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December 12, 1974

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our schedule

This special forty-eight page issue will be the last issue of INPRECOR to be published in 1974. Our next issue, which will appear at the beginning of January, will be entirely devoted to a survey of the current world economic situation. We will resume our regular publication schedule with the issue dated January 16, 1975.

in our next issue - a special
survey of the world economic
situation

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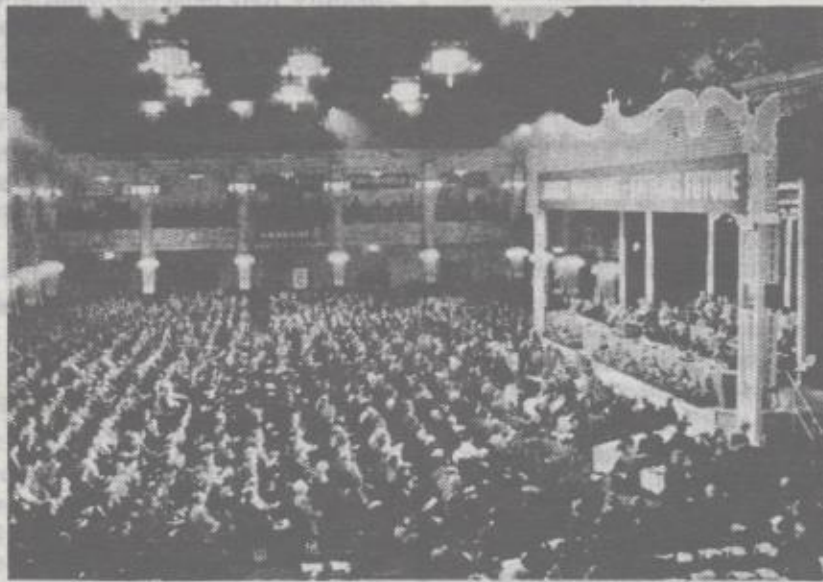
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LABOUR'S LEFT



BACKS OFF

by BRIAN HERON

Labour's conference ended on November 29 not so much with a bang but a whimper. Despite the sighs of relief from Labour's leadership, the story is far from over. The basic coordinates of the economic, social, and political crisis in Britain have already been mapped out. (See INPRECOR No. 10, October 17.)

The mass struggle of the British working class, combined with the steadily worsening economic situation, has meant that there is no stable political solution for the capitalist class outside of a major shift in the balance of class forces against the workers, first at a political level, and then at an economic and social level. The pivot of the bourgeoisie's strategy in moving toward this shift has been the drive to the strong state. At the same time, because the economic crisis of offering broad reforms has been wiped out and because the mass struggle has had radicalizing effects within the workers movement, a section of the Labour party, including parts of the leadership, have been forced to develop a "left" program within the working class. (Labour won the last election with a lower percentage of the vote than it obtained when it lost the election of 1970.) An additional pressure on the Labour party in this same direction has been the party's increasingly marginal role in the strategy of the big capitalists.

Labour's "left" and the Social Contract

The left within the Labour party arose in harness with sections of the trade-union bureaucracy, which had also been pushed to the left by rank-and-file militancy. For the first time, two programs began to exist within the party. The left began to project the need for state takeovers of industry, workers management, opening the books of the major capitalist companies to workers inspection, and so on. The center and the right maintained the old course of the British Labour party, hoping to inflict defeats on the working class through the trade-union bureaucracy. The weapon developed by Labour faced with the capitalist crisis was the Social Contract, an old-fashioned voluntary wage-restraint program concocted in a clever political manner. The Social Contract has also fulfilled an internal function for Labour, serving as a bridge between the right and the left, simultaneously offering state control and wage restraint. The very vagueness of the terms of the Social Contract were necessary to allow for the shifts and maneuvers in the policy that would be required in the struggle between the right and the left in the party and the unions. "Miraculously," Denis Healey's budget presented in November became part of the Social Contract. This "amendment," previously unmentioned, amounted to a dole of £1.5 thousand million to industry, the costs to be passed on to the

working class in the form of price increases. As one delegate to the Labour party conference remarked, "The purpose of this budget was to give nerve back to management, but we have just spent five years unnerving them."

The left at the conference

What happened to the left at the Labour party conference? The conference, originally scheduled to take place in September, was postponed until after the election. From November 26 to 29 at Central Hall Westminster delegates debated economic policy, the Common Market, and many other issues. Big challenges had been expected from the left on all these points. But they did not materialize. Even on the question of elections to the National Executive Committee (the extra-Parliamentary leadership of the party), the left made no striking gains. They did not even manage to unseat Chancellor of the Exchequer Denis Healey, the current *bête noire* of the Labour left because of his recent budget. The left gained one additional seat on the party executive through the election of the new representative of the Seamen's Union. This gives them a current overall majority of two. Anthony Wedgwood Benn, a leader of the left, polled the highest vote among the local constituency branches of the party, but that represents no change, since Michael Foot, currently minister of employment and one of the oldest left-wing figures within the party, normally takes that position. The Economist, leading journal of the industrial bourgeoisie, commented: "Mr. Wilson and his team will probably feel they have been let off lightly." Even the resolution demanding a special conference on the renegotiated terms of British membership in the EEC, passed against the wishes of the Labour party leadership, meant, according to the December 1 London Times, that "nothing is fundamentally changed so far as the Market is concerned and it will be next year's conference that counts on this issue."

So what happened to the left?

The first point to recognize is that the issue that really dominated the conference, and certainly the lead-up to the conference, was the question of whom the Labour Members of Parliament and the party cabinet ministers will be responsible to. On this issue Richard Clements had this to say in the November 22 Tribune (journal of left Social Democracy): "Democracy reaches its proper consistency only when it is intermixed with tolerance. It is my deepest conviction that in the last five years we have come very close to getting the right ingredients." Ian Mikado, left MP, platform speaker on the issue at the conference, showed in practice what this mixture means. To him fell the task of opposing on

behalf of the leadership a proposal to make Labour's MPs face new selection procedures in the party branches before every election. The character of the mixture was also clear on October 31, less than a month before the conference, when Minister for Industry Tony Benn and Minister of Overseas Development Judith Hart were carpeted for supporting a National Executive Committee motion deploring the fact that the government saw fit to sanction a visit by the British navy to Simerstown, South Africa. Wilson demanded written assurance that these ministers would defend the line of the cabinet within the NEC.

This action, declared the editors of the Times on November 2, "suggests that there is more at stake than three ministers stepping out of line about a naval visit to South Africa. And indeed there is. We are witnessing preliminary moves . . . before battle commences on the issue of authority within the Labour Movement."

Unions take a back seat

The trade unions have traditionally been the bulwark of the right wing within the Labour party conferences. This situation changed when the old bureaucracy failed to hold back rank-and-file struggle against the incomes policy of the Wilson governments in 1964-70. That struggle was of such a pitch that it resulted in a significant shift to the left in the trade-union leaderships. In the fight over Labour party democracy the total confusion of the left inside the constituency section of the party was backed up by a series of straight pro-platform votes by the trade-union leadership. For them, the issue of the accountability of MPs and ministers is abstract at best; at worst, it is extremely damaging to their own positions. The basis for the preservation of the union bureaucracy's increased political influence lies at least in part in their direct relationship to the cabinet. Further, such accountability within their own organizations would represent a real danger in the current period of mounting struggle. Finally, accountability would lock the Labour leadership into a straitjacket, thus impeding the maneuvers the trade-union bureaucracy will have to carry out in the difficult period ahead.

But the real problem lies essentially in the nature of the shift to the left within the Labour party and the trade unions. Two days of the conference were taken up with discussing changes in party rules, an issue that was carefully chosen by the Wilson leadership in order to split up and defuse the left by taking advantage of the left's political weakness, which is rooted essentially in its failure to extend its very partial and limited economic program into the political arena, both within the party and within the unions. The left failed even to make an at-

tempt to forge the political instruments that would be needed to carry out their own limited program, based as it is on a break with the immediate interests of the bourgeoisie. The fight for working-class democracy within the Labour party is the necessary extension into the party-political framework of the desire to develop a left program for the government. The left's incapacity to wage such a fight reflects both the limits of their program and, in the final analysis (and this is one of the things that divides them from revolutionaries), their conception that they should be responsible to Parliament (that is, the bourgeois state) and not to the organizations of the working class. It was this conception that enabled Wilson to consolidate his position; he attacked the left exactly on their weakest flank.

A twofold operation

Dealing with the left was the first part of Wilson's project at the conference. A second part, related to the first, was more subtle. On the second day of the conference Wilson declared that the Labour party now is "the natural party of government." His small majority in Parliament has begun to look rather more secure in view of the disarray he sees in the bourgeois parties, which has emerged since the fall of the Heath government at the beginning of this year — a disarray that reflects the crisis of the whole strategy of the ruling class. But Wilson's statement relates to something else as well. It should be recognized that the Labour party came into office very early after starting to develop its "left turn." The party's accession to the government offered a material base for an important renewal of the right wing. In that sense, left MPs put their finger on an important point when they said that Healey's budget represented a victory of the treasury ministry over the Labour party. Sections of the Labour right have attempted to find a base outside of the working class and its organizations. They look to parts of the state apparatus and the nationalized industries for support in this. This situation was consolidated when the initially precarious-looking Labour majority turned out to be sufficient to allow the Labour government to survive without facing a united initiative in Parliament to unseat them, at least for some time. The political price for such an initiative would be very high in terms of the reaction of the working class. And the internal crisis of the bourgeois parties prevents any precipitous move in this direction by the ruling class anyway.

During the summer the Labour party right held relatively open and unchallenged meetings to organize their offensive against the left. Shirley Williams, minister for prices, and Roy Jenkins, minister for the Home Office, announced their intention to resign if the renegotiated terms of Common Market

membership were not supported by the cabinet. This open blackmail met with little response from the left. Labour's recent Parliamentary victory has reinforced the right's strength. Second, despite continued rank-and-file combativity, the number of strikes has dropped in the recent period (as is normal for this time of year). The trade-union bureaucracy has been relieved of the sort of constant pressure it was under during the summer when union conferences were going on. The Trades Union Congress was able to endorse Labour's Social Contract at its autumn conference this year, and the big struggles have not yet begun.

The operation, then, that Wilson mounted at the conference was aimed at attempting to win support from the ruling class by utilizing the maneuvering room created by a few months relative industrial peace, the disarray of the Tory party, the partial and temporary containment of his own left wing, and the massive grant he has made to private industry through the budget. He confuses the internal problems of the Tory party with a process of rethinking of strategy by the ruling class as a whole. While it is true that there has been some degree of break-up within sectors of the ruling class, no section of any significance is moving in the direction of support for Labour or support for the Social Contract. Nevertheless, that is what Wilson is aiming for. He would like to play a role for the British ruling class similar to that played by Social Democratic Chancellor Helmut Schmidt for the West German ruling class. That was the meaning of Wilson's inviting Schmidt to the Labour conference.

Wilson has created a small political space for himself because of the crisis of political perspective in both the ruling class and the working class. That situation could prevail for some time if the relationship of forces between the classes depended solely on a debate about perspectives. Reality, however, is somewhat different. Wilson has a short breathing space; but nothing more.

State of the struggle

Recently released figures indicate that since October 1973 wages have risen 22.8 percent, which is approximately 5 percent above the rate of inflation. Despite the dire warnings of leading capitalists, unemployment is rising only very slowly. It now stands at 650,000 and is increasing at a rate of 600 a month. It has not yet affected the core of the working class. While the bureaucracy has moved to curtail wage demands for the winter, the balance sheet shows that this operation has been far from successful. While the Engineers executive limited the resolution that was passed to a call for a "substantial increase" (defeating the left motion for a

£50 per week wage for skilled members of the union and a proportional increase for semiskilled and unskilled members), George Smith, general secretary of the Union of Construction, Allied Trades, and Technicians, has been unable so far to fulfill his promise to the government to reduce the demand of his union conference, which called for increases of 87 and 109 percent. The executive of the Miners Union felt unable to declare its agreement with the productivity deal proposed by the Nationalized Coal Board, and the deal was rejected by an overwhelming (2-to-1) majority of the rank and file when it was put to a vote. Hospital ancillary workers are continuing a militant campaign that has been going on since early summer. These workers have not given up a struggle perspective, despite their very weak economic position. All these examples indicate that the militancy of the working class is far from having abated; in fact, everyone still expects a large wage explosion in the spring.

Secondly, we should note the attitude of the ruling class toward the Labour government and its Social Contract. It can best be judged by the recent action of the employers' organization in Britain, the Confederation of British Industry (CBI). On November 22, a week after Healey's give-away budget was announced, it refused to issue any guidelines to its members as to the type of settlements that should be made with trade unions. Mr. Bateman of the CBI declared: "Unless we are given more help by the government, our powers to resist wage claims are limited." The level of trust between the government and the employers was further eroded when Labour's reaction to this was to propose "fining" through the official pricing system, the Price Code,

employers who granted "inflationary wage settlements."

Wilson's maneuvers, inside and outside the Labour party conferences, grow out of the political weakness of the left and the paralyzing relationship of class forces faced by the ruling class. The maneuvers cannot come to represent any new strategy for the ruling class. While it is true that the ruling class is watching developments in the Tory party with anxiety, its central aims have not been abandoned. The economic formula for capitalism developed by the Wilson government between 1964 and 1970 and later consolidated by Heath — that of transforming British capitalism around the leadership of industrial capital and turning it toward the Common Market — has yet to be capped with the appropriate political formula, a formula that would be capable of substantially altering the relationship of forces within the society against the working class. In the present British social and economic context, this means the development of the strong state.

As the economic situation worsens and the workers move into the struggles of late winter and spring, the present paralysis of immediate perspectives for the bourgeoisie will develop into desperation. Such a situation, which everyone agrees is virtually inevitable, will shatter the present right-wing equilibrium within the Labour party. Whether it is precipitated around the question of a wage freeze or the question of the Common Market, the crisis of Social Democracy — intensified by the experience of a workers upsurge combined with a coming worsening economic situation — has only been temporarily delayed; it has not been averted.

IRELAND: TOO HOT TO HANDLE

One of the biggest scandals in an overall miserable performance by the Labour left at the recent party conference was the left delegates' total failure to take up the question of the new anti-Republican laws. These include banning the IRA in Britain and making it a punishable offense to carry banners or signs supporting the aims of the IRA or to collect money for it. The state now has the right to expel from Britain anyone it suspects of engaging in IRA activities. Police power has been extended dramatically; the police now have the right to hold people for one week without charges, with the permission

of the home secretary. These new measures, enacted after the Birmingham bombings (see INPRECOR, No.13, November 28), have precipitated a wave of police raids throughout Britain. Twelve people were still being held on December 2 after a week-end "roundup" November 30-December 1.

The new laws have been used as an excuse to raid left organizations in general. In the Birmingham area, houses of supporters of the International Marxist Group, British section of the Fourth International, have been raided and documents have been taken.



One of the few comments about the new laws at the Labour conference came from Joan Richardson, left-wing MP for Barking constituency. She said that the new laws made "many of us deeply unhappy." Why? Because they could be used against "colored people" or other political groups. After all, she warned, we will not always have a Labour home secretary. Those in the internment camps of the North of Ireland or whose homes have been raided might be forgiven for wondering what difference a Labour home secretary made.

Outside the conference, Joan Maynard, a left-wing MP for Sheffield Brightside, said at a meeting on Ireland that a date should be set for the withdrawal of British troops from Ireland, for the end of the Special Powers Act now in force there (which grants almost dictatorial powers to the regime), and for an end to internment. That is as far as the "radicalism" went.

The failure of the left to make a fight on this issue was part of its general failure to struggle at the conference. Despite the fact that ruling-class use of the Irish issue is potentially most dangerous to the unity of the working class, most of the left in the Labour party backs away from a fight with the cabinet, fearing unpopularity. Those who do raise the

issue do so in a very confused and limited way. Some of the most important anti-working-class legislation passed in Britain since the second world war is now in force; but in general the lefts would prefer to conduct their fight against easier targets. The repressive action of the British troops in the North of Ireland is gratefully covered up by the wave of anti-Irish chauvinism sweeping the working class in the wake of the Birmingham bombings; by maintaining their silence the left MPs become accomplices of this tremendously dangerous process.

The left MPs have been followed in their political retreat by most of the left groups in Britain. The International Socialists, for example, the largest far-left group in Britain, has printed a headline on its newspaper reading "Stop the Bombings," exactly the slogan of Labour party Home Secretary Roy Jenkins. This attitude is based on a complete adaptation to the anti-Republican and anti-Irish sentiments of the British working class. Those are the same sentiments the ruling class has used in its attempts to win support for its war of repression in Ireland, the same sentiments that the far right in Britain and Ireland are attempting to use to produce a lasting shift in the balance of forces against the working class. □

new revolutionary group formed

The November-December issue of el-Munadil, a journal published in Lebanon by Arab revolutionary Marxists, announced the formation of a new revolutionary organization in Egypt, the "Mustafa Khamis" Revolutionary Communist Group, (1) and published the group's first manifesto. The comrades of el-Munadil commented: "The appearance of a proletarian revolutionary group in Egypt is an event of extreme importance for all Arab revolutionaries and an event that is especially welcome for us Trotskyists, for it constitutes an important and fundamental

step forward in our efforts to build a revolutionary communist party on a pan-Arab scale, an Arab section of the Fourth International. El-Munadil salutes the comrades of the Mustafa Khamis group and wishes them, as well as all the workers of Egypt, full success in their struggle against capitalist slavery and for the victory of the socialist revolution." We can only concur with those sentiments. We are publishing below the first manifesto of the comrades of the Mustafa Khamis group, translated from el-Munadil.



the working class awakens

The workers of Egypt are beginning to wake up. After twenty years of near immobility during which they were lulled by the mystifying propaganda about "socialism" and the "union of the forces of the working people," our working class has begun to emerge from its long sleep. In 1972 our worker comrades of the steel factories in Helwan placed themselves in the vanguard of the new awakening, leading the Egyptian working class down the path blazed by the blood of the martyr Mustafa Khamis, the path of workers struggle against capitalist oppression.

But the workers of Egypt are much more numerous today than they were in 1952; they represent more than half the Arab working class and one of the largest working classes of the underdeveloped countries. And when the workers of Egypt reawaken to struggle, it is not simply the Egyptian bourgeoisie that trembles; all the Arab owning classes tremble too, as does world imperialism.

We thus understand why the reawakening of the

workers of Egypt was one of the direct causes of the October War.

1. The October War and the general situation in Egypt one year after

The remarkable struggle of the workers and students of Egypt had frightened the bourgeoisie and its state to the point that they directed all their efforts to putting an end to the situation of "no war, no peace," a situation whose impact was becoming ever greater and was feeding popular discontent. Now, since peace with Zionism was of course the goal being sought by the Egyptian bourgeoisie, and since the capitulationist character of this peace made it difficult to get the masses to accept it, the bourgeoisie had to dress up national betrayal in a cloak of military triumph. Thus the October War.

