took to Streets

Intercontinental Press June 18, 1973

[The following article on the May 25 inauguration of Argentine President Hector Campora was published in the May 30 issue of Avanzada Socialista, the weekly newspaper of the Partido Socialista de los Trabajadores (PST—Socialist Workers party). The translation is by Intercontinental Press.]

* * *

What went on May 25 in the Congress and outside the government house, in the demonstrations in the downtown area, and in the column of thousands of persons who went to Devoto Prison to free the prisoners, were scenes like nothing Buenos Aires has seen in the last seven years. Nevertheless, the main actor in the great demonstrations of the Peronist movement and of the resistance to the dictatorship - the organized workers movement-was absent. Its absence was reflected in the slogans, in the objectives, and in the strength of the popular mobilizations.

When all the rest of the country was being shaken by rebellions in the interior, beginning with the Cordobazo, political activists were asking themselves the question: "When is Buenos Aires going to join in?" Thus we saw rebellion after rebellion, a chain of mobilizations in the streets that stretched from Tucumán in the north to General Roca in the south, while in the streets of the capital reigned a social peace that was imposed by the menacing presence of the repressive forces and by the apparatus of the trade-union bureaucracy.

This May 25 we saw the chiefs of the repression making a retreat, negotiating with the Peronist Youth, and handing over to them the task of maintaining order with a crowd that they could not control. We saw how the church was unable to do its Te Deum, how the military could not stage its parade. We saw the heads of the armed forces helplessly endur-

ing the insults of people expressing their hatred for the armed branch of the exploiters. We saw the banners of the guerrilla organizations that were mercilessly hunted down until only yesterday waving outside the Congress, at the Pink House, and even on the walls of Villa Devoto Prison. We saw a column of thousands of demonstrators surrounding the prison, freely carrying on a dialogue with the prisoners, and getting the Peronist leadership to agree to free them.

We also saw how the forces of repression, even as they were retreating, did not refrain from firing their weapons and producing new victims among the people's fighters.

What is new is this: After long years, though still on a small scale, the people in Buenos Aires began to make use of the only method by which the workers and the people can attain the goals they have set for themselves -active mobilization and taking to the streets to debate in action the question of who holds power. This is how the workers and students in the interior won an end to the wage freeze. the introduction of democratic freedoms, the calling of elections, and the agreement to go along with a Peronist victory. This is how the military dictatorship was defeated. And this is the way the struggle must continue if new gains are to be won at the expense of imperialism, the oligarchy, and the bosses.

But the great shortcoming of the meeting and the demonstrations was the absence of the organized workers movement. Most of the participants were not workers but students or persons from the middle class. Unfortunately, there was nothing like the huge worker actions of the Peronist movement, such as the one in 1946 when the working class won the Christmas bonus and other benefits and filled the streets of the city.

The contingents of participants from the unions were pitiful. The steelworkers numbered less than 2,000; they were practically lost in the crowd. There were fewer than 1,000 textile workers. The turnout from most of the unions amounted to no more than a poster surrounded by a handful of people.

The union bureaucrats limited themselves to calling a few assemblies and renting buses. But this is not enough nowadays to mobilize the workers. After so many years of betrayals and sellouts, no one is prepared to take to the streets just because some executive board says it should be done. And even less if the mobilization does not set itself the goal of obtaining solutions to the most pressing problems of the working class: wages, high prices, unemployment. In addition, the workers do not have complete confidence in a government they supported with their votes but whose candidates were not selected on the basis of any consultations with the rankand-file workers.

Imagine what would have happened if a million workers had taken to the street demanding an immediate increase in wages, nationalization of the monopolies, and the rehiring of all the companeros who were fired for leading the struggles that ended up by bringing down the dictatorship. Imagine if the hundreds of workers who are occupying the EMA and Lozadur factories had been present, demanding solutions to the problems they face, and if the personnel at Citroën and Peugeot, and the packinghouse workers, had mobilized to demand the rehiring of those who were fired. Imagine thousands of other examples like these, examples that are occurring every day.

But this did not happen. The workers limited themselves to following the events on television—with great joy, but passively. This was reflected in the slogans at the action: They ridiculed the gorillas and the military, and urged long life to "Uncle Campora," but there were none directed against the bosses and the oligarchy or pressing for working-class goals.

ernment house.

way.

The Peronist Youth did not attempt to fill this gap by raising issues for which it has itself been fighting, with the exception of the demand for freeing the political prisoners. Thus, between the sabotage (conscious or unconscious) of the bureaucracy and the absence of an organization to put forward a workers program, the net result of the mobilizations - in spite of the fact that they pushed the problem of the prisoners much further than seemed to be in the official script -was to give a blank check to the Justicialist government. It is a blank check that the workers did not signnot the municipal workers who have embarked on a course of struggle, nor the state workers in Santa Fe with their barricades, nor those in San Luis, who twice occupied the gov-

These mobilizations are pointing to what is coming inevitably: more and more struggles by the exploited against the bosses, imperialism, and leaders who have sold out. If we are to be prepared for this, the good and bad sides of May 25 must be pointed out. On the positive side: It showed that the streets belong to the people when they decide to take them over with their own forces, and that just as the mobilization won the release of the political prisoners, many additional goals could have been achieved by continuing along this path. On the negative side: The working class is still not making itself felt because of the failures of the union leaderships and because there is still no recognized organization that expounds its needs and knows how to present them in a clear and concrete

From now on there will be a new field of struggle for the workers of the capital and Greater Buenos Aires who, since the Cordobazo, have been struggling for their demands on the factory level. Like their class brothers, the workers in the interior, they will now take to the streets in their struggle for nationalizations, to impose workers control over the books and to find out company profits, to win an immediate wage increase, to get rid of the traitorous leaderships ensconced in the unions, and to get those who have been fired rehired.

In order to prepare for these future and imminent struggles, the workers must organize and fortify a powerful organization—the revolutionary party of the Argentine working class.

IX

The Fight Against Repression

Ask United Front Against Death Penalty

(Reprinted from the May 15, 1972 issue of <u>Intercontinental Press</u>)

The Argentine Socialist party (PSA Socialista Argentino) headed by Juan Carlos Coral has called on all political parties and the union movement to form a united committee against the government's plans to introduce the death penalty and against proposals to institute 'special' prisons for political prisoners. The call appeared in the April 26 issue of Avanzada Socialista, the weekly newspaper of the PSA launched following a working agreement with the Partido Revolucionario de Trabajadores (La Verdad).

"Repeatedly nearly all Argentine political parties and the CGT [Confederación General del Trabajo — General Confederation of Labor] have made statements opposing the prevailing repressive system," the PSA states. "We must understand that today, in view of the imminent danger that the death penalty will begin to be applied or that certain prisoners will be subjected to living conditions that involve their physical and moral annihilation, it is incumbent upon all of us to go beyond statements to action by setting up the aforementioned committee."

In an accompanying article, Avanzada Socialista explains that the "possible application of the death penalty hangs over the head of many persons who are being held under suspicion of being terrorists. In addition, newspaper accounts report that the government is considering setting up 'special' prisons for suspected guerrillas." The possibility is being discussed of trans-

ferring prisoners to the deserted Isla de los Estados on the edge of the Antarctic Ocean off Tierra del Fuego.

On April 20, law 19582 was introduced to the effect that persons subject to trial (that is, who have not yet even been found guilty!) "can be held in places that the Executive Power decides on for this purpose."

The thinking of the government, according to Avanzada Socialista, is that it will attempt to get away with imposing the death penalty, but that if there is too much of a popular uproar before the condemned are executed, "it will hold in reserve a system that is no less effective but that is more 'quiet' than the firing squad."

PSA Protests Attacks by Police, Army

(Reprinted from the May 15, 1972 issue of Intercontinental Press)

The Argentine Socialist party (PSA—Partido Socialista Argentino) issued a statement April 17 denouncing repeated instances of harassment by police and the army. The statement was adopted by the party's national committee and sent to Minister of the Interior Arturo Mor Roig. The text was published in the party's weekly paper, Avanzada Socialista.