The goal of the war of October 6, 1973, was to accelerate the execution of the capitulationist UN

Resolution 242, which had hitherto been stalled. According to the regime's calculations, this goal was supposed to be achieved through the intervention of American imperialism (to which the Egyptian regime had promised a political and economic opening) after the Egyptian military position was improved by the crossing of the Suez Canal. The aim of the limited war was to establish an unlimited peace between Israel and Egypt in order to clear the air and remove one of the important sources of political agitation. The regime even wanted to present the October War with the aura of a legendary war comparable to the great conquests of history.

1. Political Results of the October War

The principal success achieved by the Egyptian bourgeoisie was the activation of the "peaceful solution." Indeed, it realized important steps down the road to peace with Zionism, aided by Henry Kissinger, a representative of American imperialism, who took on the role of itinerant "arbiter."

This happened in spite of the fact that the October War was about to terminate in a new tragedy for Egypt, after the Zionist forces crossed the canal in the Deversoir area and encircled our Third Army, threatening to destroy it. This turnabout in the military situation was not the result of the weakness or cowardice of the Egyptian soldier. On the contrary, our soldiers demonstrated devotion to combat and heroism in no way inferior to those of any other people struggling against invaders of their homeland. It was the higher military command that was responsible, since in the eyes of the regime the war was only a limited one aimed at achieving the "peaceful solution." This explains why there was no bombardment by our air force of the Israeli interior.

But in spite of everything, the regime managed to organize an unprecedented campaign of mystification, presenting the October War as a historic sequel to the conquests of Saladin and Muhammed Ali, transforming it into a historical revenge by the Arabs against Israel, a war that would change the face of the world and the course of history. After the collapse of the legend of the invincibility of the Zionist army, stories were concocted seeking to create a new legend, that of an Egyptian army "invincible because of its valiant leadership."

For an initial period, the regime's propaganda campaign met with wide success. The majority of our people believed that the hour of victory had struck and that the regime had resolved to continue the fight until liberation. But after the cease-fire and particularly after the separation of forces, these illusions quickly began to disappear. Since then, the masses of our people have progressively become conscious of the fact that Israel's concessions do not de-

rive from the successes of our army in October 1973 — successes that were partial and in any case overturned by the Deversoir operation — but rather result from the agreement between American imperialism and the Egyptian regime over the peaceful solution to the "Middle East problem."

Moreover, it must be said that while the regime's propaganda campaign bore not insignificant fruit, and while the application of the peaceful solution has moved forward up to now without meeting broad mass resistance, the reason for this lies in large part in the absence of a revolutionary vanguard capable of opening the eyes of the masses and in the failure of the Palestinian resistance to link up with the Egyptian toiling masses, particularly since the leadership of the Palestinian Liberation Organization has also begun to travel down the road to the peaceful solution.

2. The Growing Economic and Social Crisis

But whatever the intensity and success of the campaign of mystification waged around the October War, it did not and will not at all succeed in concealing the profound misery in which our masses live. In fact, since the October War Egypt has experienced more rapid and serious price increases and declines in the living standards of the masses than ever before. The reasons for this lie precisely in the changes that were made after October 1973 in the name of the "economic opening."

The overwhelming majority of our people cannot tolerate the suffocatingly high cost of living. It is sufficient to take a look at the price increases for basic commodities since October 1973, which extend even to basic foodstuffs. The price of a kilo of sugar has risen from 7 piasters before October 1973 to 11 piasters today. (The Egyptian pound, divided into 100 piasters, is exchanged inside Egypt for about US\$1.75.) The price of cooking oil has gone from 7 to 11 piasters a kilo as well, and the price of a packet of tea has risen from 3.5 to 5.5 piasters. Moreover, these items are almost completely unobtainable in the cooperatives; people form long lines to buy just a small quantity of them.

As for prices on the free market, they have risen from 16 to 26p. for sugar, from 16 to 32p. for cooking oil, and from 5.5 to 11p. for tea. Other basic foodstuffs are found only in the stores of the private sector, where the cost of a kilo of rice has gone from 5 to 6.5p., potatoes from 4 to 10p. a kilo, soap from 3.5 to 5.5p. The price of a kilo of meat has gone from 85p. before the October War to E£1.10. Popular cloth is virtually nonexistent in the cooperatives, because the directors of the public sector prefer to sell it to merchants in the private sector, which is profitable both for them and for the

merchants. The black-market price of a meter of cloth has risen from 12 to 22p. The price of a pair of shoes, which was around E£2.50 before October 1973, has risen to E£4.50-5.00.

The transport crisis has attained very serious dimensions. People fight to get onto buses and trams that are packed with people to a point not even fit for animals; those who do not find a place inside climb up onto the roof or through the windows, extremely dangerous acts that our people nevertheless find it necessary to perform. The only solution the government has found to this problem has been to withdraw a few old buses from circulation and replace them with new vehicles in order to impose a 5 piaster fare increase under the pretext that the new buses are tourist vehicles. But that does not make them any less jammed.

And we all know about the housing crisis. Rents in the popular neighborhoods have increased from E£8 a month to E£15. In spite of that, it is impossible to find housing without paying an initial fee that ranges from E£200 to E£500.

And what about the workers' wages in face of this rising cost of living? In fact, the great majority of wages have not changed since October 1973, with the exception of some routine increases! The minimum wage has been increased from E£7.50 a month to E£12, which is insufficient to cover the minimum basic needs, especially since the E£12 becomes E£10 after all the various deductions.

3. The Real Nature of the Regime Exposed

The crushing increase in the cost of living weighs a lot heavier than the fables about the October War. The regime has failed in its attempt to make the "economic opening" bring about an improvement in our situation. We have seen how quickly the legend about the wheat and corn the United States was supposed to send us has evaporated, while at the same time the planes and all the other arms that U.S. imperialism is offering to our Zionist enemy are very real and far from being a legend.

The "popular" welcome the regime arranged for Nixon was not an expression of the sentiments of our people. How could it have been, when our martyrs had fallen under the fire of arms furnished by Nixon to Israel? The reality is that the regime, besides waging campaigns aimed at conditioning public opinion and convincing it of Nixon's friendship toward us, sent the workers of the public sector to greet the imperialist president, paying each worker half a pound for coming out. (In the past, the "price of welcome" was only a quarter of a pound.)

It is very clear that the "economic opening" decreed

by Law No.43, on investment of Arab and foreign capital and the "free zones," passed by the "Peoples Assembly" on June 9 of this year — perhaps in commemoration of June 9, 1967* — profits only the landed proprietors and the exploiters of the tourist sectors, a tiny minority of our people. For the most part, Arab capital is being directed toward the purchase of land. The foreign investments are mostly in the tourist industry. The result is that the overwhelming majority of our people, with the exception of the bourgeoisie and some categories of the petty bourgeoisie, actually suffer from these investments.

How? It's simple: The main effect of the capital now pouring into land and the tourist industry in Egypt is to generate a rise in prices (inflation). It thus constitutes the principal cause of the excessive high cost of living from which we are suffering.

The real character of the regime has begun to become clear to broad masses, and the illusions about "socialism" and "the union of the peoples forces" have begun to crumble. The reality is that the existing regime is a bourgeois regime serving to stimulate capitalism and encourage the private sector and opening wide the doors of Egypt to imperialist capital. Among the major "achievements" of the regime, of which it is extremely proud, is the release of goods that had been sequestered during the Nasser era.

In reality, we are dealing with a regime of the capitalist bourgeoisie, a regime of merchants and landed proprietors. It is extremely revealing that in newspaper announcements the merchants declared in the name of their association that they "present all their thanks, all their esteem, and all their support to Mr. President Anwar el-Sadat for having chosen the chief and dean of the merchants, Dr. Abdel Aziz Hegazi, Esq., for the post of president of the council of ministers." The advertisement of the merchants' association added: "May god come to his aid and direct his steps toward the road of economic opening." It thus appears that in the eyes of the capitalists today the divine light is represented by . . . the economic opening.

It is the misery in which they live that has led our masses to realize the real character of the regime. This pressure on the masses has been especially aggravated by the fact that all the celebrated democratic rights, courts, and other such fables in reality simply amount to control by the state intelligence over the slightest workers activity, control by the

* June 9, 1967, was the date on which Egypt accepted the cease-fire in the 1967 war; Nasser then presented his resignation, thus provoking enormous demonstrations. — INPRECOR

"Socialist Union" (socialist in name, ruling bourgeois party in reality) over all forms of elections, and a total absence of real freedom of expression.

Our masses will not tolerate these conditions of misery and repression indefinitely. During the past several months they have begun to move and to wage struggles that represent the beginning of a long road of struggle against the regime of capitalist slavery. Nor will our masses be deceived by the conspiracy of the peaceful solution; we are confident that the Egyptian people will not remain passive in face of the passage of Israeli ships through the Suez Canal.

2. The development of class struggle after October 1973

It was the student movement that was most heavily influenced by the October War and the propaganda campaign that followed it. The main theme of the student struggles that took place in 1972 was the demand for war and the denunciation of the regime's impotence in face of Zionism, along with its capitulationist intentions. That is why the October War, along with the mystifying propaganda campaign that accompanied it, led to the freezing of the student movement for a time. But the "return to consciousness" was not long in coming. (The reference is to the title of a pamphlet by the well-known writer Tewfiq el-Hakim. — INPRECOR) It is probable that the student movement will again take to struggle during the coming winter.

But for our toiling masses, the principal motive force of struggle is their living conditions; and all the wars in the world will not succeed in concealing those conditions. While our peasant brothers, bent under the weight of misery, repression, and mystification, have gone into motion only rarely — and here we must mention the peasant revolts in the Bouheira region against the restitution of land to the landlords in the context of the lifting of the old rules of sequestration (the tribunal decided on a compromise postponing enactment of the new rules until after the harvest) — our working class, as usual, has placed itself in the vanguard of popular struggles against the capitalist regime.

In May of this year tens of thousands of our comrades of the aviation and war-production factories in Helwan went on strike for three days against the government's attempts to reduce the bonuses they had been getting, under the pretext of transferring the factories from the government sector to the public sector. The determination of our comrades, which brought about the personal intervention of the minister of war industries, succeeded in carrying the day; the state granted the workers' demand, but later nine members of the trade-union committee

were removed from their positions on the grounds that they had supported the strike. In August, our worker comrades of the Misr-Helwan spinning and weaving company occupied the factory to protest a wage reduction for a three-month period enacted under a false pretext; our comrades won full payment of their wages.

The month of September was riddled with workers struggles, for it was the month during which the pressure of the high cost of living attained its apogee because of the expenses for the start of the new school year and the traditional expenses for the month of Ramadan. The demand that additional credit be extended to the workers became generalized. But the regime refused to grant this, limiting itself to suspending until January 1975 the deductions normally taken out of wages for old loans, a measure whose effect is extremely limited. Our worker comrades of the Misr Helwan Company thus launched a new strike on September 14, demanding that payments be made into their frozen savings accounts. More than 4,000 workers (that is, an entire shift) went on strike for two hours on September 14 and again on September 15. This time they continued their strike, rejecting all the company's fine promises, until the radio broadcast the regime's decision to pay the equivalent of one month's wages into the workers' accounts. The success of the workers of the textile factories was due in part to the contribution made by the worker comrades of the Helwan aviation factories, who also went on strike September 15 and occupied their factory, raising the same demand. On the same day, there were strikes by the workers of the "industrial iron foundry" company and of the "technical and metallurgical industries," strikes that involved nearly 20,000 workers demanding payment of the same three-month bonus that the workers of the steel factories had obtained in reward for finishing construction of a factory before the set target date, which had been accomplished by the efforts of the workers of the three companies.

Since the payment of bonuses had been limited to the workers of the public sector, the workers of some private textile factories in Shubra el-Khaima went on strike on September 18. The regime gave in immediately and included these workers in its decree, thus failing in the attempt to take advantage of the differences it has been seeking to intensify among the various sectors of Egyptian industry.

These are the most important struggles we know about. It must be remembered that we live in a country in which the press and the other news media maintain silence about every workers struggle and even present the decrees won by workers strikes as decisions issuing from the attention the regime is paying to the interests of the workers and the people. There have been other struggles in past months by

the workers of the Shubra el-Khaima textile mills and by the public transit drivers in Shubra, Mahalla el-Kubra, and other places.

As we have already pointed out, the detonator of these struggles has been the harshness of the conditions of the workers. In some cases the workers have thrown up a vanguard leadership, as was the case with the workers of the Misr Helwan Company, who succeeded in electing delegates' committees from the ranks, breaking with the traditional institutions. They managed to keep these committees going for several months. In most cases, however, the struggles have been touched off by spontaneous pressure from the rank-and-file workers.

The development and extension of the workers struggles forcefully underlines the urgency of the task of constructing a revolutionary workers leadership expressing the real interests of the working class against the capitalist system, a leadership capable of coordinating the struggle of the various industrial sectors and branches and of arming the mass of advanced workers with revolutionary class consciousness. In the absence of such a leadership and in view of the spontaneous character of the struggle going on, the anticapitalist consciousness of the workers takes the form of nostalgia for the Nasser era, during which the present high cost of living was unknown. Years of mystification, aided by some so-called communists, have prevented our working class from understanding that what is presently going on in Egypt is simply the natural consequence of the Nasser era and that the interests of the working class will not really triumph until the workers themselves take power.

Posing the question of leadership requires examining the tendencies that presently exist in the workers movement.

3. Tendencies in the workers movement

The present line-up of tendencies in the Egyptian workers movement is of course in large measure the direct result of the years of Nasserism. In the preceding period, two main tendencies existed in the Egyptian working class. The first, which represented the regime, was the Nasserist tendency; the other, oppressed by the regime, was the Communist tendency. In the past few years other small groups have been created, both of the above-mentioned tendencies have divided, and some leaderships have emerged spontaneously from some workers struggles.

1. The Trade-Union Bureaucracy

The Nasser regime reorganized the workers movement in conformity with its own interests, turning

the "General Union of Egyptian Workers" into the official trade-union movement. Obviously, the Nasserists controlled the workers union through the Nasserist party, the Socialist Union, imposing their total domination through well-known methods, particularly by requiring approval by the Socialist Union of all candidates for election to the trade-union committees. The natural consequence was that the Nasserists got a virtually total grip on trade-union posts, and they continue to dominate these posts, thus constituting a broad trade-union bureaucracy.

But the political developments that followed the death of Nasser and the "rectification movement" of May 15, 1971,* led to a division in the ranks of the trade-union bureaucracy between two factions, the first supporting the Sadat regime, the second being discontented with the "rectification" measures.

The tendency supported by the present regime, the Sadatist tendency, includes the minority of the bureaucratic leaders who quickly abandoned their Nasserism in favor of support to the regime in order to obtain the best posts and the highest salaries. The members of this tendency collaborate completely with the regime and its apparatus, especially the intelligence services, and oppose any workers activities—spying on the workers and singing the praises of the regime and its "achievements."

The other tendency, the Nasserist tendency, includes the majority of the bureaucratic leaders and the "Vanguard Organization" group founded by Nasser and later dissolved by Sadat. This tendency does not oppose the regime and plays the same bureaucratic role of aborting workers struggles that it has always played. But it also tries to put pressure on Sadat to prevent him from continuing to liquidate the Nasserist institutions, for the Nasserist bureaucracy well knows that its privileges depend on the maintenance of the institutions created by Nasser. The Nasserist tendency opposes the liquidation of the public sector, because it knows that the position and privileges of the trade-union bureaucracy in the public sector are far higher than they are in the private sector, where the bureaucracy is subjected to the will of the capitalists. This tendency opposes the idea of reducing the 50 percent proportion of "workers and peasants" (in reality, factory directors and rich villagers) in the "Peoples Assembly," because that would mean a loss of parliamentary seats for the Nasserists. It defends the formulas of the Socialist Union and the "union of the forces of the working people" (that is, the dictatorship of the single party), because it views a multiplicity of parties as a development that would inevitably entail

*On May 15, 1971, Sadat ordered the arrest of many of the leaders of the Nasserist bureaucracy, the principal figure arrested being Ali Sabri. — INPRECOR



Nasser:
Created the
trade-
union
bureaucracy

the loss of the role of bureaucratic hegemony played by the Nasserists. These are the basic reasons for the attitudes of the Nasserist tendency; its speeches about "socialism" and the "popular interest" are nothing but transparent veils for its bureaucratic interests, which are threatened by the bourgeois regime.

2. Groups Coming Out of the Egyptian Communist Party

The tragic history of the Egyptian Communist movement after the second world war is well known. It is a history dominated by continual fragmentation, total ideological disorder, and extreme factional sectarianism. The disarray of the Egyptian Communists reached its apex after the Charter was issued*; the movement then divided into several tendencies, ranging from those that saw the Nasserist regime as a quasifascist monopoly capitalist regime to those who saw it taking a socialist road. What finally emerged as dominant was the thesis elaborated by the leaders of the Soviet Union on the "non-capitalist road of development," an invention as remote as can be from Marxism-Leninism, which recognizes no third road between the bourgeois and proletarian one. The decision of the Communist party Central Committee to dissolve the party and join the Socialist Union can be considered the declaration of bankruptcy by the party leadership; it represented the supreme class betrayal, dissolution of a workers party and integration into a party dominated by the bureaucratic bourgeoisie.

*In 1961 Nasser published a "National Charter" that marked the regime's turn toward extending nationalizations. — INPRECOR

The new period, that of the Sadat regime, has seen new activity from several groups issuing from the dissolved Communist party. The best-known of these are two groups, one representing the continuity of the Stalinist line of obedience to the diplomacy of the USSR, the other following a different, but no less opportunist, path.

The first group consists of a small grouping of partisans of the bureaucratic regime that rules the USSR. At the time when the Egyptian regime entered into intimate relations with the USSR, these people sang the praises of the regime; they dissolved the Communist party and participated in the institutions of the Nasserist regime. But the Sadat regime was not to their taste, precisely because it liquidated the Ali Sabri group, which was friendly to the USSR, and provoked tension in the relations with "the great friend," especially when it orchestrated the expulsion from Egypt of the Soviet military experts (in 1972). Then the Egyptian Stalinists began to speak again about reconstructing their party; today they oppose the Sadat regime on the same basis that the Nasserist tendency does and in alliance with the Nasserists. In their eyes, the present regime is one that is restoring capitalism after Egypt had taken the socialist road. They oppose the opening to American imperialism, but approve the peaceful solution and the execution of the UN resolution; and they could not do otherwise, since the USSR figures among the principal authors of this resolution!

The second group is larger and is active among the student milieu and small functionaries, as well as the workers. It calls itself the "Revolutionary Current" and is distinguished from the first group in that

it has abandoned obedience to the USSR, especially on the question of the Palestinian cause. The Revolutionary Current group adopts the objective of the liberation of Palestine; in general it holds radical positions on the national question, rejecting the peaceful solution, opposing the cease-fire, the separation of forces, and even the project of the "Palestinian state," which is aimed at liquidating the Palestinian cause. But the Revolutionary Current group has not adopted these positions in a "revolutionary" way. In fact, it sees no contradiction between these positions and an alliance with . . . Sadat! This group asserts that the Sadat regime will wage a fifth war and will continue in this manner until liberation is won! On the basis of this prognostication, the Revolutionary Current believes it necessary to establish a front with the regime, an anti-Zionist united front. And while the group demands trade-union and political rights, it does so only in words, so as to strengthen its alliance with the regime; it adopts a reformist attitude toward workers struggles. The Revolutionary Current group is fooling both itself and the masses when it asserts that the established bourgeois regime will liberate Palestine; it is closing its eyes to the striking reality: The regime has thrown itself into the arms of American imperialism and is marching firmly down the road of national betrayal, the road of the peaceful solution and the UN resolution. The duty of revolutionaries is to denounce this reality, not embellish it. That is elementary!

3. The New Vanguard

The past few years have seen the emergence of a certain number of small groups adopting revolutionary ideas. These groups are present mainly in the student milieu and played a notable role in the student revolts of 1972. In addition, vanguard workers leaderships have surged forward in the struggles of the workers of Helwan; in the steel and textile factories leaderships have taken charge of strikes and expressed without deformation the real interests of the workers.

The general situation in Egypt, that of exacerbation of the class struggle, necessarily involves the emergence of such revolutionary groups and vanguard leaderships. But the fundamental precondition for avoiding both the tragedy of the Egyptian Communist movement and an endless division into grouplets is the elaboration of an absolutely clear revolutionary Marxist program without Stalinist or nationalist deformation, a program around which revolutionaries will be assembled and with which they will be armed in their participation in the class struggle, in their leadership of these struggles, and in their march toward the construction of a proletarian revolutionary organization in Egypt capable of linking Egypt to the development of the Arab revolution

and the world socialist revolution. This must be an organization integrated into the revolutionary communist party on the scale of the Arab nation, which must itself be a section of the revolutionary communist international, the Fourth International, founded by the Bolshevik-Leninist opposition to the Stalinist degeneration of the Third International after Lenin's death. That is the only Leninist road!

4. Program of the revolutionary communists

The strategic aim of the struggle of revolutionary communists is the dictatorship of the proletariat, apart from which there is no way to solve the democratic and national tasks. But along this road revolutionary communists struggle for a body of immediate and transitional demands that permit the development of the struggle and organization of the toiling masses to attain the strategic goal.

The program of the revolutionary communists is as follows:

Against the high cost of living and for the improvement of the living conditions of the masses:

- *reduction of the prices of basic necessities,
- *price control by committees of workers delegates, inhabitants of popular neighborhoods, and housewives, the committees having the right to inspect the accounts of the factories and merchants,
- *minimum monthly wage of E£30,
- *E£5 increases for all wage earners making less than E£50 a month,
- *sliding scale of wages, that is, increases in wages every time prices go up — and at the same rate,
- *extension of working conditions in the governmental and public sector to the workers in the private sector, tenure being granted all workers,
- *double time for overtime work, figured on the basis of a seven-hour workday,
- *full payment of wages to laid-off workers until they find new jobs at the same wage rate,
- *guaranteed employment for all those who want work; reduction of the workweek if necessary to bring this about.

To assure democratic rights:

- *elimination of the domination of the "Socialist Union" over trade-union and political life and elimination of any form of intervention by the regime in the trade unions,
- *freedom of trade-union action,
- *total freedom of political action and association,
- *right to strike and demonstrate,
- *freedom of assembly and full freedom of expression, including freedom of the press and of publishing,

*freedom of political action within the armed forces.

Against capitulation and national betrayal:

*let us struggle against the peaceful solution and against UN Resolution 242,

*against the intervention of the great powers in the conflict in the region,

*against the Geneva conference and negotiations with the Zionist regime,

*for the complete and unconditional withdrawal of the Zionist army to the borders of June 4, 1967,

*for the arming of the masses and their instruction in the workplaces in the use of arms.

Against the imperialist penetration and the enlargement of the private sector:

*let us struggle against the economic opening and the imperialist investments,

*against the export of profits by the foreign companies,

*against the lifting of sequestrations and nationalizations,

*against compensation for nationalized property.

For the nationalization of industry and its placement under workers control:

*nationalization without compensation of all factories with more than fifty workers,

*control in all factories of production, account books, and all administrative measures by councils of delegates elected from the ranks,

*implementation of workers self-management in the factories.

For a workers regime: a workers and peasants government based on the power of councils of workers, soldiers, and poor peasants elected by the masses in their places of work! For the unification of the Arab nation: for a federated Arab socialist republic!

Such is the basic program being advanced by the revolutionary communists of Egypt. They intend to develop and complete it. They invite all Egyptian revolutionaries and all workers tendencies to join in a common struggle for the points of this program on which agreement can be reached. Political and ideological differences are natural and must not prevent the alliance and unification of struggles. We are confronting a strong and violent common enemy; let us unify our efforts!

Workers of Egypt, workers of the Arab countries, workers of the world, unite! □

"Mustafa Khamis" Revolutionary Communist Group
Cairo, October 5, 1974

1. Mustafa Khamis was a worker in the Misr Company weaving plant in Kafr el-Duwar near Alexandria, a factory with 10,000 workers. On the evening of August 12, 1952, just three weeks after the Free Officers coup led by Nasser had deposed King Farouk, the workers of the plant gathered in front of the managers' office and went on strike. They demanded recognition of their union, dismissal of two of the managerial staff, wage increases, and other economic benefits. The management of the company called the police, who attacked the workers. The workers fought back, and the police opened fire. In response, the workers held a sit-in strike. The following morning, troops were brought from Alexandria to throw the workers out of the factory. After a serious clash, the workers were driven out — at the cost of several killed, more than twenty wounded, and 200 arrested. A summary court-martial was set up to try the arrested workers, who were offered no right of appeal. On August 18 fourteen workers were sentenced to long prison terms for their role in the struggle. Two others, Mustafa Muhammed Khamis and Muhammed Hasan el-Baqri, were sentenced to death. The pronouncement of the death sentence against Khamis was used by the regime to clearly demonstrate its character to the workers. At the time, the correspondent of the London Times reported: "There was an impressive show of force by the military, many hundreds of soldiers being present. About 1,000 workers from the Misr plant and other factories in the neighborhood lined the three sides of the factory football ground, with armed troops facing them and tanks in the background." Khamis stood in the center of the field and heard the sentence pronounced against him. Later, General Nequib, then the titular head of state, brought Khamis to Cairo and offered to commute his sentence if Khamis would give the regime a list of other strike leaders and denounce them. He refused. On September 8, 1952, Khamis and el-Baqri were hanged, thus becoming two of the first martyrs of the workers movement to fall under the repression of the new regime.

— INPRECOR

● ARAFAT AT THE UN ●

The following article was published as the lead editorial in the mid-November issue of *Mal'amal* (What Is to be Done), the recently established fortnightly newspaper of the comrades of the Revolutionary Communist Group (Lebanon), members of the Fourth International. The appearance of *Mal'amal*, four issues of which have come out so far, represents an important step forward in the struggle to develop a revolutionary Marxist party on an Arab-wide scale.

El-Munadil (the Militant), the magazine of the comrades of the RCG, will continue to appear as the theoretical journal of the Arab Trotskyists.



The newspapers and other news media are unanimous in considering the speech given at the UN by Yassir Arafat as the baptism of the Palestinian Resistance within the "international community" and the conse-

cration of its legitimacy as the representative of the Palestinian people.

It is true that the delivery of the speech by all evidence marks the end of the epoch in which the Palestinian cause was nothing but a problem of refugees who moved the United Nations to pity. There is no doubt that in itself the affirmation of the existence of a Palestinian Arab people, a people who lived on the land of Palestine before being expelled, constitutes an encouragement to the struggle against the Zionist colonial entity. From this point of view, Arafat's speech represented a step forward.

In addition, the text of the speech contained a real democratic position in regard to the Jewish inhabitants of the state of Israel, saying: "We include in our considerations all the Jews who live in Palestine today and agree to live with us in peace and without discrimination in the land of Palestine." It also contained a democratic, non-racist position in regard to the Jews in general; Arafat stated: "We condemn all crimes committed against the Jews and all the kinds of open or camouflaged discrimination that the adherents of Judaism have suffered." These words also represent a step forward, especially if they are compared to the statements of the unfortunately famous Ahmed Shukhaïry about "throwing the Jews into the sea" or the Qaddafi theses on the expulsion from Palestine of all those Jews who came there after 1948. Two steps forward, then. Two steps that we appreciate.

Nevertheless, it is necessary to inquire about the conditions under which these two steps were taken. Were they the result of victories for the Resistance? Weren't they rather the result of a series of retreats? That is the nub of the problem!

When the Palestinian Resistance, Fateh at its head, stood at the height of its rise, in 1969 and the beginning of 1970, it never entered anyone's mind to invite Arafat to speak from the UN podium. Why, then, invite him today, after the Resistance has been crushed in Jordan and after the number of operations conducted by the Resistance inside Israel has been significantly reduced? Some will say that Arafat's speech, while it was not the fruit of victories of the Resistance, is nevertheless the fruit of the general "Arab victory" after October 1973. But this "Arab victory" is itself an illusion. What sort of victory is it that is expressed by direct negotiations in Geneva with the Zionist regime?

In truth, most of the states that have modified their position on the Palestinian problem have not done so for reasons of objectivity or by virtue of such principles as justice, humanity, and so on, but rather have done so in the hope of attracting Arab loans and investments to their countries; they have

done so by virtue of their economic interests and nothing else. Thus, the principal instrument of of Arafat's entry into the UN was not the rifles of the fighters — this truth is obvious, even if bitter — but rather, above all, oil capital.

The question then becomes: Why have the Arab regimes — headed by Saudi Arabia, the most reactionary one — expended all these efforts to get the PLO into the UN after having worked openly to get the PLO confirmed as the "sole legitimate representative" of the Palestinian people?

Here also, the answer is obvious: The regimes in question are seeking to liquidate the Palestinian cause as a source of permanent political tension and to guarantee the stability of the Arab region. They are seeking to apply the "peaceful solution" under conditions that, obviously, are not so difficult as to get out of "control." These regimes see the creation of a Palestinian state side by side with the Zionist state as the only reasonable road to the peaceful solution; they likewise see that this solution will not acquire its full value unless the PLO is in the leadership of this state as the representative of the Palestinian Resistance.

The leadership of the PLO has agreed to go along with these efforts; it has accepted the project of the Palestinian state, which Arafat did not neglect to mention, even if only in a single sentence at the end of his speech. This does not change the fact that this sentence was the most important one of the speech, for it constituted the direct request addressed by Arafat to the UN: "I address you so that you may permit our people to establish its independent national regime and to build its national entity on its land." That was the principal aim of Arafat's trip to New York! Moreover, after the speech, the Arab delegations immediately began preparing a draft resolution on the "peaceful solution" and the "Palestinian entity" for submission to the General Assembly.

Arafat ended his speech by declaring: "I have come today . . . bearing an olive branch and a freedom fighter's gun. Do not let the olive branch fall from my hand." Three times he repeated: "Do not let the olive branch fall from my hand."

The "international community" certainly grasped the meaning of this call: Arafat is prepared to let the freedom fighter's gun fall!

But the Arab masses, and especially the Palestinian masses, will in no way let it drop so long as the Zionist entity exists on Palestinian land!

No to the peaceful solution!

Revolution until liberation! □



debate on the «process of institutionalization»

In INPRECOR No. 5-6, August 3, 1974, we published a statement of the United Secretariat of the Fourth International issued May 29 (with a postscript issued July 12) dealing with the support of the Partido Socialista de los Trabajadores (Socialist Workers party, a sympathizing organization of the Fourth International in Argentina) to the "process of institutionalization" in that country. Below we are publishing an answer to the United Secretariat issued by the Executive Committee of the PST on August 20, 1974, and a reply by the United Secretariat adopted November 17, 1974.

statement of the pst executive committee

The United Secretariat of the Fourth International, in a resolution passed at the end of May, subjected the leadership of the Partido Socialista de los Trabajadores to a severe criticism that we consider to be unjustified.

Ordinarily the matter would be discussed within the ranks of the world Trotskyist movement, whose political activities are of fraternal interest to us. (Reactionary legislation bars the PST from affiliating with the Fourth International as an official section.) However, the authors of the resolution made the document public, thereby compelling us, much to our regret, to reply in public.

There are several versions of the resolution. In our reply we shall refer to the version published in the July 26, 1974, issue of Rouge, the weekly newspaper reflecting the views of the French Trotskyists organized in the Front Communiste Révolutionnaire. For the information of the Argentine workers, Avanzada Socialista is publishing a Spanish translation of the document.

No information is provided in the resolution as to the vote cast in the United Secretariat. It was not unanimous. The resolution was proposed by representatives of the International Majority Tendency, which holds a majority in the United Secretariat. Representatives of the Leninist Trotskyist Faction argued and voted against it. They proposed seeking further information from Argentina, in particular from the PST.

An additional fact should be indicated. The decision to make the resolution public was made at a United Secretariat meeting held July 3, 1974. A postscript, dated July 12, was included in the version published in Rouge. The postscript was not considered at any meeting of the United Secretariat.

The central contention made in the resolution is that "the PST is entering a new stage in its evolution, openly breaking with the revolutionary Marxist conception of the workers united front based on the Leninist conception of the Third International and revived by Leon Trotsky."

This charge is accompanied by the assertion that the leaders of the PST have adopted a policy of crossing class lines and that in justification "they utilize precisely the argument the Stalinists advanced in the mid-1930s to justify their adopting the popular-front line; that is, that it is legitimate to make alliances with the bourgeoisie or its so-called democratic sectors in order to oppose a fascist danger."

In justification of these grave accusations, the authors of the resolution allege that the leaders of the PST joined with representatives of seven other political parties, among which were several bourgeois parties (including the Unión Cívica Radical), in signing a common document that was presented to "the Argentine president Juan Perón" in an interview held "March 22." (The actual date was March 21.)

To prove that the document could not be signed by the PST without crossing class lines, the authors of the resolution quoted several key passages from it. They then quote from two supposed editorials in the March 28-April 5 issue of Avanzada Socialista.

(We say "supposed editorials" precisely because only one of the articles cited as such by Rouge is actually an editorial. This confusion is odd since in recent months Avanzada Socialista has followed an explicit norm, publishing its editorial in each issue on page 3 in 12-point type under the caption "EDITORIAL" placed in the right-hand column. The authors of the resolution are apparently utilizing the fact that almost all of

the articles in *Avanzada Socialista* are unsigned (a tradition inherited from twenty-six years of clandestinity) in order to dub any and all articles as editorials. And they do this despite the fact that the very issue of *Avanzada Socialista* cited by them adhered to our norm, that is, published only one article under the title of "EDITORIAL" — on page 3 in 12-point type. And from that article, devoted entirely to the interview with Perón, the authors of the resolution cite nothing except the following phrase: "concrete, flexible responses to every conjuncture in the class struggle.")

In their opinion, this assemblage of quotations proves that the leaders of the PST believe that presenting Perón with a document containing a bourgeois political line signed by a mixture of bourgeois and proletarian parties constitutes an exemplary action in defending democratic rights and fighting fascism.

The charges appear on the surface to be irrefutable. Nonetheless something is awry. The Peronist administration does not appear to have concluded that the PST capitulated. On March 25, four days after the interview with Perón, Comrade Juan Carlos Coral was arrested and imprisoned for participating in a meeting with workers on strike held in front of the entrance to the Banco Nación. An article on this was published in the same issue of *Avanzada Socialista* that reported the meeting with Perón.

Nor do the ultraright thugs, who are operating in collusion with sectors of the government, appear to have concluded that the PST is bowing to the pressure of the bourgeoisie. To the contrary, they consider that the PST, in view of its fast rate of growth and its expansion into more and more areas, is becoming a greater potential threat to Argentine capitalism. That is why they have stepped up their raids on our headquarters and their assassinations of members of the PST.

The leaders of the PST did not sign a common document with any other political party, and no document of such kind was presented to Perón at the March 21 interview.

How then did the authors of the United Secretariat resolution gain a contrary impression?

We acknowledge that we are partly to blame for this. *Avanzada Socialista* did publish the text of the supposed common document in the March 28–April 5 issue. Moreover, it included a list of supposed signers. This was an error — along with the delay in correcting it — for which we take responsibility. Comrade Coral did make a public correction on May 8 in a television interview. A public rectification was also made by the editorial staff of *Avanzada Socialista* in the June 26 issue.

However, these public acknowledgments that an error had been committed did not satisfy the authors of the United Secretariat resolution. Apparently they consider the public rectifications to be merely part of a cover-up.

It has thus become necessary to explain the circumstances of the interview with Perón more fully.

The context was the ultrarightist coup of February 27 in which the chief of police in Córdoba, Antonio Domingo Navarro, toppled the elected provincial government headed by Obregón Cano. This ominous development, which threatened to start a chain reaction that could lead to a similar coup in Buenos Aires and the reinstatement of a military dictatorship on a national scale, was profoundly disturbing. To meet the threat, it was imperative for the Argentine workers to mobilize in defense of their hard-won democratic rights and press toward a socialist resolution of the economic and political crisis racking Argentine society. For the PST, this was the central objective governing everything we did.

The coup in Córdoba also disturbed other circles, including sectors of the bourgeoisie. For various reasons these sectors feared a resumption of military rule; they also feared the possibility of a confrontation that could goad the workers into a socialist revolution.

From the revolutionary-socialist point of view there was every reason to foster this incipient division within the ruling class and to seek to take advantage of it. While this was a secondary consideration, it played a role in shaping our immediate tactics, particularly in the question of gaining publicity that might aid in mobilizing the workers.

The leading figure in the move to seek an interview with Perón was Ricardo Balbín of the *Unión Cívica Radical*. He had his own political reasons, of course, for doing this. Among them was fear of what the Córdoba coup might signify. He arranged the interview with Perón.

Perón granted the interview as head of the government. As the authors of the United Secretariat resolution correctly explain, Perón was interested in bolstering his political image as the "guarantor" of democratic rights for everyone except the ultrarightists and the protagonists of guerrilla warfare. We understood this, and we did everything we could to counteract Perón's objectives in this respect, exposing the real role of his regime.

The projected interview had another side — it involved a formal governmental act of quasiparliamentary character. The interview was an official one between the president and the representatives of legally recognized parties listed as being in the opposition. Perón therefore demanded that the opposition parties present a document stating the objectives they sought in the interview.

For an opposition party to withdraw at this point would have brought into question its legal status. To struggle for legality and to defend it when it is won is a matter of principle for Leninists.

Oscar Alende, of the *Partido Intransigente*, drew up a draft for consideration by the seven other parties. Aside from other items, we found the draft to be totally unacceptable both for what it included (support of a bourgeois government and its institutions) and for what it left out (mobilization of the working class in defense of democratic rights). At a meeting of representatives of the eight parties, we argued in favor of amending the document along these lines.

We sought to eliminate all references to supporting the Peronist regime and to add points concerning mobilizing the workers. It soon became clear, of course, that it was impossible for the eight parties to reach agreement on a joint statement.

Balbín communicated this fact to officials of the Perón administration. Perón then made a concession; he withdrew his demand that a common statement be presented.

Thus the interview was held without a common statement being presented to Perón and with each party free to state its own positions. It was on that basis and that basis alone that we participated in the interview. We went as representatives of the PST and not as adherents of an unprincipled bloc or incipient popular front.