The purpose of the statement was to demand that the government order an end to the harassment and that the party be allowed to carry out its activities with full respect for its legality and constitutional rights.

The first part of the statement details seven specific instances in which the authorities have violated the party's rights and impaired its ability to function. They include raids on

party headquarters in various cities, following which party workers going about their business have been held by the police up to several days and in some cases beaten, and the detention of persons selling Avanzada Socialista.

In one instance, police broke into the Socialist Center in Rosario April 8 and picked up more than 100 members, whom they held in custody for more than twenty hours.

"Such acts on the part of the police and military forces represent an unacceptable attack on the political rights of both our members and our organization, the national committee stated.

It noted that the party "carries on its activities in a public and legal fashion" and that it "is certain to fulfill in the near future the requirements laid down by the law 19.102 in order for it to gain recognition as a national party."

The statement concluded as follows: "We must be allowed the full exercise of our political rights. We demand full freedom of expression and guarantees that we will be permitted to freely sell our press—our weekly Avanzada Socialista and our monthly Los de Abajo—as well as to freely distribute any propagandistic or educational material that the party deems necessary or desirable to publish.

"The party must have clarification on whether it is going to be able to participate in the electoral process with full political rights and on an equal basis with the other political parties."

The statement is signed by Juan Carlos Coral.

PSA Asks Asylum in Chile for Guerrillas

(Reprinted from the September 11, 1972 issue of Intercontinental Press)

[The following petition demanding that the Chilean government grant asylum to the ten Argentine guerrillas who hijacked a plane to that country on August 15 was presented to the Chilean embassy in Buenos Aires on August 21 by a delegation of the Argentine Socialist party. The delegation consisted of Juan Carlos Coral, Arturo C. Gómez, Enrique G. Broquen, and Mario S. Doglio. The petition was addressed to the Chilean ambas-Intercontinental Press has translated the text from the August 23 issue of the PSA's weekly, Avanzada Socialista.

The Socialist party (Coral Secretariat) would like to present the following statement to the ambassador:

The Socialist party (Coral Secretariat) states emphatically that the ten compañeros who have arrived in Chile must be given political asylum. There can be no doubt that these compañeros were brought to trial for their political activities and that the alleged common crimes the Argentine government is

attributing to them must be viewed in terms of two considerations: first, the aim and purpose for which they were committed, and second, the fact that even if a so-called common crime were committed, it would be related to political activity. And in addition, their sentences were handed down by the special criminal tribunal, which has legalized violation of the law and the use of torture in this country.

The Chilean government must confront and overcome any obstacle standing in the way of a decision to grant political asylum. It must take into account the fact that the majority of the Chilean people have already granted it in their own minds, and it can have no doubt that the vanguard of the Argentine people, consisting of those political parties fighting for the interests of the working class and for national and social liberation, is demanding this asylum, or at least that the refugees be allowed to reside in some socialist country. There can be no legal obstacle that overrules or

distorts the popular will, for in that case it would immediately lose its legal character. The Chilean Supreme Court must not be allowed to intervene if there is the slightest chance that it will rule in favor of extradition.

The Socialist party is in complete solidarity with the resolution of the Central Committee of the Chilean Socialist party, released by Compañero Senator Carlos Altamirano and especially with the words of Compañero Deputy Erich Schnake: "The Argentinians are revolutionists who rose up against institutions in their country that they do not accept, and for this reason they deserve our solidarity, as political refugees always have." Especially since this solidarity has been repeatedly demonstrated in the past. In 1956, the Chilean government admitted Cámpora, Jorge Antonio, Kelly, and Cooke, well-known Peronist leaders who were being held prisoner by the Aramburu regime during the "Freedom Revolution," and who were also accused of having committed common crimes.

And Compañero President Salvador Allende himself in 1968 accompanied the Bolivian and Cuban guerrillas who had been fighting in Bolivia with Compañero Che Guevara.

The Socialist party (Coral Secretariat) thus clearly states that its position is strongly in favor of granting asylum because it considers the compañeros who have fled to be revolutionists, although it openly disagrees with the revolutionary strategy they and the organizations to which they belong are following.

The Secretariat of the Socialist party salutes the ambassador by joining the Chilean people in the words of their hymn, today more appropriate than ever: "Chile will be either the grave of the free or a refuge against oppression."

General Strike Wins Release of Prisoners

On June 14, the city of Mar del Plata, 400 kilometers south of Buenos Aires, was completely shut down by a one-day general stril e by workers and students. The June 14 issue of Avanzada Socialista, the newspaper of the Argentine Socialist party (PSA - Partido Socialista Argentino), called the mounting mobilization of workers and students "the most important reaction to date" in opposition to the "antisubversive" campaign of the repressive Lanusse regime.

The wave of unrest was provoked by the arrest of five students following a mass meeting at the university June 6. Approximately 1,000 had gathered there to mark the sixth month since the murder last December of the student Silvia Filler* by armed fascists who invaded a peaceful student assembly and opened fire on the participants. Speakers at the June 6 meeting included representatives from all tendencies in the student movement, Filler's father, and Marcos Chueque, a member of the PSA who was seriously wounded in the fascist assault. Chueque is one of the main witnesses in the case.

As the crowd was leaving the auditorium, people were savagely attacked by the police. "In the confusion," reported Avanzada Socialista, "a group of policemen dressed in civilian clothes singled out PSA comrades Jorge Sprovieri, Sara Ferreiro de Chueque, and Marisol Diez, and arrested them along with the student Alfredo Iglesias." Later that evening, Marcos Chueque was also arrested at his home.

Along with Chueque, Sprovieri is a key witness in the case against the fascist gang, a number of whom are currently in jail. The arrests were seen as a blatant attempt on the part of the police to side with the fascists by dealing a blow to the plaintiffs in the case. The newspaper La Capital com-

(Reprinted from the July 3, 1972 issue of Intercontinental Press)

mented in its June 10 issue: "The impression, shared by people on all levels, is that this is an attempt to eliminate obstacles so that members of the CNU [the fascist group that murdered Filler] can be set free before long."

An indication of the complicity of the police with the fascists is the fact that two of those arrested - Chueque and Iglesias - were actually placed in the very same cell in which the members of the fascist band were being held, thereby risking not only their wellbeing but even their lives.

The response to these arrests was immediate among the student population. On June 7, a meeting of 1,000 students voted to strike and set up an interuniversity coordinating appara-

On the night of June 8, a silent march was held around the slogan "Freedom for the comrades."

Support grew among the university population. The rector of the provincial university and all of the deans demanded that the prisoners be released. A top governing body of the university sent telegrams of protest to leading government figures, including General Lanusse and Minister of the Interior Mor Roig. A meeting of professors, teaching staff, and graduate students voted to organize a march encompassing all levels of the faculty. Statements of protest and solidarity came from a number of unions, among them those representing workers in light and power, press, private petroleum, milling, automotive transportation, banking, and graphics. They also called on the CGT (Confederación General del Trabajo - General Confederation of Labor) to call a meeting to vote on a proposal to hold a work stoppage demanding the release of the arrested students.

Statements of solidarity were also is-

sued by a series of political groups, including the UCR (Unión Cívica Radical - Radical Civic Union), the "62 Organizations," the PSA, the FIP (Frente de Izquierda Popular - Front of the Popular Left), the Communist party, the PSP (Partido Socialista Popular -Popular Socialist party), the Bar Association, the Peronist Lawyers Center, the Provincial University Workers Association, the Association of Psychologists, the Society of Architects,

On June 12, the scope of the protests increased considerably with the involvement of the secondary school students and, especially, with the decision of the CGT to organize a general work stoppage on June 14. The same day, four of the five persons who had been arrested were released. Three of them - Iglesias, Diez, and Sara Ferreiro de Chueque - are nevertheless to be eventually put on trial. The fifth, Sprovieri, remains imprisoned, and was reportedly to be transferred to Buenos Aires.

The June 14 general strike was held in spite of the release of the four, which was generally understood to be a concession to the success of the mass mobilizations.