It can be argued that we made a mistake in doing this. We do not think it was a mistake, but we are quite willing to discuss the question and are open to persuasion if sufficiently compelling arguments can be adduced. However, this has nothing to do with the charge made by the authors of the United Secretariat resolution that we joined with bourgeois parties in signing an unprincipled document.

We recognized that our participating in an interview with Perón might be misunderstood by a few loyal militants and that some of our opponents might subject it to malicious misinterpretation. Through all the means at our disposal, including nationwide television broadcasts, we sought to lessen those risks. In the only genuine editorial cited by the authors of the United Secretariat resolution, we clearly stated our political opposition to Peronism and the Peronist regime. For instance, in relation to our posing the danger represented by the violent actions of the budding semifascist currents, we said:

"Preserving the stability of the institutions in this period does not mean supporting the Peronists' policy or their government; rather it means defending the right to utilize all democratic instruments, which however precarious, insufficient, and grudgingly conceded, make possible a more extensive and continuous relationship with the working class as a whole and the people. It means preserving the right — for ourselves as well as the other political forces — to publish journals, open headquarters, make use of radio and television, organize rallies, assemblies, and demonstrations. It also means the right for workers to improve their trade-union organizations, freeing them both from military interventions and from the bureaucracy, as the *compañeros* in Villa Constitución have just done. It means, finally, the chance to make an impact in the election of our rulers and in criticizing their programs and the activities of the government.

"All this has absolutely nothing to do with a defense of the policy of the government. Perón came to office with the support of a broad alliance of all the capitalist and imperialist sectors. Defending Perón's government would mean defending the Social Pact designed to freeze wages at the present levels of exploitation, guaranteeing the privileges of the landholding oligarchy and the investments of the foreign monopolies. It would mean, finally, defending the broad range of repressive means by which they are trying to impose this economic policy, from reforms of the Penal Code to enforcing the *Ley de Prescindibilidad* (Civil Servants Redundancy Law)." (Emphasis in the original.)

We believe that it is impermissible under any circumstances to give political support to a bourgeois regime, party, coalition, structure, or representative — and we have never done so in the slightest way. We have always opposed taking the road of class collaboration leading to popular frontism and to bourgeois nationalism.

In the face of a rightist coup, the threat or actual outbreak of civil war, and an assault on the liberties of the people and the rights of the workers, it is permissible and even sometimes imperative to organize and carry on practical actions in defense of democratic rights together with nonproletarian organizations and tendencies. That is what Lenin taught. At the same time the revolutionary party must make it crystal clear that such a strictly limited tactic of joint action to ward off an immediate danger does not entail the slightest political subordination, rapprochement, agreement, or collusion with the false policies of the temporary bourgeois democratic allies. Lenin instilled the principle of maintaining independence of action and voice. Democracy can be safeguarded only through the constant and independent struggle of the workers for power and socialism. The PST has worked to mobilize the masses along this line and will continue to do so.

What led the daily papers to report that a common document had been signed? What led some of them to say that the supposed joint document had been handed to Perón? (The majority of the Buenos Aires dailies, however — *Noticias*, *La Nación*, *Clarín*, *Mayoría* — said that it was only a press release.)

In giving the press his version of the interview with Perón, Balbín used as an aide-mémoire his own draft statement based on

corrections he had made to the draft drawn up by Alende and the one proposed by Coral. No doubt it was from this that the reporters gained the impression that it was a joint statement, and a few of them concluded that it had been handed to Perón. It should be added that the leaders of the Communist party have been pressing for the formation of a popular front in Argentina and they hoped to utilize the interview with Perón as a step in that direction. It was in their interest to help advance the interpretation that a common document had been agreed to.

Let us now take up the attempt by the authors of the United Secretariat resolution to show by judiciously selected quotations from two articles in the March 28–April 5 issue of *Avanzada Socialista* that we have made a turn and now favor joining unprincipled blocs with bourgeois parties in defense of democratic rights.

The United Secretariat resolution states that it is our position that in the given context a struggle must not be conducted to overthrow the government or the present institutions, but on the contrary it is necessary to defend "democratic institutionalization and that, to this end, it is correct to establish an accord with bourgeois parties by signing joint declarations and calling for joint demonstrations."

Neither the genuine nor the supposed editorials utilized by the authors of the United Secretariat resolution contain the quotation ascribed to us. Was the "quotation" taken from a different source? We would appreciate learning what the source was.

The matter is important, because it is on the basis of that "quotation" and its accompanying interpretation that we are accused of repeating the arguments used by the Stalinists in the thirties in favor of a popular front. The truth is that we have been campaigning in the most consistent way for many years against popular frontism. The very same issue of *Avanzada Socialista* that has proved so serviceable to the authors of the resolution carries vigorous polemics against popular frontism, which in the current situation in Argentina represents a real danger. (The authors of the resolution acknowledge our polemics against popular frontism, but brush them aside, saying we only "formally reaffirmed" our position.)

They brush aside, for instance, the following statement in one of the articles cited by the authors of the United Secretariat resolution:

"We . . . are the most determined opponents of 'democratic' or 'popular fronts.' That is, united fronts between workers and bosses. The most basic thing we are fighting for is the political independence of the workers movement from the parties or fronts of the bosses. For this reason, we did not join in the elections either with Frejuli (Frente Justicialista de Liberación Nacional — the National Liberation Front for Social Justice, the Peronist electoral formation) or the APR (Alianza Popular Revolucionaria — People's Revolutionary Alliance, a popular-front-type front of small left liberal parties supported by the CP.) We stand, more strongly than ever, for a united front of the working class."

The authors of the United Secretariat resolution even go so far as to take phrases from the document allegedly handed to Perón, place them in quotation marks, and represent them as our position. This procedure enables them to say the following:

"The PST leadership must have realized that all of this — its decision to participate in a meeting that served as a cover for Perón's 'normalization' moves, its signing a common document with bourgeois parties (including the Unión Cívica Radical, the traditional bourgeois party and even today the principal bourgeois force aside from Peronism), its proclaiming a 'fundamental agreement' among all the signers on defending the process of 'institutionalization,' its accepting 'objectives' approved

by 'the people' (which in reality are objectives elaborated by Cámpora and Perón), and its thesis that the fight against fascism can and must be conducted in common with the parties representing the class enemy — would provoke reactions among the party membership."

With such methods, it is easy to prove a case — any case, no matter how far it departs from the truth.

The other quotations selected by the authors of the United Secretariat resolution are irrelevant inasmuch as they do not presumably defend the famous statement that was allegedly presented to Perón. They deal with the concrete situation revolving around the ultrarightist coup in Córdoba, the broader threat this represents in Argentina today, and how the opposition of certain bourgeois sectors to a possible fascist threat in Argentina might be utilized in furthering the only sure answer to fascism, that is, mobilization of the working class in accordance with the program of revolutionary socialism.

From the way these quotations are utilized and from a couple of mistranslations, it is evident that the authors of the United Secretariat resolution do not understand the concrete situation in Argentina or our position on it. For instance, they quote one of the articles in *Avanzada Socialista* as talking about "defending constitutional stability." The original reads "defending institutional stability." That difference is not an essential one; what is essential is to understand that the reference is to the coup in Córdoba and its ramifications.

The loose use of the word "institucional" has undoubtedly added an element of confusion (and we are not free of blame in this), but it is hard to understand how the authors of the United Secretariat could have so badly misinterpreted the term in this instance, for it immediately follows the opening paragraph of the article outlining the concrete situation. The translating error (if that is what it really is) is repeated elsewhere. For instance, the article states that the fact "that eight political parties converged to demand a meeting to raise the institutional question is of extraordinary importance (que ocho partidos políticos hayan coincidido en solicitar la entrevista para plantear el problema institucional es de extraordinaria importancia)." This is translated as "the fact that eight parties reached an agreement to call for a meeting to demand institutionalization is of extraordinary importance (le fait que huit partis soient arrivés à un accord pour demander la réunion, afin de demander l'institutionnalisation est d'une importance extraordinaire)." But the reference in the article is to the struggle for the establishment of constitutional guarantees of democratic rights, a process that began with the Cordobazo and the subsequent downfall of the military dictatorship. In other words, the eight parties sought the interview in order to dramatize the problem of the coup in Córdoba and the danger that the process of establishing democratic rights might be reversed. The objective of the PST was not to plead with Perón but to give impetus to mobilizing the Argentine workers.

Still another charge is made against the leaders of the PST by the authors of the United Secretariat resolution. They state: "At the same time, they (the PST leaders) have forgotten the fundamental distinction that exists between the democratic rights demanded by the workers movement and the structures of bourgeois democracy."

We acknowledge that some of the formulations we have used could have led to this impression. We might even have made the error in the current situation in Argentina of not carefully distinguishing between a given bourgeois "structure" and the defense of democratic rights. Since our attention has been called to this, we have begun discussing the matter. We appeal to other sectors of the Trotskyist movement to also consider this question, bearing in mind the concrete situation in Argen-

tina, including the meaning acquired by the word "institucionalización."

If an adjustment is called for, we will not hesitate to make it as we have in the past on other questions.

However, we insist that our basic approach is squarely in accordance with the Leninist concept of the Third International, particularly as promulgated by Leon Trotsky. That basic approach is to mobilize the workers and their allies along the road to a socialist revolution through methods outlined in the Transitional Program.

We see no alternative to this approach. The "guerrilla strategy" has been advanced as a possible shortcut. We have rejected the "guerrilla strategy" as not being in accordance with the Leninist concept of the Third International, above all as promulgated by Leon Trotsky. In Argentina the "guerrilla strategy" has proved to be a big obstacle to mobilizing the workers and their allies along revolutionary-socialist lines.

We note in passing that the authors of the United Secretariat resolution throw in the charge that we "previously supported the Uruguayan Frente Amplio, which was led by a representative of the bourgeoisie, SEREGNI. . . ."

The intent of this gratuitous assertion is clear. The authors want to suggest that we supported the bourgeois figure Seregni, and called on the workers to vote for the Frente Amplio, a class-collaborationist bloc. The innuendo, however, has no basis in fact. That is why the authors of the United Secretariat resolution offer no quotations or other "proofs." (We are willing to discuss the character of the Uruguayan Frente Amplio, the Chilean Unidad Popular, or the French Union de la Gauche, and what tactical attitude ought to have been adopted toward them, but this is hardly the place to take up these problems.)

We turn now to the July 12 addendum to the resolution of the United Secretariat. The addendum acknowledges the public self-criticism made by the editorial staff in the June 26 *Avanzada Socialista* only to shrug it off as meaningless. If the leaders of the PST did not sign the document handed to Perón, that proves nothing, they argue, because the PST leaders support such a course in general! But then the specific case involving our allegedly signing the document, on which the authors of the United Secretariat hinged everything, also disappears, and we are left with nothing but their general assertion, deprived of any foundation in fact, that our course has been "opportunist."

Moreover, the authors of the resolution contend, if the leaders of the PST did not sign the document allegedly handed to Perón, they at least signed other unprincipled documents; therefore the charges against us still stand. The fresh "evidence" adduced for this argument — which is an extraordinary one to say the least — is that on June 29, 1974, the PST added its signature to the signatures of seven other parties on a "center-left" declaration supporting "the process of institutionalization in the country" and "the operation of the legal mechanisms of constitutional succession." The source of this "evidence," state the authors of the resolution, is the June 30, 1974, issue of the Buenos Aires bourgeois daily *La Opinión*. (Other newspapers reported to the contrary. For example, *La Nación*.)

Besides this, the authors of the resolution declare, on July 3, following the death of Perón, the leaders of the PST signed a statement in the city of Santa Fe in response to a request from the president of the provincial parliament in support of "the maintenance of constitutional stability as the only adequate means for attaining social justice in freedom, breaking the grip of the imperialist interests, and achieving lasting independence." The source cited for this "evidence" is a dispatch from Rosario published in the July 4 issue of the Buenos Aires bourgeois daily *El Cronista Comercial*.

The reports are erroneous in both instances. In neither case did either leaders or members of the PST sign any such documents or support them. We would suggest to the authors of the postscript to the resolution of the United Secretariat that the standards of accuracy in the bourgeois press in Argentina are even below those of *Le Monde*.

A final point: How could it happen that the editorial staff of *Avanzada Socialista* made the error it did in reporting the March 21 interview with Perón? It is of no public interest to go into the details, which concern the organization and functioning of the staff. Suffice it to state that the specific problem

is but one of many facing our organization in a period of tumultuous growth. The opportunities for recruitment and expansion have placed extreme demands on all our seasoned cadres. New adherents are being integrated as fast as possible, but full integration requires time. Meanwhile errors are bound to crop up. Our situation, we are sure, will be appreciated by those sectors of the world Trotskyist movement that have undergone similar periods of swift growth. What we require above all from the Fourth International at present is understanding of our opportunities and problems — and loyal collaboration in our effort to handle them in a principled way.

August 20, 1974

2 statement of the united secretariat

The United Secretariat of the Fourth International has adopted the following statement in response to the August 20, 1974, statement of the Executive Committee of the PST:

We acknowledge the affirmation of the comrades of the PST that they did not sign the document of March 21, 1974, or the documents of June 29 and July 3, 1974, signatures the Argentine press had attributed to them.

If the contrary impression was created, it was due in large part to the fact that *Avanzada Socialista*, the organ of the PST, had itself confirmed the information in the bourgeois press in this regard and to the fact that there was an extraordinary delay in the correction made by the PST.

Let us leave aside the argument that it was necessary to wait two months before publicly correcting the error made by *Avanzada Socialista* in order to give that correction greater exposure through the television appearance of Comrade Coral. But what of the delay in the internal rectification?

The comrades of the PST were invited to three successive meetings of the United Secretariat to explain their attitude toward the meeting and document of March 21, 1974. They did not attend any of these meetings. They could have immediately explained in writing that they had not signed the document in question. They refrained from doing so. The first written indication in this regard was received by the United Secretariat at the beginning of June in a letter from the PST dated May 23. The first public interpretation of the new version of the facts came to the United Secretariat three months after the events, with the June 26 issue of *Avanzada Socialista*, which explained that the PST had not signed the document. To this day we have received no explanation of the reasons that led the PST to delay so long an internal rectification that could have been sent forty-eight hours after their receipt of the first letter from the United Secretariat.

We also acknowledge to the comrades of the PST that in the published text of the United Secretariat resolution of July 12, 1974, the passage relative to the PST's conception of the defense of institutionalization was placed between quotation marks through an error in transcription of the manuscript. It is true that this was not a quotation from *Avanzada Socialista* but rather our own judgment of the meaning of the conceptions and action of the leaders of the PST, a judgment based not on

an allegedly abusive quotation but rather on an analysis that we can only reiterate.

All this is not the basis of the problem. What concerned the leadership of the Fourth International was not only the fact that according to the Argentine press, including *Avanzada Socialista*, the PST was said to have signed a common declaration with seven other parties, several of them bourgeois parties, one of them the country's principal bourgeois opposition party. What was also of concern was the argumentation through which the leadership of the PST had justified the meeting with representatives of the government and the bourgeois parties and through which *Avanzada Socialista* had justified — "by mistake," it now appears — signature of a common document of the eight parties.

Avanzada Socialista continued to develop this argumentation for months. It thus exhibited a political orientation that breaks with the programmatic continuity of the Fourth International and of revolutionary Marxism on at least one important question. That is the reason the leadership of the Fourth International judged it necessary to make public its criticism of the PST in its declaration of July 12, 1974, and, at the request of the PST, continues to have this discussion publicly.

Thus, in the first denial, published by the June 26 *Avanzada Socialista*, we read (we are quoting the English version published in the July 15, 1974, *Intercontinental Press*):

"In our country the democratic liberties we have at present are the result of tremendous workers' struggles that erupted with the Cordobazo. These liberties are being threatened by the rise of fascist groups that are supported by a wing of the government, by the union bureaucracy, and by the bourgeoisie. Faced with that threat, we consider it not only permissible but obligatory to make limited, tactical, temporary agreements with any sector that comes out for the defense of democratic rights. . . ."

"One of the eight parties proposed that a joint declaration be made, and it presented a draft. Our party proposed a series of changes that were partially accepted. At the time we went to press, the editorial staff thought that the document bore the signature of the Partido Socialista de los Trabajadores. Ac-

tually, it was not signed because there was still disagreement with it."

That can mean but one thing: In principle, the leadership of the PST continues to think that signing a common document with the Communist party and a certain number of bourgeois parties, among them the country's principal opposition bourgeois party, "for the defense of the process of institutionalization" was correct. If the PST did not sign this particular common declaration, it is simply because an agreement on the exact content of the declaration had not (must we say, had not yet?) been reached.

In its July 4, 1974, issue *Avanzada Socialista* returned to the charge and wrote (again, we are quoting the English version, published in the July 22, 1974, Intercontinental Press):

"Our party is the only militant party left in Argentina that has publicly stated that it supports the process of institutionalization. . . .

"In October 1972 representatives of our party went to meet the representative of the military dictatorship to tell him that we supported the 'process of institutionalization' and to demand the withdrawal of the military junta from the government. . . .

" . . . today . . . once again, in the aftermath of General Perón's death, we have reiterated our support for the 'process of institutionalization' against the attacks of the putschist right."

We were and are in total opposition to this political orientation, whose fundamental logic, based on a distorted quotation from Lenin, is expressed in the clearest manner in the following passage from the July 4, 1974, *Avanzada Socialista*:

"In a nutshell, since the Cordobazo unleashed the struggle against the Onganía dictatorship, the word 'institutionalization' has acquired a meaning in Argentine politics different from the one given in the dictionary. It has become a synonym of fighting to defend or win democratic rights."

"This is why we have used the term in public statements. And we do not regret using it to condemn the military dictatorship, even though this could have the effect of defending the elections the Peronists won; or to condemn the Navarro coup, even though this could have the effect in practice of defending Obregón Cano; or to condemn a coup d'état now, even if it has the effect of defending the Peronist government. . . . This is what Lenin was referring to when he said that every revolutionary had to distinguish between forms of government and defend the higher ones. . . .

"How must the process of institutionalization be defended?"

"The fact that in defending democratic rights our position coincides with non-working-class and nonsocialist currents and parties does not mean that we agree with them on anything else or on the way to defend these democratic rights."

"Our party will always agree with Balbín and the FAS lawyers in opposing by all means the suppression of the daily *El Mundo*. Balbín does this in the name of the bourgeois liberal constitution he supports. We do so in the name of workers democracy and socialism."

"These convergences with bourgeois sectors can be expressed in the form of limited agreements, documents, statements, etc. All these various types of public actions, from joint communiqués to rallies, are useful and help to create the kind of social consciousness and climate needed to defend civil liberties or condemn fascism. Moreover, they safeguard and reinforce the legal rights of the revolutionary party."

We can only repeat: We are in total disagreement with this conception of the struggle against fascism and the threat of rightist dictatorship. For the Trotskyist movement and the Fourth International, the struggle against fascism and the threat of rightist dictatorship is centered on the necessity for the workers united front, which is a class front and not an interclass front. We reject the Social Democratic policy of lesser evilism according to which the workers are supposed to defend "superior" or "better" bourgeois "forms of government" against "less good" or "inferior" forms of government. Lenin explained that it was perfectly possible to struggle against Kornilov without defending the "superior" form of government of Kerensky. Trotsky many times explained that the necessity of combating the fascist threat as the heaviest threat weighing on the working class in no way involved defense of the "superior" government of Brüning, not to mention that of von Papen or von Schleicher, against Hitler. (Leon Trotsky, *The Struggle Against Fascism in Germany*, Pathfinder Press, New York, 1971, pp. 95, 108, 135-7, 140, 152, etc.)