A coordinating committee of various political parties has been formed to help organize a continuing struggle for freedom for Sprovieri and demanding that no trials of any of those arrested be held. The participating parties thus far include the PSA, the FIP, the PSP, and the ENA (Encuentro Nacional de los Argentinos - National Encounter of Argentinians).

The Mass Mobilization in Mar del Plata

(Reprinted from the July 10, 1972 issue of Intercontinental Press)

[The following account of the general strike in Mar del Plata on June 14, which we reported in our last issue (see "General Strike Wins Release of Prisoners" pp. 768-69), has been translated by Intercontinental Press from the June 21 issue of the Buenos Aires weekly Avanzada Socialista. A translation of some editorial comments by Avanzada Socialista appears under "Documents."]

* * *

MAR DEL PLATA, June 17—The mobilization began with the students but rapidly spread to other sectors. The first unions to take a stand were Light and Power, the Tile Setters, Postal Workers, the Bus Drivers Union, among others. All these sectors, together with Intersindical [Interunion], which includes the flour workers and miners, began to put pressure on the CGT [Confederación General del Trabajo—General Confederation of Labor] to call a strike. The "62 Organizations" had already indicated their support through a press release.

The university staffs, associations of professionals, and political parties also joined the mobilization. The bar association decided at a general meeting to participate in the action. The university teachers, the deans, as well as the rector joined in.

The political parties, among them the UCRP [Union Civica Radical del Pueblo—Radical Civic Union of the People] and the FIP [Frente de Izquierda Popular — Front of the Popular Left], issued statements demanding release of those who had been arrested, and denouncing the repression. The PSA [Partido Socialista Argentino - Argentine Socialist party called on all the parties to form a broad commission to give more power to the mobilization. The proposal was accepted by the PSP [Partido Socialista Popular - Popular Socialist party], the Communist party, the Juventud Peronista [Peronist Youth], the ENA [Encuentro Nacional de los Argentinos -National Encounter of Argentinians] and the FIP. The Social Democrats and the UCRP turned down the pro-

On Monday [June 12] a meeting of 1,000 persons, most of them students, was held. They decided to call a strike.

The presence of the labor movement at the head of the mobilization polarized the whole population. A large number of sectors began to join the strike. These included the Universidad Católica [Catholic University], Agronomía de Balcarce [Agricultural School of Balcarce], teachers of both the primary grades and high schools, nonteaching staff, the associations of psychoanalytical studies, of psychologists, visual arts, the engineers' center, etc.

The high-school students played a very important role. They elected delegates by schools to a coordinating body. The student vanguard was made up of youth from the high schools and from the working class. An eloquent index of the participation of the youth was the fact that of the 105 arrested—all of whom were later released—the big majority were youth.

The army mobilized a huge force. They brought in troops from nearby areas as well as special detachments from the federal district.

Businessmen and the middle class opposed the strike. Terrified, they closed shop, and the school authorities called a holiday.

Nevertheless the strike was a complete success. Even the newsstands, daily papers, buses, and taxis stopped work. The rank and file of the unions that refused to support the strike (building trades, textile, and office workers) likewise joined the action. They organized picket squads that went from plant to plant in the unions whose leaders had acted as strike-breakers and got their comrades to down tools.

Despite the levy of troops, the workers and students formed into columns. These swelled to 300, 400, and up to 1,000 persons. People applauded from their doorways and helped demonstrators get away when they were chased by the military.

'Avanzada Socialista' Comments on Mar del Plata

(Reprinted from the July 10, 1972 issue of Intercontinental Press)

[Under separate headings below, we are publishing, for the information of our readers, four editorial comments made by Avanzada Socialista, a Buenos Aires Trotskyist weekly, on the recent general strike in Mar del Plata.

[The strike was touched off by students who protested the arrest of witnesses to the murder last year of Silvia Filler, a student. For further details see the eyewitness account of the events in Mar del Plata, published elsewhere in this issue, and the article

"General Strike Wins Release of Prisoners" in last week's issue of *Intercontinental Press*.

[The translation of the four editorial comments is by Intercontinental Press.]

Mar del Plata

The "happy city" is beginning to become an unhappy city for the bourgeoisie. The mobilization of the workers, students, and populace confronted the government with the danger of a Marplatazo [semiuprising in the city]. For the first time in the history of Mar del Plata, a strike staged by the CGT with a political objective (release of Sprovieri and all the political prisoners, and in opposition to the repressive legislation), welded together the majority of the population. The murder of Silvia Filler last year angered the populace as a whole. Now the arbitrary imprisonment of the main witnesses of the crime bared the "justice" of the regime in all its nakedness. Even the most backward sectors were drawn in by the power of the mobilization.

Likewise for the first time in Mar del Plata, the army intervened in a struggle of the workers and students and occupied the university. Nevertheless the impressive military deployment could not overcome the popular indignation, and the government had no choice but to release five of the six who had been imprisoned.

News of their release had been given out the day before the strike, probably in expectation that this would weaken the demonstration. But the workers and students of Mar del Plata took the release of the five as a partial victory that could serve to give further impulse to the struggle.

The complete success of the strike and the broad participation of the workers in the mobilization indicate that we are on the right road.

For a Giant Meeting

The struggle has just begun. The victories that have been won must become the basis for moving forward. Let us not forget that the student Sprovieri is still being held under the Parliament of Terror and has been sent to the Chaco.

The CGT, the Intercoordinating Committee, the Commission of Political Parties, all the sectors that came out against the repressive legislation and in favor of freeing Sprovieri and the other political prisoners must join together to make a common call at a Giant Public Meeting (or Popular Assembly) in Mar del Plata this week. The only way to continue the struggle is to keep up and expand the massive actions achieved the past week. The main dangers are becoming isolated or engaging in sectarianism.

Why CGT Joined

The workers and students of Mar del Plata know Rizzo, the local general secretary of the CGT, very well. He is not exactly an outstanding fighter. The connection between Rizzo and Gómez—the fascist alleged to have murdered Silvia Filler—is a source of comment in Mar del Plata.

How could he possibly be interested in freeing the witnesses that are going to testify against "his friend"?

How could he possibly appear to be fighting, apparently against his own interests?

Rizzo, like all union bureaucrats, has to do a balancing act to stav in office. When the pressure from the ranks is very strong, he tries to adjust his position in that direction. Between an idea or "friendship" and his post, a bureaucrat always chooses the post. Thus Rizzo had no choice but to support the work stoppage. Our comrades in Mar del Plata understood this reality very well and were able to bring pressure on the trade-union leaders, who were reluctant to support the struggle. The adherence of the CGT was decisive in assuring the mobilization. Without that, only small student skirmishes would have occurred.

Let's learn from the Mar del Plata experience. The trade-union organizations, although still in the hands of the bureaucrats, remain the only organizational form of the labor movement as a whole and its only medium for massive mobilizations. The Ru-

ccis must also be faced with the same alternative as Rizzo. Let's mobilize to demand that the national CGT take the lead in a powerful campaign for the release of all the political prisoners, both students and unionists.

We must take advantage of every opportunity to put pressure on the national leadership of the CGT. In connection with this, the projected July 4 meeting of the Peronist and Communist youth, if it is to be effective, must be presented to the CGT, with a demand for its adherence in the struggle against the repression.

Correct Line Wins

In Avanzada Socialista, we have been stressing the need for a broad nation-wide campaign backed by the sectors that agree on two objectives: (1) release of all the political prisoners, both students and unionists; (2) repeal of the repressive legislation, an end to kidnappings by the police, and an end to torture.

The correctness of this position has been confirmed by the events in Mar del Plata. There the powerful pressure of the working-class and student rank and file, aroused over the attitude of the police, compelled united action, eliminating the possibility of opposition from the ultraleft currents on the one hand, and from the union bureaucracy and the bourgeois currents on the other. The tendencies that believe the way forward is through small but very "combative" actions of the vanguard were proved wrong by what happened. In this way, the most important mobilization of the workers and students in recent months was achieved as well as the release of five of the six who had been arrested.

Why can't all the political parties and organizations of the unions, students, and professional layers that united in the Mar del Plata events mount a common nationwide campaign for the release of the 500 political prisoners still being held in prison? Our party is pledged to do its utmost in this task.

Call for Investigation of Trelew Murders

(Reprinted from the September 11, 1972 issue of Intercontinental Press)

[The following front-page editorial on the August 16 murder of the guerrillas in Trelew by the Argentine military appeared in the August 23 issue of Avanzada Socialista, published weekly by the Partido Socialista Argentino (Argentine Socialist party). It was entitled "Repudiate the Massacre: We demand an investigation and punishment of those responsible." The translation is by Intercontinental Press.]

Our party, which has stated its opposition to the mistaken methods of the guerrillas, shares the angry suspicion of the workers and the people that the fifteen* revolutionists killed in the Almirante Zar Base were viciously murdered by the navy, which was responsible for guarding them. The official explanation is full of unanswered questions and points that need clarification, yet the bloody repressive and political meaning of this deed is clear. The armed forces and the government cannot expect the country and the people to be satisfied with the explanation that has been of-

This explanation raises certain questions that are today being asked by the entire country. How did the officer on duty and in charge of guarding the nineteen most important politico-military prisoners in the country come to find himself alone with them, in a corridor, at 3:40 a.m. with a machine

gun in his hands? How did the guerrillas manage to get weapons for the subsequent shootout? How did it happen that all of the prisoners and none of the jailers were killed or wounded in the shootout and that the hostage emerged alive and unhurt? What could have driven the prisoners to such a preposterous act as that of confronting 400 watchful soldiers, on a military base in the middle of the desert, with no hope of escaping, when just a few days earlier, in circumstances where the possibilities for escaping were better, they surrendered unconditionally?

The fraudulent nature of the official version in face of these basic questions is obvious. No decree or clampdown can overcome the suspicion that this was a premeditated massacre—a massacre that could have expressed the military's hatred for the guerrillas and its thirst for vengeance against them, or that could in addition have had a coup d'etat as an ultimate political objective.

It is the government itself that is attempting to cover up these doubts by limiting itself, late on Bloody Tuesday and then in a lengthy session of the military chiefs, to placing a ban on any information from the guerrilla groups and stating that the process of democratic normalization leading up to elections [next year] would continue its course.

If the hunger and poverty of the workers, together with the biased and repressive character of the military government, were decisive obstacles, limiting the process of restoring civil institutions, the unexplained killing of fifteen revolutionists on a naval military base can end the government's control over this process.

The Argentine Socialist party will continue its stubborn struggle to defend even the most minor vestige of constitutional political rights and the most modest civil rights won by the working-class and popular masses. In defending them, we call for denunciation of the Trelew massacre and for its investigation by a commission consisting of the CGT [Confederación General del Trabajo - General Confederation of Labor] and the workingclass and popular political parties. We call for punishment of those responsible to the full extent of the law. This is the way to halt the sinister escalation that the repressive forces are embarking on, and to block success for any attempt at a military coup by the far right against the masses. We must alert the working people, and especially the workers' movement and its class organizations, to the need to compel trade-union and political leaders to speak out against the Trelew massacre and call for a clarification of the matter and the punishment of those responsible; to denounce any attempt at an ultrareactionary military coup; and to place no confidence in the present military government, which must be replaced by a workers' and popular govern-

Regardless of what comes out of this necessary investigation, the Argentine Socialist party repudiates the bloodbath, the responsibility for which lies with the military dictatorship that took power six years ago.

^{*} This was the number at the time the editorial was written. Later, another of those wounded died, bringing the total to sixteen. Whether the other three who were wounded survived remains to be seen.

Campaign to Free All Political Prisoners

Intercontinental Press January 29, 1973

Activity in many areas slowed down during the final days of 1972 and the first days of 1973. Not the repression, however.

The year's end shed no light on the case of the student Enrique Brandazza from Rosario. Brandazza disappeared in very murky circumstances while there was a warrant out for his arrest. The police and military authorities in Rosario issued contradictory statements, at first denying, and then confirming, the existence of this warrant. The investigation into the possibility that he had been kidnapped appears, like the Filler case, to have reached a dead end. Today not even the most optimistic persons hope ever to see Brandazza alive again.

There was absolutely nothing new or surprising in this case or in other things the military junta did. During the first week of the new year they announced that the state of siege would remain in effect. Some guerrilla attacks were taken as the excuse for thus going against repeated promises that the electoral campaign would take place without a state of siege. Continuing it involves banning public openair meetings, suspending constitutional freedoms, and the possibility of

holding prisoners without trial for an indefinite period of time—election-campaign provisions that are all obviously designed to insure smooth sailing for the Great National Agreement.

The year 1972 drew to a close with a hunger strike by political prisoners to protest against the inhuman conditions of their confinement: poor food, overcrowding, wretched medical care, lack of reading material and recreation, and inhuman visiting rules. The visiting room at Rawson has earned a sad reputation: The prisoners are separated by bars and wire screens from their loved ones who visit them.

These conditions prompted the prisoners to decide to jeopardize their health and their lives in order to force the dictatorship to improve the treatment they receive. Going without food for twenty days, and without liquids on a revolving basis brought no improvements to the prisoners, despite the fact that some of them seriously compromised their health.

Nevertheless, in spite of the silence of the bourgeois press, their protest has had an impact outside the prisons. Various organizations, including our party, have joined together in denouncing the situation and in coming out against the pernicious maximum security system, which is a legal device for covering up abuses.

Still, we believe that this denunciation is insufficient. It is not enough to say that the prisoners are being held under inhuman conditions. A joint, massive action must be initiated if the repressive abuses are to stop. Our party calls on all parties and coalitions participating in the elections to organize a public meeting against the repression. The meeting should demand an end to the state of siege and repeal of the repressive laws. A public commitment should be made to struggle for the elimination of the maximum security system and to press the congress to pass as its first measure full amnesty for all those imprisoned for political and related offenses. Congress should be urged to set up an investigating commission to probe all kidnappings, tortures, and murders not yet cleared up.

Only such a commitment will make it possible to prevent the next government from acting—even though it may treat the prisoners with less brutality—essentially as a new jailer of hostages.

Police Raid Three PSA Headquarters

(Reprinted from the November 27, 1972 issue of Intercontinental Press)

At the end of October and the beginning of November, the latest in a long series of attacks on the Argentine Socialist party (PSA - Partido Socialista Argentino) occurred when police raided three of its headquarters. On October 31, according to the November 8 issue of the PSA's weekly, Avanzada Socialista, the police entered the Villa Lugano center and left without seizing anything. On November 2, the Florida headquarters received its second visit from the police. "This time they were in uniform, unlike the group in civilian dress that broke in two months ago, made off with personal and party effects, and mistreated and insulted two compañeros," Avanzada Socialista stated.

On the same day, a group claiming to be acting under orders from a judge (the judge in question emphatically denied issuing such an order) occupied the Beccar headquarters and arrested twenty-eight party members who arrived during the afternoon. Among those arrested was the party's national counsel, Jorge Luis Gonçalvez. The homes of those arrested were also raided, and in some cases personal effects were confiscated. Some have since been fired from their jobs.

The Beccar incident, according to Avanzada Socialista, "exceeds the outrages previously carried out against other headquarters (the centers in Flo-

res, Núñez, Rosario, and Córdoba). The police moved against a recently opened headquarters, the address of which is included in the list published by our newspaper and whose opening had been announced to the very commissariat that subsequently raided it. Since the police were unable to come up with any 'evidence' capable of justifying their action, they gave the press a frivolous story about an alleged stronghold of 'extremists' where 'documents were falsified' and 'clandestine meetings' held. These fairy tales have been refuted by the very fact that the police were forced to release our compañeros twenty-four hours after they were arbitrarily taken into custody."

Campaigners Seized by Police at Rally

(Reprinted from the January 29, 1973 issue of <u>Intercontinental Press</u>)
(Translated from the January 12, 1973 issue of <u>Avanzada Socialista</u>)

Córdoba

Some forty companeros attended a meeting in the town of Villa María with José Páez and César Robles, members of the executive board of the Córdoba Workers' Front. When it was over and people were leaving the premises of La Fraternidad, where they had been meeting, the provincial police proceeded to arrest three of the participants. With this, a campaign of intimidation was unleashed against the activists, supporters, and sympathizers of the Front in this city.