The position of *Avanzada Socialista* was so excessive that the PST had to back off on the matter and sketch out an initial self-criticism in its statement of August 20, 1974. There we read:

"Still another charge is made against the leaders of the PST by the authors of the United Secretariat resolution. They state: 'At the same time, they (the PST leaders) have forgotten the fundamental distinction that exists between the democratic rights demanded by the workers movement and the structures of bourgeois democracy.'

"We acknowledge that some of the formulations we have used could have led to this impression. We might even have made the error in the current situation in Argentina of not carefully distinguishing between a given bourgeois 'structure' and the defense of democratic rights."

Unfortunately, this beginning of self-criticism, which we salute, stops short with an attempt to reduce everything to semantic confusion over the word "institutionalization." The word is supposedly not being used in the dictionary sense, but rather to mean "the institutional guarantee of democratic rights." Without wanting to enter into this semantic debate, we draw the attention of the PST comrades to the fact that they themselves have used this term in a clearly broader sense — one that does not diverge very much from the usual meaning the "dictionaries" commonly attribute to it. When *Avanzada Socialista*, apropos of the "process of institutionalization," refers to the elections won by the Peronists (issue of July 4, 1974); when the PST insists on the necessity of obtaining constitutional guarantees of democratic rights (Intercontinental Press, September 9, 1974); when Comrade Coral affirms at the "multisectoral" meeting of October 8, 1974: "El PST seguirá luchando contra todos esos factores que crean el clima golpista, y luchará por la continuidad de este gobierno, porque fué elegido por la mayoría de los trabajadores argentinos. . . ." (The PST will continue struggling against all those factors that create the putschist climate and will struggle for the continuity of this government, because it was elected by the majority of Argentine workers; *Avanzada Socialista*, October 17, 1974), it is obvious that it is not simply a question of the "guarantee of democratic rights" but also of the functioning of the institutions of the so-called democratic parliamentary bourgeois state as a whole. Obviously, this includes parliamentary elections, the parliament, the bourgeois state apparatus, the government that comes out of these elections, etc. And Marxist-Leninists know that these institutions also involve defending bourgeois property, capitalist exploitation, and the apparatus of repression devoted to this defense.

The insufficiency of the self-criticism and the confusion that it maintains derive from the fact that the comrades of the PST identify the question of "institutionalization," that is, the con-

tinuity of the democratic parliamentary institutions of the bourgeois state with the question of the defense of democratic rights. It is true that the PST's August 20, 1974, declaration pronounces itself against any political support to a bourgeois regime or coalition. That is really the least one can demand from an organization that claims allegiance to Trotskyism. But the rejection of "support to the policy of a bourgeois regime" combined with "support to the process of institutionalization," that is, the consolidation and strengthening of the institutions of bourgeois-parliamentary democracy, leaves the question of the PST's attitude toward the bourgeois state completely open. And it is that question that lies at the center of the controversy. The PST's self-criticism has not at all clarified the party's attitude in this regard. We hope that it will be extended to eliminate any equivocation on this crucial problem.

II.

The origins of the confusion appear rather clearly when the question of agreements with the parties or representatives of the bourgeoisie is examined. Revolutionary Marxists are advocates of the defense of democratic rights. They have even always allowed for the possibility of temporary technical agreements with bourgeois liberals on practical objectives of struggle for a given and precise democratic right, all the while rejecting any political bloc with the liberal bourgeoisie. Trotsky cited in this regard the fact that some bourgeois Jews gave money to the Social Democratic workers groups in Russia in order to allow them to buy arms to fight against the Black Hundreds, who were organizing pogroms. Only inveterate sectarians who are scarcely interested in the real struggle could reject such an agreement as "opportunist."

Likewise, no revolutionary having a minimum of good sense would reject the support of a bourgeois politician in a campaign to defend or regain legality for a workers journal or for the exercise of the right to strike, so long as that support is not contingent on subordinating the general orientation, including in the defense of democratic rights, to the exigencies of the search for the support, that is, to a policy of compromise with the "liberal" bourgeoisie.

The August 20, 1974, document of the Executive Committee of the PST appears to say the same thing. But in sliding from the question of an occasional technical agreement for the defense of a particular democratic right to the search for an agreement with the "liberal" bourgeoisie for the defense of democratic rights in general, the statement passes imperceptibly to the search for political accords for the defense of the institutions of bourgeois parliamentary democracy.

This emerges clearly from the quotations already cited from the July 4, 1974, *Avanzada Socialista*, in which this journal speaks of "convergences with bourgeois sectors (that) can be expressed in the form of limited agreements, documents, declarations, etc. All these various types of public actions(!), from joint communiqués to rallies, are useful and help to create the kind of social consciousness and climate(!) needed to defend civil liberties or condemn(!) fascism."

It is precisely to avoid such confusion that Trotsky clarifies the objectives of the workers united front in the struggle against the rise of fascism by making a distinction between the defense of the "germs, elements, of proletarian democracy within bourgeois democracy" and the defense of the bourgeois-democratic institutions of the bourgeois state:

"What will the Communist Party 'defend'? The Weimar Constitution? No, we will leave that task to Brandler. The Communist Party must call for the defense of those material and moral positions which the working class has managed to win in the German state. This most directly concerns the fate of the workers' political organizations, trade unions, newspapers, printing

plants, clubs, libraries, etc. Communist workers must say to their Social Democratic counterparts: 'The policies of our parties are irreconcilably opposed; but if the fascists come tonight to wreck your organization's hall, we will come running, arms in hand, to help you. Will you promise us that if our organization is threatened you will rush to our aid?' This is the quintessence of our policy in the coming period. All agitation must be pitched in this key." (The Struggle Against Fascism in Germany, Pathfinder Press, 1971, p.72.)

And still more clearly in an article entitled "Fascism and Democratic Slogans" dated July 14, 1933:

"It is true that the upsurge of discontent of the middle classes and the resistance of the workers will provoke a division in the bloc of the owning classes and will impel a 'left wing' to seek ties with the petty bourgeoisie. But the task of the party of the proletariat in regard to the 'liberal' wing of the owning classes will not consist in integrating them into a bloc 'of all classes' against fascism but on the contrary in immediately engaging in a determined struggle against it for influence over the lower layers of the petty bourgeoisie." (Trotsky, *Schriften über Deutschland*, Volume 2, p.600, our emphasis.)

Now, the meetings in which the PST has been participating in no way had as their objective engaging in practical actions for the defense of a given democratic right, a given conquest of the working class. It was a matter of meetings to affirm — in the presence of the government — the defense of the "process of institutionalization." Moreover, regular meetings with the bourgeois opposition parties and the CP are in turn becoming institutionalized meetings. In political terms, that is called an interclass political bloc against all those who "resort to violence" in Argentina and who thereby threaten the "process of institutionalization."

This political orientation is inadmissible from the standpoint of principle. From the standpoint of the desired effects in the struggle against the fascist threat and against the terror of the far right it is totally ineffective.

In its March 28, 1974, issue *Avanzada Socialista* makes much of a quotation from Trotsky affirming that in the struggle against fascism one can even make an alliance with the devil and his grandmother. But the organ of the PST neglects to add that this quotation was aimed at explaining to Communist workers the necessity of a united front with the Social Democratic party, that is, a reformist workers party whose leaders are undoubtedly representatives of the bourgeoisie within the workers movement but who are no less part of the organized workers movement. Trotsky in no way proposed such an agreement with bourgeois parties like those that are participating in the regular meetings between the PST and the seven other parties.

In drawing this quotation out of context *Avanzada Socialista* above all does not point out that the very article from which this phrase is drawn, "What Next," turns completely on the idea of the class united front, of a "class against class" opposition to combat the rise of fascism:

"The contentions regarding the policies of the united front take their origin from such fundamental and inexorable exigencies of the struggle of class against class. . . ." (The Struggle Against Fascism in Germany, p.179.)

"'Class against class!' This means all organizations of the proletariat must take their place in the united front against the bourgeoisie.

"The practical program of the united front is determined by agreements with organizations made in full view of the masses. Every organization remains under its own banner and its own

leadership. Every organization obeys in action the discipline of the united front.

"'Class against class!' Indefatigable agitation must be conducted in order that the Social Democratic organizations and the reformist trade unions shall break with the perfidious bourgeois allies in the 'Iron Front' and that they join in common with the Communists and all other organizations of the proletariat." (Ibid. p. 256.)

Trotsky considered the breakup of the alliance between the Social Democrats and the "antifascist" bourgeois "liberals" of the *Staatspartei* as a concomitant condition for the constitution of a workers united front against fascism. He called for the exclusion of the bourgeois liberals of the Eisener Front (Iron Front) at the same time as he demanded the conclusion of agreements between the Social Democratic party and the CP.

Does the PST counterpose the conception of a bloc with liberal bourgeois parties for the defense of the "process of institutionalization" to Trotsky's conception of the workers united front?

This conception of Trotsky's was not a concession to the ultra-leftist atmosphere prevailing in the Communist International in the beginning of the 1930s. Its roots lie in the Marxist comprehension of the origins and nature of fascism. The source of the rise of fascism lies in the structural crisis of decadent capitalism and the crisis of the bourgeois-parliamentary system, which is its corollary. The more serious these two crises become without the revolutionary vanguard being capable of leading the working class to the overthrow of capitalism, the more the culture medium of the fascist germs ferments. Under these conditions, to counterpose defense of increasingly paralyzed bourgeois-parliamentary institutions in decomposition to the rise of fascism is to court certain defeat. Trotsky explained in this regard:

"Isn't the conclusion self-evident that, faced with difficulties and tasks too great for it, the democratic regime is losing control? . . . The internal and external difficulties of the German nation have heated up the class struggle to the point where no one can or wants to subordinate it to parliamentary conventions. Some may regret this, bitterly reproach the extremist parties for their inclination toward violence, hope for a better future. But facts are facts. The wires of democracy cannot take too high a social voltage. Such are, however, the voltages of our time." (Ibid. pp. 267-68.)

For this reason, the workers united front against fascism turns entirely on the extraparlimentary action of the workers. The defense of the workers organizations against the fascist gangs is an indispensable precondition for strengthening the self-confidence, striking force, and combativity of the working class. That is why wanting to pass to "the offensive" so long as fascism is not driven back represents irresponsible chatter. But this defense must unleash a dynamic of anticapitalist offensive to render the antifascist struggle victorious:

"The task of demolishing fascism retains all its acuteness. The decisive battle of the proletariat against fascism will signal the simultaneous collision with the Bonapartist state apparatus. This makes the general strike an indispensable fighting weapon. It must be prepared. A special general strike plan must be worked out, that is, a plan for the mobilization of the forces to carry it out. Proceeding from this plan, a mass campaign must be unfolded, on the basis of which an agreement for carrying out the general strike under well-defined political conditions may be proposed to the Social Democracy. Repeated and made concrete at every new stage, this proposal will lead in the process of its development to the creation of the soviets as the highest organs of the united front." (Ibid. p. 321.)

And even more clearly:

"The logic of events is such that the struggle for 'parliament' and for 'democracy' becomes for every Social Democratic worker a question of power. Therein lies the main content of the whole conflict from the standpoint of the revolution. The question of power is the question of the revolutionary unity of the proletariat in action. A united front policy with respect to the Social Democracy must be pursued in the very near future to render possible, on the basis of proletarian democratic representation, the creation of class organs of struggle, i.e. of workers soviets."

Of course, Argentina in 1974 is not Germany in 1932. There are important differences in the social structure of the two countries, in the relative weight of the different social classes, and above all in the forms of organization, political tradition, and level of political class consciousness of the workers. But no "national particularity" can transform the Radical party of Mr. Balbín into a serious candidate for the organization of a general strike — not to mention workers councils — at the side of the workers organizations. Is it not obvious that Trotsky is defending a different political orientation in these propositions of struggle against the fascist threat through the workers united front leading to the united class action of the proletariat culminating in a general strike — different from the orientation that sees regular meetings with bourgeois parties, signing common declarations and communiqués with these parties, and organizing common meetings with these parties as the useful condition for "creating the kind of social consciousness and climate needed to defend civil liberties or condemn fascism" (*Avanzada Socialista*, July 4, 1974)?

Moreover, the comrades of the PST are caught in an additional contradiction. They heavily insist on the fact that they were and remain irremediably opposed to coalitions of the "popular front" type. Excellent resolve! But they seem to forget that the popular fronts were constituted in the 1930s exactly with the aim of "defending democratic rights" against the fascist threat. If not only technical agreements but also political agreements with liberal bourgeois parties are admissible for the defense not only of a specific democratic right but democratic rights in general, what remains of the basis of the revolutionary Marxist opposition to the "antifascist" policy of the popular front? Is it solely the fact that the popular front also contains a governmental program? Would it then become acceptable without such a program? If agreement with bourgeois parties to defend democratic rights in general is admissible, is it not even more admissible for regaining them where they have been suppressed? What then remains of the validity of the revolutionary Marxist opposition to the policy of "antifascist front" with the "liberal" bourgeoisie and its political parties, as followed by the Spanish CP, the Chilean CP, and the Uruguayan CP, to cite only three examples?

The question is not simply rhetorical. Already the PRT-U (*Partido Revolucionario de los Trabajadores-Uruguay*), a close political ally of the PST, has pronounced itself squarely in favor of such a front for the "reconquest of free elections":

"In view of this situation and the way the consciousness of the working class has advanced as a result of the colossal general strike it fought in defense of the last vestiges of its democratic rights, which were wrenched away by the putschists, we think that the struggle begun in June (1973) must continue. It must go forward to overthrow the dictatorship by raising a program that sums up the most urgent demands of the workers and draws behind it the entire people's movement, including sectors of the bourgeoisie itself that are opposed to the dictatorship. We think this program . . . is summed up in the demand for free elections in which all parties can participate." (*Prensa Obrera*, March 11, 1974, quoted in *Intercontinental Press*, April 22, 1974, our emphasis.)

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We are entitled to ask the comrades of the PST: Do you agree with this "bloc" with the liberal bourgeoisie for the "defense" or "conquest" of "free elections"? Is that the line that Trotsky defended as the orientation for the struggle against fascism and the threats of far-rightist dictatorship? Is that the orientation of the workers united front? Is not an urgent and complete self-criticism required in face of such dangerous confusion?

III.

Nevertheless, the seriousness of the error committed by the PST acquires an additional dimension when it is placed in the context of the concrete political situation that exists in Argentina today.

Revolutionary Marxists are unanimous in regarding the replacement of the military dictatorship of Lanusse by the return to power of the Peronists as being the result of the rise of an explosive mass movement that began with the insurrectional general strike in Córdoba in 1969. We will add that the development of multiple forms of armed confrontation between the military bourgeois forces on the one hand and sectors of the masses as well as some groups of the vanguard on the other created for the bourgeoisie the clear danger of a civil war in which entire sections of the toiling masses would successively become engaged, a danger that precipitated its opting for a return to power of the Peronists.

By promoting the "process of institutionalization" through the "great national accord," the Argentine big bourgeoisie, supported by imperialism, pursued the essential aims of averting the risk of an overall confrontation between its army and the masses (which involved, moreover, a challenge to the internal cohesion of the army), of reestablishing control over the workers movement through the Peronist trade-union bureaucracy, of arresting the impetuous rise of workers struggles, and of relaunching the process of accumulation of capital thanks to the combination of reestablished "social peace" at home and precise operations abroad (search for investments from European and Japanese imperialism, search for new outlets in the bureaucratized workers states, development of an "Andes bloc" as a privileged market for Argentine industry vis-à-vis its Brazilian competitor, etc.).

But the *sine qua non* for the success of this Peronist project was the acceptance of "social peace" by the whole working class in exchange for "free elections" and some improvements in real wages in comparison with the worst periods of the military dictatorship. And the situation in the workers movement after the experience of the military dictatorship and after the Cordobazas was no longer one of integral control by the Peronist bureaucracy over all the workers. A growing number of workers — although still largely a minority on a national scale — were beginning to act independently both in certain regions (Tucumán and Córdoba, for example) and in certain sectors (the workers of the drafting industry, for example).

Under these conditions, the reestablishment of the Peronist regime inevitably involved a growing violent and terrorist repression not only against the Peronist far left and the groups engaged in guerrilla struggle, but also against all independent sectors of the workers movement and the working class. From the attacks against the Peronist youth on the very day of Perón's return to Argentina (the massacre at Ezeiza airport) to the raiding operations against union headquarters in October 1974, inclusive of the innumerable intervening bombing attacks and assassinations of leftist militants, this repression has in no way been a "riposte" to the "violence of the far left," as the open apologists and other mouthpieces of the bourgeoisie claim. Rather, it is inscribed in the very logic of the project of the Great National Accord: reestablish "social peace" at any price and isolate — in order to crush them — the radicalized sectors of the working class and the petty bourgeoisie that are

not submitting to the "social peace." The resolution on Argentina adopted by the Tenth World Congress of the Fourth International (Fourth Congress since Reunification) affirmed in this regard:

"It is this very explosion of the internal conflicts of Peronism that has rapidly brought to light the unstable character of the new period of bourgeois democracy. But beyond the internecine struggle within the Peronist movement, the escalation of actions by the parapolice gangs and the bureaucracy is aimed at dealing selective but effective blows against sectors of the social vanguard that refuse to accept the imperatives of capitalist 'national reconstruction.' The murder of militants, kidnappings, and the rightist attacks of various kinds are occurring at a rhythm never seen before, even under the military dictatorship. A curious 'democracy' that develops the white terror starting from the highest governmental circles! The selective repression, under the cover of the activity of the parallel gangs, is going to be completed by new repressive legislation on various levels."

That is exactly what has happened.

This "institutionalized" and systematized repression, under the direct control of López Rega, the "strongman" of the Peronist regime, reveals the hypocritical and fraudulent character of the declarations of the leading Peronists — yesterday General Perón and today María Estela Perón — according to which "the process of institutionalization" justifies no form of violence. Those who have made these declarations are tolerating, covering for, and justifying a systematic terror against the vanguard sectors of the working class and youth. The first duty of a revolutionary party in Argentina is to denounce this abject hypocrisy. The PST's participation in the institutionalized meetings between the government and the so-called center-left opposition on the contrary provides left cover for a political operation whereby the Peronist regime is seeking to camouflage its responsibility for the organization of an antiworker and antiforevolutionary repression behind the shield of verbal declarations against "terrorism wherever it comes from." By publishing headlines in its newspaper like "Neither Guerrillas Nor Social Peace," by multiplying condemnations of "terrorism of the left and the right," by affirming that the "guerrillas create the pretext" for the unleashing of the rightist terror, the PST provides grist for the mill of the bourgeois propaganda to the effect that the fascist terror is the "product" of the "violence of the left" instead of denouncing the terrorist repression against the far left and the vanguard sectors of the working class as the logical and inevitable product of the Peronist project of reestablishing "social peace" at any price and of fostering class collaboration in a climate of exacerbation of the class struggle.