The campaign has taken the form of completely unjustified summonses and police searches. According to the Córdoba chief of police, the three who were arrested have been turned over to the federal court.

Coming on the heels of the arrests of Páez and Flores, which also occurred recently, this incident constitutes a serious attempt to obstruct the activity of the Front and of the Socialist Workers party. Moreover, it is an outrage against the very laws laid down by the bourgeoisie, which its

representatives, more than anyone else, have an obligation to respect.

All the organizations that claim to represent the working class and the people must step up their struggle for broader democratic freedoms and, immediately, for the release of all political prisoners that the regime is holding in its concentration camps. Our party will back any mobilization to achieve this, for it is a matter of principle to wage a common struggle against the repressive policy of the government and the bosses.

Bureaucrats Strike at PST

(Reprinted from the March 2, 1973 issue of The Militant)

As the March elections approach, the growing impact of the campaign of the Workers Front and the Socialist Workers Party of Argentina (PST) is worrying the Peronist trade-union bureaucracy and former dictator Juan Peron himself. In a message released Jan. 27, Peron claimed that the occupation of the Somisa steel plant by the workers (see story in last week's Militant) was the work of "a group of agents provocateurs." The Workers Front and PST were prominent in their support of that strike.

The Jan. 31 issue of the PST's newspaper Avanzada Socialista reported on three physical assaults against PST members. On Jan. 21, 15 armed goons of the Peronist-led Union Obrera Metalurgica (UOM—Metalworkers Union) tore up copies of Avanzada Socialista being sold by two women outside the Fiat Concord factory in Cordoba. They fled, however, after being surrounded by 200 workers from the plant who came to the defense of the women.

On Jan. 26 PST members selling their newspaper outside a plant in Munro were shot at from a car. One person who witnessed the attack recognized the car and those in it as paid goons of the UOM.

Two other PST members were attacked by the head of the Portworkers union while distributing leaflets at the waterfront in Buenos Aires.

PST Proposal on Political Prisoners

(Reprinted from the April 2, 1973 issue of Intercontinental Press)

[The following is a reply by the Argentine Partido Socialista de los Trabajadores (PST—Socialist Workers party) to an appeal from the Comisión de los Familiares de los Presos (Committee of Relatives of Prisoners). It was published in the February 22 issue of the PST's weekly, Avanzada Socialista under the title "Only Popular Mobilization Will Free the Prisoners." The translation is by Intercontinental Press.]

* * *

Compañeros:

We have just received your request that our party make a material contribution to helping organize the meeting that you are scheduling for the 22nd.

While not declining to make this contribution, we feel obliged to state our

political position regarding your struggle in defense of the political prisoners because we believe that up to now it has been poorly directed.

When we speak of the tragic problem of your relatives who are prisoners and of our participation in the struggle to free them, what we mean is precisely this: In the case of our brothers in jail, there can be no scheming, no sectarian plotting, no propaganda actions on behalf of any particular group, sect, or party; rather, there must be an implacable struggle to win their release. Our participation in the defense of the prisoners has only one aim—to free them from the clutches of the regime.

Only Popular Mobilizations
Will Free Them

There is no other way to achieve this goal than to bring about a mass mobilization of the people—a task that, unfortunately, you are not carrying out.

One of the conditions that the military junta has laid down for the next government is that the political prisoners must remain in the jails. The statements and deeds of the dictatorship daily bear this out. If the savage bloodbath at Trelew was not enough, then the maximum security regulation and the behavior of the military during the hunger strike confirm this. No party in the parliamentary opposition, nor even in the government, will be able to impose and make the armed forces go along with any amnesty without the backing of a popular mobilization.

But the situation is even more serious than this. The leaderships of the parties that have a chance of winning the elections do not have a position that openly favors freedom for all prisoners, including those found guilty of armed actions. Balbín, one of those who might become president after May 25, has repeated to the point of monotony that he is "against indiscriminate amnesties." Cámpora has said publicly that "this question will be resolved by the future congress."

The fact that these leaders hold this position does not mean that it is shared by the millions of citizens who will vote for them. Every day we hear statements from the Radical youth or sections of the Peronist movement that specifically come out in favor of freeing all political prisoners. We believe that sentiment in favor of a general amnesty exists among broad layers of the people.

Your Position Strikes Us As Sectarian

Your call for a meeting on the 22nd, which we have supported, does not seek to provide for the thousands and thousands of Peronists and Radicals who want amnesty a way to express their feeling. It does not make it possible for the rank and file of these parties to apply pressure on their leaders and force them to modify their position. Nor does it make it possible to involve other political forces.

Compañeros: The head of the Peronists is not Ongaro, nor is it the thirdworld priests. It is Cámpora whom you should invite. He is the one who

would then have to give an explanation to his rank and file if he turned down the invitation. It is he who might become the next president and from whom a commitment must be sought; if he refuses, he must be unmasked in front of his followers. The same goes for Balbin and all the other candidates. Your approach, by not involving the leadership of the Peronist movement, allows it to send some respectable figure as its representative who does not have the authority to commit it as a party.

Your call does not make possible wide participation either. You are inviting Tosco [leader of the Córdoba electrical workers, who was freed from jail in September 1972 after serving a year and a half for "subversive" activities]. We propose that you also invite Luis Gómez, leader of the SOMISA strike by 8,000 steelworkers in San Nicolás. You are inviting Salamanca, leader of the Córdoba SMATA Sindicato de Mecánicos y Afines del Transporte Automotor del Automóvil - Union of Mechanics and Related Transport Workers in the Automobile Industry]. We propose that you also invite Páez, leader of SITRAC [Sindicato de Trabajadores Concord - Concord Workers Union and the second Cordobazo. If we want this to be a big meeting, room must be made for all currents that call for freeing the prisoners.

When the bullets of the military put an end to the lives of sixteen political prisoners six months ago, no ideological distinctions were made. Nor was any made by the 150 Rawson prisoners who signed an appeal to "the organizations of the people and public opinion" on May 25, 1972, in which they expressed the hope that "by achieving close unity in the face of our common enemy, the way we are doing inside the prisons, you will not be tacitly allowing such outrages to be committed."

There is a lesson to be learned in the success of the Mar del Plata mobilization, which forced all the political parties to take a stand and the leaders of the CGT [Confederación General del Trabajo—General Confederation of Labor] to call a strike. In only two days, we won the release of five compañeros who had already been turned over to the antisubversion authorities.

We think that you have to ask yourselves: Do you want a massive meeting, involving the political parties, or do you want a small one with the usual speakers and the same people in attendance? Do you want to launch a bold campaign that will reach public opinion and force the parties to take a stand, or do you want a campaign that will go unnoticed? For us, the answer is clear. If we want the release of the prisoners, there is no other way than to organize a broad, massive campaign. The alternative will be to waste our efforts.

If you should decide on the former path, our party will place all our help and facilities at your disposal. If not, you will still be able to count on our support, but we will not commit ourselves to an effort that we consider useless.

Free All the Political Prisoners in Argentina!

(Reprinted from the April 9, 1973 issue of Intercontinental Press)

[The following is a translation by Intercontinental Press of an article that appeared in the March 15 issue of the Buenos Aires Avanzada Socialista, the weekly newspaper of the Partido Socialista de los Trabajadores.]

Journalist: Is it true that one of your first measures will be to proclaim a broad amnesty law for political crimes?

Campora: Without doubt; in fact we're doing our utmost to contribute to pacifying [the country]. I think that the Argentine parliament... will be anxious to contribute to this pacification and to this Argentine coexistence, providing on the parliamentary level a broad amnesty for all those who have been unjustly deprived of their freedom. (La Nación, March 13.)

* * *

We appeal on this occasion to the compañeros who in one way or another have been struggling or who want to struggle to free the prisoners. We appeal especially to the compañeros of the Juventud Peronista [Peronist Youth] and to the militant sector of the Peronist movement, who have been campaigning on the fundamental slogan "Cámpora for president, freedom for the fighters." It was a satisfaction perhaps when you learned about the declarations of the president-elect reported above.

As a matter of principle, it likewise appeared positive to us for Dr. Cámpora to indicate that he favors a broad amnesty.

Nevertheless, compañeros, we feel obliged to say that there's a long way to go before these declarations become converted into the reality of an Argentina without a single political prisoner after next May [when Cámpora is scheduled to take office]. The fact is that the president-elect's words were ambiguous.

In his declaration Dr. Cámpora said, "I think that the Argentine parliament . . . will be anxious . . ." We wonder. And if parliament is not "anxious"?

Why didn't Dr. Cámpora, in order to dispel any doubts, simply say: "My first act in government will be to send a bill to parliament; and the FREJULI [Frente Justicialista de Liberación—Liberation Front for Social Justice, the Peronist coalition] legislators—who constitute the majority—will immediately approve it." Millions of citizens are awaiting a promise like that—clear and emphatic.

Another point to be disturbed about, because it lends itself to a double interpretation, is the statement that the "broad amnesty" will be "for all those who have been unjustly deprived of their freedom." And we say that it lends itself to misinterpretation because it can very well be concluded that if there are political prisoners who are "unjustly" held in jail, then there are others who are quite justly being held in jail. And this interpretation is not a fanciful one. We know—Mor Roig [minister of the interior] himself hinted at this just hours before the polls opened—that the military, in order to alleviate pressures, is prepared to allow a discriminating or selective amnesty; that is, to release a handful of prisoners for minor so-called crimes, letting the rest rot in jail. By no means do we say that Dr. Cámpora's intentions merit such an interpretation. But it is necessary to clarify the point.

ALL the political prisoners, including ALL the guerrillas, must be freed. Who is going to determine which have been "justly" or "unjustly" imprisoned? Perhaps the same judges who convicted them on the basis of "spontaneous confessions" obtained through torture? And on the basis of what norm are they to be liberated or left in jail? Perhaps on the basis of ideological discrimination?

Absolutely ALL the political prisoners and guerrillas Let's must be freed, because the guilt for all the violence in nesty!!

these past years falls solely on the military regime. It was the dictatorship that began repressing the popular protest in blood and fire. It was on this basis that the guerrilla actions arose and developed.

Compañeros of the Juventud Peronista and the militant sector of the Peronist movement: You, better than anyone else, know the conditions that the armed forces want to impose on the incoming government. And you also know that one of the main points among these conditions concerns the political prisoners.

Dr. Cámpora's declaration thus fails to answer the main question: how to counteract the formidable pressure that will be mounted by the military to block a genuinely broad and full amnesty? There is only one means: All of us who want to finish with the reign of the jail and torture must mobilize in a united way!! And with a precise objective: to solicit from the elected deputies and senators, especially those belonging to the FREJULI, a public promise that the first law to be passed by Congress will be a broad amnesty, the abolition of all the repressive legislation and of the Supreme Criminal Court, and an investigation of the torture, murders, and kidnappings committed under the military dictatorship. For this investigation we must demand the formation of an Investigating Commission, with a labor majority, made up of legislators representing the trade-union organizations, political parties, and the families of those who were murdered.

To accomplish this, we appeal in the first place to the compañeros of the Juventud Peronista and of the militant sector of the Peronist movement. You bear an enormous responsibility. You carried the FREJULI campaign, and you raised as one of the main slogans of that campaign: "Cámpora for president; freedom for the fighters." There is no point in discussing whether the FREJULI legislators intend to carry out their electoral promise without vacillating. It is not a matter of intentions in the main, but of the strength available to neutralize the formidable pressure of the military. For that, compañeros of the Juventud Peronista and of the militant sector of the Peronist movement, your interest and feeling of urgency must be higher than that of anyone else in advancing this broad mobilization for the prisoners.

We likewise call on the young Radicals. You claim the tradition of the UCR [Unión Cívica Radical] on the question of civil liberties, having been the first to demand from your legislators the promise to free the prisoners and to repeal the repressive laws.

We likewise call on all the tendencies that claim to be in the left. Enough of sectarianism!! Let's unite in the struggle for an amnesty!! Whoever, on whatever pretext, holds back the broadest unity of action in demanding that parliament grant an amnesty facilitates our compañeros' being held prisoner until they rot.

Finally, we appeal to the families of those detained. We suggest that they take the initiative in convoking a public mass meeting to which all the legislators are invited, there to be asked to sign a promise to vote for a general amnesty. Demand that the Peronists, the Radicals, and members of any other party take a position on this point.

Let's initiate a massive campaign for a general amnesty!!

Will Peronists Free All Political Prisoners?

By David Thorstad

Intercontinental Press May 28, 1973

Throughout the Argentine election campaign that brought the Peronists to power, an important issue was amnesty for political prisoners under a future Peronist government. President-elect Héctor Cámpora is scheduled to take office on May 25, yet as the day draws near it is still not clear just which prisoners will be freed by an amnesty.

On May 3, shortly after the execution of Rear Admiral Hermes Quijada by guerrillas belonging to the Ejército Revolucionario del Pueblo 22 de Agosto (August 22 Revolutionary Army of the People), Cámpora met, in secret, with the military junta, including President Alejandro Lanusse. Throughout his campaign, he had refused any meeting with the junta. While all parties to the meeting emerged with evident satisfaction, the details of what was decided have been kept quiet.

The theme of the meeting, according to an editorial in the May 9 issue of Avanzada Socialista, the weekly newspaper of the Argentine Partido Socialista de los Trabajadores (PST—Socialist Workers party), was the question of amnesty. Since the meeting, the Argentine press has been full of speculation on the nature of the amnesty that will be implemented after May 25.

Indications are that the amnesty will be a limited one. This is the interpretation given to Cámpora's statement that "the amnesty will be broad, generous, and just." The "just" is held to mean that certain political prisoners will not be freed.

There are other signs as well. Vice president-elect Vicente Solano Lima, for instance, hinted that the amnesty might not include certain non-Peronist guerrillas: "The decree of an amnesty will possibly be the first legislative act [of the new government], as a move toward helping to pacify the country. The extent of the amnesty will be set by the law itself. The law will have to determine whether events such as what happened to Rear Admiral

Quijada are of a political nature or not. The proposal is that the law be broad in scope. But the parliament has the power to restrict it, place limits upon it, and, in the final analysis, to regulate it." The Peronists hold a majority in both houses.

Up to a point, this statement seems to echo a declaration by Admiral Mayorga on May 2: "I cannot conceive of anyone saying that political prisoners who killed a policeman should be freed. . . ." In a further clarification of the thinking of the most reactionary wing of the armed forces, he added: "If a legislator votes for freeing a murderer, everything possible must be done to put the legislator in jail. . . ."

The Peronist tack appears to be to adopt an amnesty law that will bring about the release of Peronist political prisoners, but not necessarily those of the ERP or the ERP August 22. Such a move would clearly be designed to isolate the non-Peronist guerrillas, thereby making it easier to crack down on them. Mariano Grondona speculated on the intentions of the Peronists in the May 12 issue of the Buenos Aires daily La Opinión:

"It is obvious that once in power, the Peronist movement will want to amnesty the members of its 'special formations,' thanks to whom, in part, it won the elections. But how far will it go in also drawing its cloak of forgetfulness over its 'enemies,' that is, of figures responsible for the previous regime? Among them are some who have been tried and convicted in illegal rulings. And there are a whole series of acts and situations that, in terms of the new legality, remain unclear. Will all these cases also be affected by a pardon?

"Finally, there is the non-Peronist guerrilla movement, circumstantially allied with the Peronists under a military government, but from now on potentially an opponent. Will the same criteria be applied to this movement as to the Peronist activists? Will the non-Peronist guerrillas be asked, for

instance, to leave the country once released?"