The PST's participation in the hypocritical comedy of "national harmonization" around support to the process of institutionalization organized by the Peronist regime is all the more fraught with consequences in that it allows the bourgeois press to distribute in millions of copies reports about the PST's approval of the government propaganda about the "union of all Argentines around democratic institutions and the unanimous condemnation of violence." And the statement made by Juan Carlos Coral at the "multisectoral meeting" of October 8, 1974, was not made to deny this propaganda. In the text of that statement, we read, notably:

"Asumiendo plenamente la cuota de responsabilidad que nos corresponde en el actual proceso político con la sinceridad con que siempre hemos expresado nuestros puntos de vista, y con la sinceridad que la misma señora presidente nos reclamaba en su discurso inicial, hemos venido esta mañana a repudiar categoricamente todas las formas de terrorismo, todas las manifestaciones de violencia individual de grupos que se ejerzan al margen de la voluntad y las necesidades de las masas, y a repudiar también esa otra forma de violencia mas general y casi institucionalizada en nuestro país, que es el golpe de estado.

"Termino, señora, diciendo que nuestro partido considera útil esta forma de diálogo, que no tiene precedentes en el país. No pretendemos modificar con un discurso la política del gobierno, pero, seguramente, la señora presidente y los señores ministros habrán recogido algunas de las observaciones que hemos formulado.

"Sabemos que las limitaciones burguesas del gobierno le impedirán adoptar las medidas mínimas que nosotros reclamamos. Ni puede hacer la Reforma Agraria, ni puede expropiar los monopolios, ni puede modificar sustancialmente la relación de precios y salarios, ni podrá, seguramente, sancionar drásticamente los desbordes de la violencia fascista.

"El Partido Socialista de los Trabajadores seguirá luchando contra todos esos factores que crean el clima golpista, y luchará por la continuidad de este gobierno, porque fué elegido por la mayoría de los trabajadores argentinos y porque permite el ejercicio de algunas libertades democráticas que son, a su vez, una conquista de las movilizaciones obreras y populares que conmovieron al país a partir del cordobazo." (Avanzada Socialista, October 17, 1974.)

"(We fully assume the responsibility that devolves on us in the present political process with the sincerity with which we have always expressed our points of view and with the sincerity that Señora Presidente herself demanded of us in her opening speech; we have come this morning to categorically repudiate all forms of terrorism, all the manifestations of individual violence of groups that act apart from the desires and necessities of the masses, and to repudiate also that other, more general, almost institutionalized, form of violence in our country represented by coups d'etat.

"(Finally, Señora, let us say that our party considers this form of dialogue, which is unprecedented in the country, to be useful. We do not hope to alter the government's policy with a speech; but surely Señora Presidente and the ministers have noted some of the observations we have formulated.

"(We know that the bourgeois limitations of the government will prevent it from adopting the minimal measures that we are demanding. It cannot carry out the Agrarian Reform, cannot expropriate the monopolies, cannot substantially change the relations of prices and wages, nor, surely, will it be able to drastically restrict the incidents of fascist violence.

"(The Partido Socialista de los Trabajadores will continue struggling against all those factors that create the putschist climate and will struggle for the continuity of this government, because it was elected by the majority of Argentine workers and because it permits the exercise of some democratic rights that,

In turn, are conquests of the workers and peoples mobilizations that have shaken the country since the cordobazo.")

It is true that Coral's speech as reported in Avanzada Socialista also contained a condemnation of the government's "passivity" in face of the murder of worker militants like those of the PST (a condemnation that was not reported in the bourgeois press). But the passages we have just quoted — like the accounts published in Avanzada Socialista according to which the president approached the PST delegates to express condolences for the losses in human life suffered by the PST and like the big headlines about the condemnation of the white terror by the oppositional delegates assembled at the multisectoral meeting — facilitate the Peronist government's camouflage and cover-up operation instead of exposing it. Coming on the eve of the proclamation of the state of siege, after the vote on antistrike laws, and after the greater and greater accentuation of terror against the PST itself, this manifestly serves the bourgeoisie and the Peronist regime more than it contributes to defending the PST against the violence of the far right or the attempt to outlaw the PST.

It is thus high time for the PST to reexamine and correct its policy of "support to the process of institutionalization." To take all the initiatives necessary to effectively defend its own legal status, the freedom of action of all the workers organizations, the total exercise of the right to strike and of trade-union democracy, and to defend effectively its own leaders and militants, who are more and more threatened by the terror of the far right, the PST must resolutely orient itself toward the line of the workers united front and the propagation and carrying out in practice of self-defense by the workers organizations themselves against the fascist terror.

It is high time to put the main stress on the Peronist government's responsibility for the repression against the left and to avoid any false maneuver that serves in reality to hide this responsibility from the masses.

The Fourth International has a duty of political clarification to fulfill. We are convinced that this duty constitutes an aid for the comrades of the PST and not an attack on this sympathizing organization. But the principal task of the sections of the Fourth International at the present moment, given the situation that is developing in Argentina, is to arouse the workers movement and the toiling masses of all countries against the terror in Argentina, to the defense of the workers and revolutionary organizations that are victims of violent repression, both legal and extralegal, to the defense of the PST and the other sympathizing organizations of the Fourth International in Argentina. We are certain that our sections will not fail in this task. □

evolution of the communist parties in capitalist europe

The following text was adopted by a meeting of the Political Bureaus of the European sections of the Fourth International held early in November.

1. The Communist parties, founded as revolutionary vanguard parties of the proletariat after the Social Democracy's 1914 capitulation to imperialism and the victory of the October socialist revolution, have undergone a process of bureaucratic degeneration parallel to that of the Soviet Union. Under the pressure of the Communist International controlled by the Stalinist faction of the Soviet CP, these parties progressively lost their internal democratic structure and their ability to elaborate a political line in accordance with the needs of the class struggle on a national and international scale. They have been transformed into tools of the diplomatic maneuvers of the Soviet bureaucracy. This process culminated in the German CP's capitulation to Hitler without a fight in 1933 and the acceptance of this capitulation by all the other CPs without self-criticism or serious political examination of the line the Communist International had followed from 1929 to 1933.

Since then the political line of the bureaucratized and Stalinized CPs has followed the zigzags of the Kremlin's policy, in accordance with the exigencies of the bureaucratic defense of the "Soviet bulwark." The interests of the international revolution have been systematically subordinated to this defense, in line with the logic of the theory of "socialism in one country." The successive zigzags are:

- * the rightist line of 1925-28 (support to the Kuomintang, Anglo-Russian Committee, etc.);
- * the ultraleft policy of the so-called third period, 1929-34;
- * the right-wing policy of alliance with the "democratic" bourgeoisie and the antifascist Popular Front, 1934-38;
- * the sudden change in course and more leftist-sounding phraseology during the 1939-41 period of the Hitler-Stalin pact (with, however, criminal accommodation to Nazi imperialism, especially in 1940);
- * the policy of "national front" with the Western imperialist bourgeoisie within the framework of the alliance between the USSR and Anglo-American imperialism in 1941-47. It led in particular to the French, Italian, and Greek CPs' liquidation of the revolutionary possibilities that opened up in

these countries at the end of the second world war and to their active participation in the reconstruction of the bourgeois state and army and the capitalist economy; It was followed to the point of lending cover to the colonial wars of French imperialism;

* the "hard-line" policy against American imperialism coinciding with the beginning of the Cold War and its exacerbation in the Korean war and the Indochina war (1948-53). This policy combined a temporary anti-U.S.-imperialist phraseology and activism (as in the Ridgeway demonstrations) with the right-wing strategic line of "new democracy" and "revolution by stages," which clearly differentiated the policy from that followed during the "third period" or the 1939-41 period.

The nature of the bureaucratized and Stalinized CPs emerges from this whole historical experience of 30 years duration (1923-1953). They are bureaucratized workers parties that in origin, program, tradition, and the way they are regarded by both the imperialist bourgeoisie and the proletariat, as well as in their social composition and their objective role in society, continue to be a part of the organized workers movement; but their political line at any given moment is a reflection of the interests of neither the bourgeoisie nor the petty bourgeoisie, but of the bureaucracy that has usurped power in the workers state of the USSR. It is this allegiance to the USSR, a degenerated workers state, that fundamentally differentiates the CPs from the Social Democratic parties, the objective foundations of whose political orientation consist of conciliation and capitulation to the imperialist bourgeoisie. Even when they render historically decisive services to the bourgeoisie, as they did at the time of the Popular Front or in the 1944-1947 period, the CPs do so not because of any allegiance to big capital, but because of the counterrevolutionary politics of the Soviet bureaucracy.

2. Beginning with the end of the Cold War (first Geneva Conference, 1954) a long period of rapprochement and relative collaboration between the Soviet bureaucracy and imperialism opened up. The present phase of this development, the so-called détente, is only the latest of many (end of the first Indochina war, Eisenhower-Khrushchev meeting,

Kennedy-Khrushchev meeting, halting of atmospheric nuclear testing, etc.). For twenty years now, the basic orientation of the CPs in capitalist Europe has undergone no fundamental zigzags, but has been marked by the strategic line of "peaceful co-existence," excluding the possibility of proletarian revolution and revolutionary struggle for the conquest of power in the imperialist countries. This strategy is fundamentally based on the following propositions:

a. The struggle between the "socialist camp" and the "imperialist camp" is the principal manifestation of the class struggle on a world scale (a "revised and corrected" version of the theory of "socialism in one country").

b. As long as the economic relationship of forces between the "socialist camp" and the "imperialist camp" is not fundamentally modified (in particular by a greater per capita productivity in the USSR than in the imperialist countries), the "passage to socialism" is impossible in the West.

c. Between the system of monopoly capitalism as it now functions in the West and the overthrow of the capitalist system there is an intermediary phase of "antimonopoly alliance" — an interclass alliance of the working class, the urban and rural petty bourgeoisie, and the "antimonopoly" section of the bourgeoisie. This alliance requires the elimination from the CPs' action programs of all objectives tending to question the existence of the capitalist system as a whole. It presupposes the survival of the bourgeois state apparatus, which is to be subjected to a process of "democratization."

d. Having emerged from the Cold War period in a state of extreme political isolation in relation to all the other political forces in their respective countries, the CPs set as their main priority ending this isolation, particularly by seeking an alliance with the Social Democracy and the trade-union bureaucracy. For this reason they must systematically avoid any political orientation that would lead to head-on opposition to the reformist bureaucracy (particularly in the unions or during strikes). The "international détente" is seen especially as facilitating breaking down the isolation in which the CPs find themselves.

The fact that in spite of certain minor turns the CPs in capitalist Europe have been following this basic orientation for twenty years now, without essential zigzags and without periodic returns to an anti-capitalist or revolutionary phraseology or internal education comparable to the past, cannot but have profound effects on the level of consciousness and the nature of the activity of their members and sympathizers. These effects are sufficient to amply justify the idea of an evolution of the CPs and the beginning of their transformation. But the evolution of the CPs is not simply a function of this long-term alignment on the strategy of the "peaceful, reformist, and electoral road to socialism." It is also influenced by the international crisis of Stalinism, by the repercussions within the CPs of the development of a new mass vanguard in Europe, and by the impetuous new rise of workers struggle and radicalization. We are concerned here with analyzing the combined effects of these three processes on the nature of the CPs.

3. The twenty-year-long systematic alignment of the European CPs on the strategy of the "antimonopoly alliance" and of "advanced democracy" has given rise to a process of Social Democratization of these CPs in the following sense:

a. These parties considerably reinforce reformist ideologies and illusions within the workers movement and the working class that were formerly represented by classical Social Democracy: an essentially electoralist orientation; systematic encouragement of illusions in the bourgeois parliament and bourgeois parliament members; attempts to contain strikes within a strictly economic framework; absence of any revolutionary education, etc.

b. With the exception of some survivors of the old generation (almost all of whom are bureaucrats), CP members retain almost no continuity of thought or, more important, of experience with the programmatic bases of the Communist International or the teachings of Lenin on bourgeois democracy, the dictatorship of the proletariat, the world revolution, the rejection of coalition governments with the bourgeoisie, etc. Militants systematically educated in a day-to-day neoreformist practice will be progressively less capable of making a rapid turn toward an essentially different sort of practice (as was also the case with the majority of Social Democratic militants in 1914).

c. The limited but real success of the CPs' neoreformist orientation in several countries of capitalist Europe (winning majorities on town councils, gains within the trade-union apparatus, parliamentary positions, positions within the "mass organizations" like cooperatives, women's and cultural organizations, etc.) creates an objective social dynamic in the direction of Social Democratization. Part of the apparatuses of the CPs, especially the mass CPs, is winning positions within the bourgeois-parliamentary state and bourgeois society comparable to those won by classical Social Democracy. As was the case with classical Social Democracy, these positions are increasingly less counterbalanced by systematic anticapitalist education and practice.

d. The long period of relative stability of capitalism in Western Europe (1949-1968) and the absence of large-scale revolutionary explosions in that part of the world during that period have considerably reinforced the evolution of the CPs, playing a role analogous to that played by the period of imperialist expansion in Europe from 1893 to 1914.

Nevertheless, while it is legitimate to speak of a process of Social Democratization of the CPs in capitalist Europe as currently in progress, it would be wrong to conclude that this process is already completed and that the CPs have already been transformed into pure and simple Social Democratic parties. The following factors indicate that this evolution is not yet complete and that the CPs have not yet undergone a qualitative modification of their social character:

a. The CPs of capitalist Europe have not yet broken their privileged connections with the Soviet bureaucracy. These connections are material (we must not underestimate the scope of financial aid that continues to flow in from the bureaucratized workers states, the advantages the CP leaders draw from

this aid, the various links between the leading cadres of the CPs and those of the workers states, etc.). These connections are also (and in the first place) political, reference to the Soviet Union and the "international communist movement" being the principal mark distinguishing the CPs from the Social Democratic parties and the justification both for their separate existence before the broader masses of workers and for their right-wing line in the eyes of the most hard-core of their own working-class militants. In the event of acute conflict between their own imperialist bourgeoisie and the USSR, whether direct conflict or conflict through "interposed countries" (as in the Middle East or Africa), the CPs are not yet at the point of crossing bag and baggage into the camp opposed to the USSR. The ongoing process of Social Democratization of these parties means that in case of such a conflict parts of the CP apparatus would certainly take such a position (as they already did in 1939-40). But until there is proof to the contrary we can say that the majority of the apparatus is not inclined toward such a definitive capitulation to imperialism.

b. The CPs of capitalist Europe continue to attract the most experienced and militant adult worker militants (not the young): those having a vague but real anticapitalist consciousness and, in a number of countries, those demonstrating a degree of militancy widely superior to that of the Social Democratic reformist militants.

c. The imperialist bourgeoisie of capitalist Europe continues to regard the Communist parties and their apparatuses as a socially alien body, not integrated and unable to be integrated into the bourgeoisie. Even when governmental collaboration with the CP is accepted as a last-resort solution aimed at averting a revolutionary social crisis, this collaboration is strictly limited to certain given areas of the state and related apparatuses. The bourgeoisie rejects any penetration by the CP of the army, the repressive apparatus, or the diplomatic corps. There are no CP leaders or cadres on the boards of the big private capitalist firms.

Consequently, the Communist parties of the countries of capitalist Europe are most correctly defined as bureaucratic workers parties in process of Social Democratization but continuing to align themselves fundamentally with the historic interests of the Soviet bureaucracy (as expressed indirectly through the ideology of the "socialist camp").

4. The international crisis of Stalinism has also profoundly influenced the evolution of the CPs of Western Europe. The Kremlin's break first with the Yugoslav CP and then with the Chinese CP (two indirect demonstrations of the irreconcilable opposition between the Soviet bureaucracy and the progress of the world revolution, however deformed); the repression by armies commanded by the Soviet bureaucracy first of the Hungarian revolution and then of the "Prague spring"; the partial reconciliation between Moscow and Belgrade; the rise of a political-intellectual opposition in the USSR and its repercussions in the West; the repercussions of the Cuban revolution's triumphing independently of the Kremlin and against the line of the Cuban CP; the vicissitudes of the Indochinese revolution; the emergence of a number of mass CPs developing independently of Moscow and Peking (the Indian CP-M, the Japanese CP, the Vietnamese CP) —

all these manifestations of the international crisis of Stalinism have had more and more marked effects on the orientation of the CPs of capitalist Europe.

A certain number of CPs have increasingly taken their distance from traditional Stalinism, and have started to openly criticize the attitude of the Soviet bureaucracy — both its international orientation and certain of its internal political decisions. This has particularly been the case with the Italian, Dutch, and Spanish CPs and the "interior" faction of the Greek CP. While the questioning of some of the classic theses of Stalinism has remained more timid in certain cases than in others; while the alignment behind Soviet diplomacy has remained predominant, even though no longer unconditional; and while the dogma of the "guiding state" and "guiding party" has been openly rejected only in a few cases, it nevertheless must be stressed that a significant step was taken down the road of CP "polycentrism" during the invasion of Czechoslovakia by the Warsaw Pact armies: The majority of the CPs of capitalist Europe condemned the invasion; only the West German, Finnish, Luxembourg, Portuguese, and Greek ("exterior") CPs expressed unconditional approval.

To be sure, this still timid "disengagement" from the Kremlin was followed by a capitulationist "backsliding" in regard to the "normalization" imposed on the Czechoslovak CP. But the attitude that has been adopted in relation to the persecution of oppositional intellectuals in the USSR confirms that the behavior of the majority of the CPs of Western Europe in August 1968 was not an isolated event. Unconditional alignment behind any attitude or decision (whether international or internal) taken by the leaders of the Soviet Communist party is becoming more and more difficult for the CP leaders in Western Europe. This sort of unconditional alignment still occurs only in exceptional cases that are accounted for by a clearer and more immediate material dependence on the Kremlin on the part of some CPs (the West German or Finnish, for example, or the Portuguese and Greek CPs in exile before the fall of the dictatorships in these two countries). By all evidence, the fundamental dynamic points in the opposite direction.

This dynamic is nevertheless fundamentally contradictory. On the one hand, it is an expression within the CPs of capitalist Europe of the changes that have occurred in the world situation and in the situation in the USSR itself, changes that are making the fundamental dogmas of Stalinism ever less credible. The concept of the "besieged fortress" no longer stands up since the victory of the Chinese revolution and the emergence of the USSR as the principal Eurasian military power. The imperatives of Realpolitik no longer seem embodied in the policy of the Kremlin in that the Kremlin itself appears at least co-responsible for the division of the "socialist camp" resulting from the Sino-Soviet conflict. It is becoming more and more obvious that bureaucratic centralism, bureaucratic privilege, and the absence of Soviet democracy in the USSR play a braking role both in the economic and cultural progress of the USSR and in the power of attraction exerted by the "Soviet model of socialism" on the Western working class. Under these conditions, opposing any public criticism of the Soviet bureaucracy becomes simply rear-guard skirmishing

within the CPs of Western Europe, in whose positions sensational changes are inevitable. (The attitude of the French CP on the Solzhenitsyn affair is an example.)

On the other hand, this taking distance from the Soviet bureaucracy also corresponds to a pressure exerted by the immediate social surroundings of the CPs, by the imperatives of rapprochement with the Social Democracy at any price, by the attempt to renew contact with the intelligentsia and the "liberal" bourgeoisie, by the desire to gain at any price respectability that is supposed to lead to re-entry into coalition governments. The change in attitude toward the Common Market and on the participation of "their" countries in NATO by CPs that are aiming at participating soon in coalition governments is very significant in this regard. While the first move for the criticisms of the Kremlin leaves open the possibility of the development of the CPs (or splits from the CPs) toward centrist or even left-centrist positions, the second fits perfectly into the framework of an evolution of these parties to the right, that is, toward further Social Democratization. This is undeniably the dominant element in the contradictory development of the CPs, an element that the occasional, limited, and essentially opportunist differentiations from the Kremlin can only confirm.

A distinction has to be made between the CPs that have a mass influence and play a predominant role in the workers movements of their countries (essentially the Italian, French, Portuguese, and Spanish CPs, and, to a lesser extent, the Greek CP) and the "small" CPs that have only a minority (sometimes even marginal) influence within the organized workers movement. To be sure, there are intermediary cases, such as the Finnish CP, which while holding a minority position within the class nevertheless incontestably a party with a mass influence both on the political plane and in the trade-union movement, and such as the British CP, which, while it is insignificant on the political plane, holds preponderant positions among the most combative sections of the trade-union movement.

Nevertheless, the distinction between these two categories is extremely useful. Government participation is a realistic possibility in the short or medium term only in the cases of parties with a mass influence. (The case of the Finnish CP can be assimilated to the first category in this regard, and obviously the possibility cannot be ruled out of a qualitative change in the relationship of forces in the workers movement of additional countries, following an exceptional upsurge in the mass movement during which the Social Democracy is unable to adapt in time, and the local CP experiences a sharp growth.)

The structural process of Social Democratization is clearly more advanced in the mass parties than in the "small" CPs. For the latter category, neither their already acquired positions within the bourgeois state nor the perspective of governmental participation in the near future provides a material basis for these parties taking greater distance from the Soviet bureaucracy. (An exception to this rule is the Dutch CP, whose break with the Kremlin after the outbreak of the Sino-Soviet conflict went furthest.)

This does not mean that these parties are following a less right-wing line than the mass CPs or that their political Social Democratization is less pronounced. But it does mean that their function in the mass workers movement (especially in the trade-union movement and during strikes) is objectively different and is seen differently by the masses. In comparison with the Social Democratic apparatuses that continue to dominate the trade unions, the militants of the "small" CPs continue to be seen as much more combative workers leaders who give greater stimuli to struggles, which they do not break, although they do orient them toward reformist paths and class collaboration. Under these conditions any radicalization of the workers movement can thus more easily find expression in an increased trade-union influence of CP militants.

Moreover, the fact that the mass CPs can be led to adopt political positions critical of the Soviet bureaucracy with a view to facilitating their ministerial participation is not considered a tragedy by the Kremlin. In the changed world situation resulting from the overall weakening of imperialism, the mass CPs of Western Europe have less the function of exerting pro-USSR pressure on their own bourgeoisies than of demonstrating to them that the bureaucracy has ceased to be a force favoring the overthrow of capitalism. It is precisely through their control of the workers movement during serious social crises and through the medium of governmental participation that the CPs can best fulfill this function. Thus, anything that favors the accomplishment of such a task is not in contradiction with the basic strategic designs of the Kremlin.

6. The CPs of capitalist Europe were initially taken by surprise both by the appearance of a new mass vanguard in capitalist Europe (stimulated first by the youth radicalization and later by the sudden rise in workers struggles) and by the progressive and reciprocal politicization of the different components of this vanguard. The CPs understood the scale of the phenomenon only belatedly, and they were thus broadly outflanked. The sectarian attitude adopted toward student explosions, wildcat strikes, and radical forms of organization and mass struggles, and the condemnation of these phenomena en bloc as "petty-bourgeois ultraleftism," "anarchism," "left opportunism," etc., contributed to the CPs being outflanked and facilitated the formation of significant far-left organizations to the left of the CPs, thus changing the relationship of forces within the workers movement, albeit in a still modest and initial way.

But the very scale of the crisis of the whole of bourgeois social relations, the progressive deterioration of the economic climate, and the increasingly pronounced new rise of working-class struggles had to have an effect over the long term within the CPs themselves. The CPs could not remain impervious to the aspirations and hopes of millions of men and women. In practically every country of capitalist Europe the CPs have made a belated but not ineffective "turn to the youth." After having ignored the mass student movement, they now offer it primarily an answer to the principal concern of its politicized vanguard layer: the search for a link with the working class and the workers movement. Also belatedly, and with more ambiguous aims, they tried to take the lead in class struggles, both in

order to avert a growing influence of the far-left organizations in the factories and at the same time to strengthen their negotiating and blackmail positions vis-à-vis the bourgeoisie, with a view toward breaking out of their political isolation and getting into the government in given cases.

To be sure, this more marked participation in mass movements since 1969 has been characterized by numerous contradictions. While the CPs no longer try to "wreck" or stifle mass struggles head-on, but rather channel them toward the neoreformist objectives the CPs are seeking, they have to face the real danger that any encouragement of the struggle runs the risk of its breaking through the narrow framework in which they try to contain it. On the other hand, the more the CPs participate in the struggle, the more chance there is of the deepgoing radicalization of the working class and youth having an influence within these parties and feeding new opposition currents, this time squarely from the left. The fact that the bourgeoisie has doubts about the CPs' ability to effectively control and channel the explosive mass struggle in the case of a coalition government with CP participation makes it hesitate to play this desperate hand in order to save its regime.

Finally, the rapprochement with the Social Democracy, or even the formation of a bloc with it (as in France), threatens to accentuate the existing contradictions and even to provoke new ones. The SP can try to bypass the CP on the left, especially in regard to trade-union militancy (CFDT) and to certain slogans with an anticapitalist and antibureaucratic axis ("self-managing socialism"), because the SP is concerned with reconquering a working-class base, reestablishing electoral parity with the CP, and even challenging the hegemony of the CP over the organized workers movement in certain countries.

In countering these maneuvers, the CP is hindered by its own rejection of any head-on attack on the Social Democracy, by its fear of giving way to "ultraleftism," and by its continuing ties to the Soviet bureaucracy. But the main obstacle is its inability to modify its basic strategic orientation. It is therefore by no means excluded that after some initial electoral success and some success in recruiting young people, the CP could eventually begin to suffer electoral losses and see the relationship of forces within the organized workers movement shift at its expense. This is already beginning to loom ahead in France, Belgium, and Holland. This process may facilitate the beginning of the challenging of the CP's strategy within the party itself, especially if it coincides with a serious political crisis in the USSR or a revolutionary rise in Western Europe.

7. While the fall of the Allende regime in Chile was seen as a very serious defeat by the CPs in capitalist Europe — since the Chilean CP had practiced the same strategy with which they have identified themselves for many years — the fall of the Portuguese dictatorship, coming after Mitterrand's 49 percent of the vote in France, has incontestably increased the credibility of this strategy in the eyes of part of the working class and even of its vanguard in capitalist Europe. A whole series of centrist groups that only a short time ago held a sectarian ultraleftist position in regard to the CPs are now sketching out a rapprochement and even lining up

behind the policy of the CPs. The split within the Bandera Raja group in Spain, where part of the leadership has rejoined the CP, is one of the most spectacular manifestations of this development.

Without going into a more detailed analysis of the purely conjunctural or even "national" aspects of this phenomenon, we should point to certain structural aspects that explain it in part:

a. The new rise of workers struggles and the politicization of very broad layers of the working masses has had the classic effect of causing the mass workers parties to gain much more on their right than they lose on their left to the centrist and revolutionary organizations. This is particularly true with layers just awakening to political life in small and medium-sized industry, in the provincial towns, among white-collar workers and technicians, in rural areas, etc., and is in no way opposed to a sometimes very radical militancy in the same circles.

b. The CPs' reformist strategy has a real credibility in the absence of a mass revolutionary party. Even the most radical layers of the proletariat, who want to go beyond the "electoral road to socialism" sense that in the absence of such a party a revolutionary victory in the short term is improbable. An experiment with governments of workers parties or even with a "new democracy" government appears to them as the only practical alternative to the mismanagement and growing structural crisis of capitalism in decline.

c. The very fact of the aggravation of the crisis of the system initially strengthens the attraction of the solutions offered by the mass CPs, because the sharpened crisis places the question of the government and of political power in the center of the concerns of the masses, which slows down the tendency to resort to generalized direct action not leading to a visible political conclusion.

It is for this reason that Communist worker militants, who in the preceding phase were increasingly falling back on union activism and in this framework had come closer to revolutionary militants, are now taking their distance by capitalizing on the renewed credibility of the political project of certain CPs in capitalist Europe.

A new and higher level of mass struggle will have to be reached to reverse this dynamic temporarily favoring a rise in the credibility of the CPs: Either the scale of the mass struggle must reach the level of mass strikes with factory occupations that lead to the emergence of potential organs of dual power, thereby posing a tangible revolutionary alternative to the reformist "solutions" and accelerating the appearance of revolutionary workers parties with a mass audience; or else the participation of the CPs in the government must again lead them to confront the mass struggle head-on (as in Portugal), which would stimulate not inconsiderable sections of the working class to bypass the CPs.

8. The revolutionary Marxist analysis of the evolution of the CPs in capitalist Europe is not an academic exercise, but is intended to aid us in inserting ourselves into the class struggle, our political struggle against Stalinism and reformism, and our task of building the revolutionary party. Toward this end the definition of the political orientation of the CPs

and the main axes of our polemic against it should be made as rigorously as possible. In this sense it is absolutely inadequate to characterize their orientation today as being on the whole a "popular front orientation."

It is of course perfectly possible to define the popular front policy so vaguely and broadly as to include the practice of all workers parties having a reformist line. If "popular front" means every form of class collaboration with the bourgeoisie, then the Social Democracy has been practicing the "popular front" universally since 1914 if not since 1900, and the CPs of capitalist Europe have been practicing it since 1934. But this definition is so vague as to throw pell-mell into the same bag the holy alliance governments of 1914, the Kerensky government of 1917, the Ebert-Scheidemann government of 1918, the British and Swedish labor governments, the Blum and Azaña governments of 1936, the de Gaulle government of 1944, the Mallet-Mendès government of 1955, and even the Waldeck-Rousseau-Millerand government of 1903. It loses all value in guiding the responding tactics of revolutionaries. It is clear that the principal tactical slogans of revolutionaries could not be the same in all the above cases.

It is possible to restrict the notion of "popular front" slightly by defining it as every form of coalition government with the bourgeoisie. But apart from the fact that it is perfectly possible to practice a procapitalist, counterrevolutionary policy without necessarily having bourgeois ministers in the cabinet (Ebert-Scheidemann government, Attlee and Wilson governments, Social Democratic governments in Sweden), this first restriction is still largely insufficient to distinguish what is peculiar to the popular front. Indeed, the 1940 Churchill government, like the French government in 1914, not to mention the Waldeck-Rousseau-Millerand government in France or the Brandt and Schmidt governments in the German Federal Republic, were all "coalition governments with the bourgeoisie" and can clearly not be classified as "popular front governments."

It would be more correct to define popular front governments as coalition governments of workers parties (including the CPs) and bourgeois parties in a prerevolutionary or revolutionary situation in which the anticapitalist will and revolutionary potential of the masses are deflected toward paths compatible with the survival of the capitalist system under the justification (or rather, pretext) that the coalition with the bourgeoisie is the only alternative to the victory of the counterrevolution (tsarist, fascist, militarist, etc.). It is because the coalition with the ("anti-tsarist," "antifascist," "antidictatorship," "anti-imperialist," according to situation) bourgeois parties is at the very heart of CP and Socialist party strategy in these specific cases that the demand "Throw out the bourgeois ministers" acquires its full meaning; and, if this demand is perchance realized, it permits the development of a higher level of mass experience with the ineffectiveness of reformist "solutions" without bourgeois ministers.

But in situations in which the existing government is viewed by the masses not as a coalition government with the bourgeoisie, but already as a government of the workers parties themselves (independently of whether or not one or another individual

capitalist is involved, as has moreover been the case in all the Labour governments in Britain), and in situations in which the principal illusion that must be combated is not that of "alliance with the bourgeois parties" but that of collaboration with the employers and of toleration of the bourgeois state apparatus, the main axis of revolutionary Marxist polemic should clearly be directed against this form of class collaboration, and not against the presence of a few bourgeois-liberal extras within the cabinet. This was the situation in Germany in 1918-19, in Britain in 1945-51, 1964, and 1974; it was the situation in Chile in 1972-73. It would also be the situation in France if the "Union de la Gauche" were to come to power in its present form.

In all these cases, to adopt as the principal axis of agitation the slogan "Throw out the bourgeois ministers" would be to miss the central contradictions, both in the objective situation and in the state of mind of the masses. The principal axis in exposing the counterrevolutionary policy of the CP and SP leaders should on the contrary consist of slogans unmasking their collaboration with the employers and the bourgeois state: nationalization without compensation and under workers control of the factories, banks, and transport enterprises; dismantling of the bourgeois army and the repressive apparatus and arming of the proletariat; formation, generalization, federation, and unification of organs of dual power, etc. It may be necessary to raise intermediary demands between immediate and transitional slogans, for example, a workers government responsible to the workers organizations. But the slogan "Throw out the capitalist ministers" in cases in which these ministers are neither the justification for nor the principal embodiment of class collaboration in the eyes of the masses is clearly of tertiary importance, and not central. This means that while the slogan should not be abandoned, it must not be made the central one in our propaganda or especially in our agitation.

The situation is completely different in the case of a government alliance between the Christian Democrats and the Italian CP in the framework of the "historic compromise" being sought by the CP, especially if this should coincide with a prerevolutionary upsurge of mass struggle. In that case the slogan demanding the break-up of the coalition would be a central political slogan, while serving as a rallying point for a totality of transitional demands tending to generalize the mass struggle and to give rise to committees of a pre-soviet or soviet type.

It is in this sense that the definition of the CPs as bureaucratized workers parties in process of Social Democratization — even though in the last analysis they remain aligned with the Soviet bureaucracy — entails an important political consequence for our movement. This definition places the fight against reformist ideologies and illusions (electoralism, parliamentarism, class collaboration) in the center of the tasks of the revolutionary Marxists among the working masses. Helping the masses to overcome these reformist illusions in practice is an essential condition for promoting both the transformation of a prerevolutionary situation into a revolutionary situation and the transformation of the revolutionary organizations into mass revolutionary parties.

An intelligent policy toward the CPs combining unity in action and outflanking the leadership should obviously help in this process. □

BEHIND PRETORIA'S DIPLOMATIC TURN

Vorster



by JOHN BLAIR

It is now quite clear that the events touched off in southern Africa by the repercussions of the fall of the Salazarist dictatorship and in particular by the September 7 Lusaka agreement, which traced out the steps towards independence for Mozambique by June 25, 1975, have profoundly affected the approach of the government of South Africa to the southern African region.

First, on the question of Mozambique: For more than ten years Pretoria had been the closest ally of Portuguese colonialism, exchanging military missions and equipment and collaborating in intelligence activities in the attempt to suppress the Frelimo liberation fighters. But immediately after the Lusaka agreement, promises of "continued collaboration and cooperation" with the new government flowed from the mouths of South African spokesmen. Three key economic considerations have determined their attitude:

1. Fifty percent of South Africa's trade is conducted through the port of Lourenço-Marques, which is the nearest outlet for South Africa's industrial heartland, the Transvaal area around Johannesburg. Any disruption of this transportation link would have disastrous effects on the already overstrained rail system and ports.

2. The gold mines of South Africa are now almost totally dependent on imported labor from surrounding countries. For the mine managements, imported labor is superior because the workers come for limited periods of time — a maximum of twelve months — and do not bring families. That prevents the formation of a real proletariat so that the threat of unionization, strike action, and so on, is considerably reduced. Furthermore, the imported labor is

recruited from wide areas in the surrounding territories, and the mine owners undoubtedly benefit from the exploitation of ethnic and language differences among various groups in the work force — even though such factors can occasionally overflow into clashes that disrupt production, like those that are currently affecting the Western Deep Level Mine of the Anglo-American Corporation. The key result is that mine wages are depressed way below the average for blacks in South Africa. This makes it possible to work seams equivalent in mineral content to those that were closed down as unprofitable in the United States thirty years ago.

Of this imported contract labor some 100,000 people a year (approximately 25 percent of the work force) come from Mozambique. Moreover, since Hastings Kamuzu Banda, president of Malawi (the source of another 28 percent of the imported labor), is now threatening to clamp down on recruitment, it is vital for the South African mining industry that the Mozambique quota be maintained, if not increased, in the future.

3. In Mozambique the Cabora Bassa dam project on the Zambezi River in Tete province is nearing completion of its first stage. The massive hydroelectric station is linked by overhead cables with the Transvaal, to which the overwhelming majority of power produced is supposed to be exported. The dam's construction by a South African-led consortium has been an essential brick in Pretoria's strategy to minimize its dependence on foreign-controlled energy.

These three factors explain the attitudes taken by the South African government, the acid test of which came when white racists in Lourenço-Marques staged their protest against the Lusaka agreement.

There were bloody clashes in the streets of the city, and the obligatory "horror stories" appeared in the South African press. But in a speech to Parliament, Foreign Minister Hilgard Muller enunciated the following principles: No South African mercenaries would be allowed into Mozambique under any circumstances; South Africa would not interfere in the situation and would offer cooperation with the Mozambique authorities; South Africa held "no brief for colonialism in any shape or form" and was strongly opposed to neocolonialism; it strongly believed in self-determination for its own and Africa's blacks and would not "take fright and run away from it" in Mozambique; lastly, the Republic possessed "an understanding and appreciation of black nationalism." Clearly, this jumble of hypocrisy and statement of intent was aimed at the Frelimo leadership and the people of Mozambique; in addition, as we shall see, it was directed to the leadership of certain other black African states.

The same factors help to explain why Minister of the Interior Connie Mulder has twice warned white "refugees" from Mozambique that they must follow proper immigration procedures in entering South Africa. He also stated that in any case most of them were not wanted in South Africa, with the exception of a few hundred skilled workers.

Clearly then, safeguarding their economic interests has been paramount in determining the recent attitudes of the South African rulers toward developments in Mozambique. The success or failure of these maneuvers cannot be determined with certainty; but the indications are ominous. Frelimo Prime Minister Joaquim Chissane has several times affirmed his government's desire for collaboration with all neighboring territories, and there have been unconfirmed press reports that secret clauses in the Lusaka pact guarantee the continuation of the Cabora Bassa agreement.

With regard to Rhodesia, the change in the South African line has headed in the opposite direction. Of course, the Vorster government has never been a fervent supporter of Ian Smith's positions. Unlike Mozambique, Rhodesia has no economic importance for South Africa. In fact, since Rhodesia's "unilateral declaration of independence," it has actually been an economic strain, because South Africa has had to compensate for some of the shortages arising from economic sanctions. Rhodesia has also put a heavy burden on the South African transport system, because many of its imports and exports (chrome, for example) have had to pass through South Africa in order to appear as South African on shipping documentation. Should the new Mozambique government carry out a policy of full economic sanctions by cutting the crucial rail link with the port of Beira, which carries 80 percent of Rhodesia's trade, the

pressure, particularly on the already hard-pressed South African rail network, would become intolerable.