One answer to these questions was offered on May 9 by Deputy Salvador Busacca, a member of the Partido Popular Cristiano (Christian People's party), who belongs to the Peronist coalition, the FREJULI (Frente Justicialista de Liberación — Justicialist Liberation Front). According to the May 10 La Opinión, when he was specifically asked what fate awaited the guerrillas who participated in the executions of General Sánchez and director Oberdan Sallustro. Busacca replied that this would be up to the courts. Moreover, cases where the amnesty does not clearly apply to a prisoner, and which therefore go into the courts, could drag on for an estimated ten months before a final ruling comes down, reported La Opinión.

In view of the clear collusion between the military and the Peronist leadership to place conditions on the post-May 25 amnesty, Avanzada Socialista issued an urgent appeal for a campaign of mass mobilization to compel the new government to grant a broad, unconditional amnesty for all political prisoners. "Since the most reactionary sectors of the country are waging a public campaign against unconditional amnesty and against legislators who defend such an amnesty - Mayorga's statements, for example, show this to be the case - we want to meet them in the same way. It is through a big, public campaign for the release of all the political prisoners, involving all the popular parties and those who claim to represent the working class, together with the union organizations, the CGT [Confederación General del Trabajo-General Confederation of Labor, and the entire workers movement, that we will win the debate in parliament and any internal discussion this question may prompt within the ranks of the FREJULI and the Peronist move-

Mass Mobilizations, Prison Rebellions Force Campora to Free All Prisoners

By DAVID THORSTAD

Late in the evening of his inauguration May 25, Argentine President kets, and clothes, which they suspend-Héctor Cámpora announced a sweeping amnesty of all the country's political prisoners. Faced with determined crowds of tens of thousands of demonstrators who stormed prisons demanding the immediate release of the prisoners and with rebellions inside some prisons, he immediately declared a pardon for all political prisoners, declining to wait for the new Congress to approve an amnesty law the next day.

The move was a clear vindication of the political forces—the Partido Socialista de los Trabajadores (PST-Socialist Workers party) in the forefront-that had made the fate of the political prisoners a central issue of the election campaign. Throughout the preinaugural period these groupings sought to mobilize mass action as the only way to ensure the release of all the political prisoners.

During the campaign, Cámpora had promised that his government would declare an amnesty that would be "broad, generous and just." This was generally understood to mean that some of the prisoners, presumably certain non-Peronist guerrillas, would not be freed. Those campaigning for the release of all the prisoners responded to that by demanding: "Not a single day with political prisoners under the people's government."

This demand was the central focus of the huge and festive crowd that gathered in the Plaza de Mayo early on the day of the inauguration.

But what really forced Cámpora to grant a total amnesty, and to move up his timetable for doing so, was the events at Villa Devoto Prison in Buenos Aires, where many political prisoners were being held.

By late afternoon May 25, the first columns of demonstrators began arriving outside the prison. The prisoners in Cellblocks 2 and 3 had already rebelled and were in control of the situation on the inside. The

Buenos Aires daily La Opinión gave the following account:

Intercontinental Press June 11, 1973 oners had set fire to bed sheets, blaned through the bars of the windows. From the street a poster could be seen that announced 'Common Prisoners Back the Guerrillas.'" The common prisoners asked only that their sentences be reduced, as is customary during the granting of amnesties.

"In Cellblock 3, which had been taken over by the guerrilla prisoners, the rioters could be seen through the windows of the three floors hailing the demonstrators who were gathering in the street. The outside walls of Cellblock 3 were covered with the banners of all the guerrilla movements that were active throughout the country during the military regime that came to an end yesterday. With the aid of a megaphone, Peronist guerrillas and guerrillas of the Ejército Revolucionario del Pueblo [ERP-Revolutionary Army of the People] spoke to the crowd of people below, who were hoisting the colors of Argentina and of the various revolutionary

"The enthusiasm of the crowd, which was arriving in caravans, on foot, and in trucks and automobiles, made it appear likely that the doors would soon give in. The repeated chants of the crowd were directed against the former heads of the armed forces and the police and wished long life to the people, Perón, and the guerrillas."

In the late afternoon, negotiations began between the crowd and the authorities on the inside. At 8:45 p.m., the crowd agreed to support an ultimatum, presented by Fred Ernst of the Montoneros and Pedro Caces Camarero of the ERP: The authorities were given forty minutes to respond.

"After 9:00 p.m., the secretary general of the Peronist movement, Dr. Juan Manuel Abal Medina, announced that the prisoners would be released that very night," continued La Opinión. "Throughout all this, there were no signs of the military or the police. The doors seemed on the verge of giving in under the pressure of the throng. Inside the prison, the number of guards had been reduced and the

prisoners were in control of telephone communications. At 10:00 p.m., Pedro Caces Camarero, a member of the ERP, climbed onto the wall that faces Bermúdez Street, and announced to the crowd that he had spoken by telephone with Minister of the Interior Esteban Righi.

"He announced that Cámpora was prepared to pardon the prisoners, although this would require 'a few hours.' Caces Camarero asked the demonstrators not to disperse—in spite of the fact that Righi had requested that they do so - and shouted that 'a popular government cannot repress the people.' Then he said that he had asked that the pardon be announced over radio and television so that the people would be aware of the situation. 'If this is done,' he added, 'the crowd will disperse.'

"A little after 10:00 p.m., Abal Medina climbed onto the wall and, through the same megaphone that the guerrilla had used, announced that within one hour the pardon would take effect. Never had the Devoto neighborhood witnessed greater rejoicing. Cablegrams indicated that the city of Rawson was the scene of similar jubilation."

Even before Cámpora granted the pardon, a number of parliamentary deputies who were inside the prison had decided, together with prison officials, to go ahead on their own and sign a document releasing the political prisoners. They reached the decision that such a move was necessary. according to La Opinión, by taking into account the situation prevailing in the vicinity of the building."

At 11:00 p.m., the first group of prisoners emerged from the jail, to be greeted by relatives who were among the demonstrators.

Around 2:00 a.m., May 26, only a nucleus of some 2,000 demonstrators remained outside the prison. They were reportedly determined to wait until the last prisoner had been released. According to the May 27 La Opinión, a large number already had been released, but an undisclosed number appear to have still remained inside. At that point, "around twenty patrol cars and six armored cars unexpectedly happened into the square. Immediately, the sound of machine-gun fire could be heard, followed by intermittent gunshots from weapons of various calibers. The group of demonstrators quickly dispersed and the area continued to be patrolled well into the early hours of the morning; according to some, the patrol was met by gunfire from some roofs."

The incident left two teen-age boys dead, one a Peronist, the other a member of a Marxist group. Twenty were wounded.

The regional office of the Peronist Youth subsequently issued a statement accusing "various groups that showed that they do not understand the meaning of the popular triumph" of provoking the shoot-out. Although just what transpired is not entirely clear, La Opinión interpreted the statement in its May 29 issue as being directed against "the members of the Ejército Revolucionario del Pueblo (ERP) and other Marxist groups that took part in the mobilizations aimed at freeing the political prisoners in that prison."

Rebellions similar to the one in Villa Devoto occurred in other prisons. In most cases, common prisoners reportedly managed to take advantage of the chaos to escape. In Buenos Aires, Caseros Prison was virtually occupied, although, according to the May 27 La Opinión, "the political prisoners subsequently reported that it had in fact been a case of revelry that got out of hand." A couple of days later, 150 common prisoners held in the Borda Neuropsychiatric Hospital in the capital rioted. They took two patients and four guards hostage, threatening to kill them if they were not released.

In Córdoba, common prisoners rioted after twenty political prisoners were released. Some fifty common prisoners were said to have escaped, taking advantage of an assault on the prison by demonstrators who were demanding the release of the political prisoners. The prison archives were completely destroyed.

On May 28, a dozen or so inmates of the Córdoba women's prison Buen Pastor rioted. They demanded improved conditions and medical services in the prison and a speedup of the legal proceedings against them.

Some 800 prisoners rioted in the provincial penitentiary in Mendoza after a visit by Governor Alberto Martínez Baca. He came to the prison to free political prisoners jailed during the uprising there in April 1972.

In Rawson, too, prisoners took over their cellblocks demanding that they be released. They did so at 2:00 a.m. May 26, after learning about the events at Villa Devoto. By late afternoon of the same day, 200 political prisoners from Rawson arrived at Ezeiza airport in the capital in three airplanes. The fuselage of one had been spray-painted with the slogan: "Glory to the Trelew martyrs."

Philippe Labreveux described the arrival in the May 29 issue of the Paris daily Le Monde: "The fighters in the popular resistance got off the plane with the Peronists flashing the V-sign for victory, while the others raised the clenched fist. On the runway, relatives and friends, as well as their comrades in arms, greeted them with banners and signs bearing the symbols of the underground organizations: the FAR [Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias — Revolutionary Armed Forces, the FAP [Fuerzas Armadas Peronistas — Peronist Armed Forces], the ERP, etc. Several of the young militants covered their faces with handkerchiefs or stockings so as not to be recognized because, they said, 'the struggle con-A group of revolutionists wearing the legendary starred beret of Che Guevara chanted: 'Every fighter who has been freed will find his gun awaiting him.'"

Among the arrivals were the two longest-jailed political prisoners in Argentina: Frederico Jouve and Héctor Méndez, members of the Ejército Guerrillero del Pueblo (EGP — People's Guerrilla Army). They had helped organize an uprising in Salta in 1964 and were serving life sentences.

Le Monde reported that the number of political prisoners who had been freed in the amnesty totaled more than 1,000.

An example of the surge of enthusiasm and direct action that attended

the release of the political prisoners was the take-over of Bejamin Matienzo Airport in Tucumán the evening of May 27 by relatives of political prisoners, university students belonging to various political tendencies, and a group of the Peronist Youth. For three hours they kept airline personnel and passengers inside the airport in anticipation that a plane carrying twenty-two political prisoners from Buenos Aires and Trelew was going to land there. The occupation was lifted when it became clear that no plane carrying the prisoners was going to arrive at the airport.

According to a report in the May 29 issue of the Buenos Aires daily La Prensa, "the groups of young people arrived at the airport a little after noon after hearing that the political prisoners were to arrive by plane. While they waited, they painted the following slogan across the front of the building: 'Heroes of Trelew, FAR, ERP, Montoneros, FAP, FAL[Fuerzas Armadas de Liberación - Liberation Armed Forces] Airport.' They also lowered the flag from the pole in the airport's courtyard and hoisted it again after painting a five-pointed red star and the letters of the abovementioned armed organizations on it.

"At the same time, they put up a sign in the control tower that said: 'Welcome, fighters of the people. Popular justice for the Trelew murderers.' They also painted slogans on an ambulance and on the walls and doors of the building.

"The Peronist Youth also put up a big sign in the airport vestibule bearing the slogan: 'Perón and Evita, the Socialist Fatherland.'

"On the other hand, there were also chanting competitions between the Peronist and leftist groups. While the former sang the Peronist march and chanted slogans like 'Hey, hey, ho, ho, the prisoners have been freed on orders from Perón,' the latter chanted 'the masses have triumphed, the prisoners have been freed.' In addition, in an effort to unify the groups, various speakers from the Peronist Youth and another one who claimed to represent the ERP spoke about the need for unity among the armed groups."

Lessons of March on Villa Devoto Prison

June 18, 1973

Intercontinental Press

[The following article analyzes the events outside Villa Devoto Prison in Buenos Aires May 25 that brought about the release of all the political prisoners. Some 50,000 persons surrounded the prison, forcing newly installed President Héctor Cámpora to declare an immediate pardon. (See Intercontinental Press, June 11, p. 691.)

The article was published in the May 30 issue of Avanzada Socialista, the weekly newspaper of the Argentine Partido Socialista de los Trabajadores (PST - Socialist Workers party). The translation is by Intercontinental Press.

Following the mobilization in the Plaza de Mayo, the Peronist Youth initiated a march that was crowned with a clear triumph: the release of the Villa Devoto political prisoners and the presidential pardon.

The next day, it continued by organizing other street demonstrations in which all the political youth organizations participated.

This positive outcome, which serves as an example of what mobilizations can achieve, must not allow us to forget errors that prejudice the winning of new gains.

The problem of the prisoners, like that of the nationalizations or the rehiring of militants that have been fired, is not a task for the youth alone, however important the youth sector may be. It is a problem that belongs to all sectors that claim to be antiimperialist and revolutionary.

The Peronist Youth Refuses to Coordinate the Strugales

For months the Peronist Youth has consistently refused to undertake joint actions with the various left-wing currents in order to bring about the release of the prisoners. It proceeded with the same sectarian approach in the case of the march on Villa Devoto: It refused to organize it in common, or to state the time and place,

thereby forcing those who wanted to take part to first go to the Plaza de Mayo and go along with the organization and program of the Peronist Youth. We who are not prepared to cast our principles aside found ourselves obliged to go as individuals. Other left-wing groups submitted to this criterion and played a regrettable role. First, they got lost in the Plaza de Mayo. Second, they formed a small group. And finally they ended up chanting or going along with Peronist slogans.

The Peronist Youth had no difficulties in allowing the left-wing groups that acted in such a fashion to join in. This is all a step forward, since on other occasions this has not happened. For this reason, its attitude of allowing various sectors to join its march, even though only under its own leadership, is a positive move.

Lack of Political Coordination Facilitates Desperate Adventures

At Villa Devoto, two companeros were killed, shot from inside the prison when they attempted to break down the doors. A delay in releasing the last batch of prisoners brought on this action, which was desperate and unnecessary in view of the fact that they were being freed as a result of the pressure that was being exerted.

Two days later, the Peronist Youth put out a statement blaming "provocateurs" for the deaths, accusing them of having disrupted what was an act of support to the government and pointing out that they were not going to allow any repeat of this kind of

This is a very dangerous statement. First of all, it is true that this assault on the prison doors was, on this occasion, unnecessary, and more than that a desperate adventure. But along with pointing this out, it is necessary to condemn, before anyone else, the police, who do not hesitate to indiscriminately open fire on our youth. Who gave this criminal order?

Oddly enough, many of the prisoner companeros for whom the Peronist Youth mobilized were arrested for actions that were as adventuristic as the ones that the Peronist Youth are now condemning. How is it possible, within the space of one day, for the "provocateurs" and not those who shoot them down to become the enemy?

Second, the march on Devoto, like the mobilizations the following day, were not acts of support to the government. We respect the fact that the Peronist Youth sees it that way, and we accept the fact that this is their approach. But in fact the actions were, and must be, joint actions to free prisoners who come from different organizations. For this reason the actions needed to be coordinated and organized by agreement on common slogans and objectives. Not doing this increased the possibility that one or more tendencies would carry out a desperate or provocative action.

Finally, the statement that in the future it is not going to allow this type of action shows the sectarianism of the Peronist Youth. It does not understand that it is not a mass organization, that it cannot claim to be an organization representing any major section of the population. It does not understand that it is only a tendency of the youth, and one, moreover, that is heterogeneous, and lacks any clearly defined program and goals. The Peronist Youth does not understand that, whatever its positive intentions may be, it will be completely impossible for it to impose any anti-imperialist, revolutionary measure (nationalizations, elimination of the union bureaucracy) without acting in a coordinated fashion with leftwing sectors and the working class, of which we are a part. An example was the beating they took outside the Nino [restaurant] when they attempted to confront the armed bands of the union bureaucracy.

By not understanding this, the Peronist Youth, and many of its honest militants, fall into the same domineering approach used by the union bureaucracy: They refuse to discuss democratically and coordinate actions in a

framework of mutual political respect

The action on May 26 outside the Congress could have been an example of such an approach, yet again the Peronist Youth resorted to the same method. This time it refused to mobilize, and as a result the participa-

tion of its members was very poor.

These examples do nothing to aid in carrying out the immense task facing the youth. There are soldiers who are still being held prisoner and there are thousands of activists who have been fired and who must be rehired. It is these immediate tasks, together with the nationalizations and workers

control, that are waiting to be carried out. We must continue along the path opened up by the youth of the capital and Greater Buenos Aires in order to win the release of the prisoners and the abolition of the repressive laws. To do this, unity of action agreed upon loyally and democratically will be necessary.