Although South African involvement in the war against the ZANU guerrillas in Rhodesia has perhaps provided Vorster's police and military with some valuable training, Vorster certainly realizes that the present renewed upsurge in the fighting there is a signal that in the long run this war would be a bottomless pit for South African men, military resources, and money. Finally, not the least consideration in Pretoria's calculations is that there have been clear indications that the issue of Rhodesia is the biggest current obstacle to the "normalization" of relations with the black-ruled states to the north.

So far there has been no decision to end support to Smith, although that has been advocated in the press. The October 18 Johannesburg Star, for instance, declared: "Black rule in Mozambique makes the Rhodesian 'white buffer' less important to us strategically. Economically she is largely a burden. And politically we have plenty of our own crosses to bear without the embarrassing bit of surplus baggage to the north. At the United Nations we have been having our roughest ride yet: and on top of that Britain, which generally leaves us alone there, has criticised South Africa in unusually specific terms as the chief breaker of economic sanctions against Rhodesia. . . . We suggest Mr. Vorster use his position of unique influence with Mr. Smith to force the pace of constructive change there. He must spell out that the fantasy of indefinite white supremacy has a very limited tenure indeed."

Not quite so explicit, but clearly thinking the same way, was Vorster himself in a speech to Parliament on October 23 in which he claimed he did not want to interfere in any way in the internal affairs of Rhodesia. But he believed that "with goodwill an honourable solution could be found to that country's constitutional dispute." The heavy hint implied in this statement was no doubt well calculated to be acted upon in Salisbury.

The third area in which South African policy has undergone a subtle change of emphasis in the past period is Namibia. This ex-German colony of South West Africa, handed over to South African administration under League of Nations mandate in 1919, has been a constant source of contention between South Africa and a majority of states at the United Nations, which inherited ultimate responsibility for the country. The territory, which has effectively been integrated into the apartheid state, has consistently seen the most developed opposition to the regime, chiefly through the medium of SWAPO (South West African People's Organization). In 1973 SWAPO was able to organize an effective

...the gold mines are dependent on imported labor



boycott of the polls organized to set up a Bantustan-type puppet government, while workers actions resisting the migrant labor system have been recurrently militant, particularly in Ovamboland.

Vorster's change of line on Namibia consists of his recent statements that the people of that "province" should be given an opportunity to decide their own future. Of course, this could be interpreted solely as a move in the diplomatic game around South African membership in the UN, which was maintained only through the joint Security Council veto by France, Britain, and the United States. But it is likely to have somewhat deeper significance. Namibia is adjacent to Angola, which, despite the current maneuvers of the Portuguese regime and the disarray of the nationalist movements, threatens to achieve its independence in the not too distant future. Ovamboland itself straddles the Namibia-Angola border, and the continual two-way movement of population poses a threat to the stability of racist rule in Namibia. Vorster is obviously thinking of the possibility of ridding himself of this potentially troublesome and continually embarrassing possession in order to be able to strengthen his grip on the heartland of South Africa.

Here again the white racists are dealing with an area that is particularly crucial to them economically, especially in the matter of labor supply. Their aim is to try to produce a solution that would bow to the notion of formal independence but keep the area tied to Pretoria in reality. Today, such a maneuver would certainly founder on the strength of SWAPO. In reply to Vorster's statement about the need for the future of Namibia to be decided by the people of the area SWAPO pointed out that

the wide support they already enjoyed was evidence enough of the desire for total independence. They pledged to continue the armed struggle until all South African forces are completely withdrawn.

But if all these subtle changes in policy toward these three areas have immediate importance for certain very clearly identifiable political and economic interests of the South African government, their total effect is designed to have repercussions not only in those neighboring territories, but also throughout Africa to the north. One aspect of the changes is the possibility that they are an attempt to consolidate the white racist stronghold on a smaller and more easily defensible basis in the heartland of the South African state itself. But the other aspect, of at least equal importance, is the acknowledged attempt to "normalize" relations with black Africa, which has been expressed by Vorster himself on numerous occasions. In his keynote speech October 23 he stressed that South Africa wanted to work with other nations on the continent through technical and monetary assistance. Of course, the reality behind this statement is that as the leaders of the most economically developed power on the continent, the South African rulers see themselves as the potential dean of a subimperialism extending far to the north. Steps in this direction have already been taken, particularly through the close relationships built up with Malawi and the Ivory Coast. But Vorster is after much bigger fish, and on October 26 it looked as if he had indeed caught the biggest one of all.

In a speech on that day Zambian President Kenneth Kaunda had this to say about Vorster's October 23 speech: "He declared his faith in the future and

expressed his optimism about future developments in southern Africa. This is the voice of reason for which the world has waited for many years." Setting out his conditions for a détente, Kaunda said: "Rhodesia and Namibia, after the end of the war in Mozambique, are the major obstacles to peace and cooperation between the people of South Africa and the people of the rest of Africa. Unless these obstacles are removed, the basic causes of conflict will remain."

Throughout the speech Kaunda gave the impression that if the racist government were to withdraw from Namibia and Rhodesia, then the way would lie open for its cooperation with Zambia. Careful observers of Kaunda's politics were not surprised by this development. On October 19, for example, the following statements had appeared in a center-page feature in the government-owned Daily Mail:

"In hard economic terms any improvement in relations between South Africa and black Africa would be enormously beneficial to both sides. . . . The closure of the border between Zambia and Rhodesia has cost South Africa millions of kwacha (the Zambian unit of currency, approximately equal to US\$1.40) worth in exports and other business. And it has cost Zambia millions of kwacha because of the costly re-routing operation the border closure has entailed. . . . And countries such as Zambia which now import a large range of goods from Europe would be able to make considerable savings in exchange by taking South African goods. . . . Zambia would also be able to buy South African mining equipment at an appreciably lower cost and its Southern Province, now something of a backwater, would once again become an important crossroads of trade."

The article also admiringly quoted statements describing South African Foreign Minister Muller as "no ruffian, and in the South African context probably a liberal."

It is also of course noteworthy that until Smith's

precipitate closure of the border in January 1973 Zambia had carried on very extensive trade with South Africa; until this year, half of its copper mines remained under the management of Oppenheimer's Anglo-American Corporation, which still holds 49 percent of the shares in Nchanga Consolidated Copper Mines.

Indeed, whatever its verbal pledges of solidarity with the forces hostile to apartheid, the Kaunda government has always sought to maximize profits through as liberal an attitude as possible toward economic relationships. Right now it is eagerly taking advantage of the possibilities opened by Vorster's remarks to reopen these lucrative links.

But above and beyond such considerations, the desire of the leaders of neocolonial black Africa to normalize relations with South Africa and consequently defuse the opposition movements has a more deep-rooted and crucial motivation. The eruption of the revolution of the black masses of South Africa against the apartheid system will be entirely different in character and effect from any other liberation struggle that has taken place on the continent. In this most industrially developed country all the key imperialist states are fast increasing their stake in the profits to be derived from the cheap labor force guaranteed by the racist laws. The revolution that will ultimately rise up against this system cannot fail to pose from its earliest stages the socialist tasks of totally destroying that imperialist penetration. And the effects of such a development would not stop at the borders of South Africa, but would send ripples throughout the continent, shaking the foundations even of regimes as seemingly solidly entrenched as that of Kaunda.

If Vorster's present moves are being welcomed as opening the way to a "new order in southern Africa" it is because the governments of neocolonial Africa ultimately have as much interest in preserving "stability" as Vorster does. □

November 5

the revolution: how far along?



by F. CAZAL & C. GABRIEL

Three comrades of the Front Communiste Révolutionnaire (Revolutionary Communist Front, the French Trotskyist organization) were among a group of militants who had participated in the movements of support to the liberation struggle and were invited to Guinea-Bissau in September, on the occasion of the country's official accession to independence. In this report, two of these comrades deal with a series of questions. For reasons of space, we are unable to publish a section on "the question of the Cape Verde Islands" in this issue of INPRECOR. We will publish it in a future issue. — INPRECOR

The welcome accorded us by the PAIGC (African party for the Independence of Guinea and the Cape Verde Islands) was extremely warm. The militants of the PAIGC spared no effort in showing us around, helping us, transporting us. It was their way, they said, of thanking all those throughout the world who had organized solidarity with their liberation struggle.

Thus, we were granted access to the PAIGC's external bases in Ligionchor (Senegal) and Koundara (Guinea-Conakry). We were able to attend the transfer of power from the Portuguese to the PAIGC fighters in Farin. We had every opportunity to study the situation in the two main cities, Bissau and Bafata. Finally, we were able to meet with Luis Cabral and other leaders of the party in eastern Boa,

a region that was emptied of its population by the war and where the PAIGC today is trying to recreate an economy and resettle the peasants.

The economic situation

The state in which the Portuguese left the country is catastrophic. Independent Guinea-Bissau is a country mutilated by ten years of war. But more than that, its economic and social structure was profoundly affected by several centuries of colonialism. Guinean society is marked by all the usual characteristics of an underdeveloped and dependent economy; a principally agricultural economy oriented toward the colonial metropolis (with an export monoculture), industrial underdevelopment, low living standard of the masses, illiteracy, lack of trained technicians, high unemployment, and so on. Let us examine some of these features.

*An economy dominated by agriculture and oriented toward the satisfaction of the needs of the colonial metropolis. Unlike the other colonies (Angola and Mozambique), where the enormous natural resources forced Portuguese colonialism, whose investment capabilities were limited, to give way to imperialist powers in the exploitation of economic resources, Guinea remained a sort of private preserve for Portugal. The CUF (Compagnie União Fabril, tied to the Melo family), which is associated with big Portuguese private interest groups, held a virtual monopoly on import-export trade, either by itself or through the intermediary of its associated companies; it also remained master of the Guinean econ-

omy, which was oriented toward the needs of the metropolis. This company possessed its own fleet, its own subsidiary industries, and several thousand employees. Through it, Portuguese colonialism restricted itself to plundering the agricultural resources of the country (rice, peanuts, wood), never undertaking any initiative toward setting up a local industry, not even a limited one. The exploitation of the Guinean peasant was carried out through the monetary mechanism of taxes and the setting of buying prices for agricultural products through an accounting system. This system did not directly attack collective (village) ownership of the land. The rural population was compelled to cultivate "for cash" a product to be sold at a fixed price and then exported. This export culture tore a serious breach in the original domestic economy, aggravating the poverty and undernourishment of the peasants. The period of the war, while it reduced the area of colonial exploitation (through the extension of the liberated zones), intensified the dependence on the metropolis of the zones within the colonial economy (especially in the urban centers). The problem the PAIGC is now facing is to homogenize the economy while at the same time breaking the ties of dependence on the colonial metropolis.

*The low living standards of the rural population. The combined effects of the export monoculture and the rapid extension of the liberated zones strongly diminished production in the rice fields and provoked a genuine food blockade in the zones under Portuguese control. Thus, beginning in 1969 the Portuguese were reduced to importing thousands of tons of rice to feed their troops and the urban population. The departure of the Portuguese troops poses the crucial problem of feeding the urban population, which is incapable of self-subsistence. While feeding the population is a planned process in the liberated zones, shortages have begun to be felt in the cities (in oil, sugar, and soon, rice). This obliges the PAIGC to import the rice necessary to feed these populations and to rapidly plan for increasing agricultural productivity. In addition, the taxes and the compulsory growing of peanuts have led to indebtedness and impoverishment among the peasants. This process of pauperization provoked the beginning of a process of lumpen-proletarianization of the peasants who were in contact with the urban colonial market; but it also, and above all, fostered the rallying of the peasants to the PAIGC.

*The weakness of the level of development of productive forces and the state of industrial underdevelopment. Economic activity in the cities is limited to commerce and industry tied to colonial exploitation (operation of the ports, import-export, sawmills, rice-shelling factories, cooking oil manufacturing). This activity was directed toward supplying the internal colonial market (retail commerce, breweries,

etc.), toward administrative and tertiary activity (generally within the framework of the colonial army), and toward a marginal activity tied to the colonial presence (craftsmen, prostitutes, etc.). Industrial activity was held to a bare minimum (treatment and transformation of food products). All consumption of manufactured products, which had been stimulated in the cities by Spínola as a way of getting a grip on the urban population, stemmed from imports aimed principally at the colons, the Portuguese military, and the urban petty bourgeoisie.

*A contorted economy. The specificity of Portuguese colonial exploitation and the victorious development of the national liberation struggle (with the rapid extension of the liberated zones) thus had a double impact on the Guinean economy. This twofold economic reality is clear in the town-country differentiation, which generally cuts through the entire social structure of the country. The necessities of the colonial war (the presence of a significant military contingent) and the trading economy engendered the formation of a parasitic economy tied to the existence of the military market. In the urban centers this provoked an artificial swelling of the commercial sector and of a wheeler-dealer commercial petty bourgeoisie. Nevertheless, the CUF monopoly on large-scale commerce and the import-export trade and the existence of a small layer of Portuguese colons monopolizing the small food-processing enterprises limited this Guinean petty bourgeoisie (most often Mestizo or Lebanese, in any case) to an intermediary role in the trade circuit (small-scale internal commerce). The economy of the urban centers was thus directly tied to the colonial presence and to the exploitation of the Guinean peasantry. On the other side, the victorious development of the national liberation struggle, while marginalizing the colonial economic sector (the food blockade), permitted the development of an agricultural economy based on new relations in the liberated zones.

To lay the basis for a new economy in the liberated zones, the PAIGC concentrated (a) on redressing the nefarious effects of the export monoculture imposed by the colons by developing cultivation of food products, (b) on starting to construct the bases of a social accumulation that would allow for commercial exchanges aimed at providing products of basic necessity and producing food surpluses to be exported for manufactured products on the basis of barter with a monopoly of foreign trade), and (c) on developing new relations of production (primitive forms of agricultural cooperation).

Guinea-Bissau today is characterized by a double economic and social reality. On the one hand the parasitic monetary colonial economy in the urban centers has accentuated the process of social differentiation; on the other hand, in the preceding period,

a communal agricultural economy in which exchange was based on barter blocked the process of social differentiation in the countryside. The fundamental problem today is to homogenize these two sectors economically, politically, and socially. This process necessitates an increase in agricultural production (the only basis for accumulation in the country) and strict control over private commerce (in terms both of prices and of the kinds of imports) in order to avoid the enrichment of the merchants through the black market or through speculation. On the other hand, the introduction of money in the liberated zones creates the objective basis for the development of private accumulation and therefore for the disorganization of the cooperative relations of production. The Guinean peasantry is very little differentiated socially; nevertheless, the appearance of money and the development of agricultural productivity can favor the emergence, beginning from the old feudal structures, of accumulators and can thus accentuate social differentiation.

*A material infrastructure linked to the needs of colonialism. The specificity of Portuguese colonial domination, the industrial underdevelopment of Guinea, the presence of a numerically weak layer of European colons, and the generally low level of development of the productive forces have reduced the infrastructure set up by Portuguese colonialism to the most rudimentary level. To this must also be added the destruction suffered during the colonial war. The total infrastructure amounts to:

- road network composed of a few paved roads (around Bissau) and some trails that are more or less passable depending on the season; a good number of them were closed during the war because they had been mined;
- maritime network limited to a few embarkation points, some ferry boats, and one port at Bissau;
- airport at Bissau and a few random trails around the main camps set up by the Portuguese;
- health system concentrated around the hospital of Bissau and a few first-aid posts in isolated garrisons; the military doctors have returned to Portugal;
- school system composed essentially of the Bissau high school and a few schools in the larger cities (the teachers were either Portuguese officers or priests attached to Catholic missions);
- national radio run by totally outdated generators.

That is the meager total of the infrastructural assets established by several centuries of colonial rule.

It is obvious that the economic reconstruction of the country is going to be made more difficult by the sorry state of the road network, which suffered great damage during the war of liberation. But the concentration of the health and educational systems in Bissau poses the problem of decentralization in

order to service the rural population. This makes the problem of the lack of trained personnel emerge quite sharply.

*The lack of technicians. The colonial administration was entirely in the hands of the military; only a very narrow place was left for a functionary petty bourgeoisie, which had no future and no real training (a few people employed as middle-level managers in the public services or in the offices of the CUF). In the medical field, for example, there were eighty doctors in Guinea-Bissau, forty of them in the capital, whose population is 80,000 out of a total in the country of 600,000. (It must be remembered, however, that nearly half the population was living in zones controlled by the PAIGC.) Almost all of these doctors were Portuguese army personnel, and today they have left Guinea. Thus, on the eve of the official recognition of Guinea's independence, a PAIGC official told us that only four Portuguese doctors were staying in Bissau, and several of them had collaborated with the regime and were not trusted by the party. The PAIGC has only a few doctors in its ranks, some of them foreign volunteers (a certain number of medical students are still receiving training abroad), and a few dozen nurses, medical aides, etc. The main problem is therefore to find the aid required to get the hospital infrastructure working and to assure minimum medical assistance to the peasant population dispersed throughout the country. It is also a question (and this is a political problem) of assuring basic medical care for the population (until recently controlled by the Portuguese) that benefited, in the framework of Spnola's political demagogy, from some medical assistance from Portuguese military doctors beginning in 1968. Frontier hospitals have already been set up in the interior, but to solve the problem the new state of Guinea-Bissau will have to appeal for international technical aid and will also have to call for the return of Guinean technicians who emigrated and did not participate in the struggle directly. What is necessary in the medical field is also required in the field of education and technology in general. The need for technicians will pose important political problems for the PAIGC (which will have to find ways of exerting political control over the technicians, reach cooperation accords with capitalist states, and get aid from the workers states). These problems can be solved only through decisive economic and political choices. The initial responses advanced so far by the comrades of the PAIGC unfortunately bode ill on this question. But the fundamental point is that the problem of technicians is allowing the PAIGC to justify before the masses its policy of taking over the existing colonial state apparatus. Far from destroying the colonial state apparatus, the PAIGC is contenting itself with utilizing it by placing its own militants at the head of the administration, the radio, the police, and the public services, while retaining

the apparatus forged by colonialism. Moreover, the apathy of the urban masses and the frontist illusions of the PAIGC prevent it from developing a strategy that permits the rapid mobilization of the laboring masses of the cities in order to establish a structure of democratic power.

“National Reconstruction”

The economic reconstruction of the country will be made very difficult by the present state of the Guinean economy and by the general weakness of the development of the productive forces. The PAIGC militants assert that the reconstruction will be a battle that will be harder to wage than the armed struggle and that it will be based on prior political choices. When we talked with PAIGC militants at all levels it was around these fundamental political choices that the discussion revolved. Today, their main concern is the participation of all social classes in the phase of “national reconstruction.” For, as PAIGC General Secretary Aristides Pereira asserted, the state of Guinea-Bissau “will be essentially democratic and will guarantee the participation of all social layers, without distinction of color, religion, or sex, in the management of the affairs of state.” (Le Monde, August 6, 1974.)

The frontist political line of the PAIGC is determined by the specific nature of Guinean social structure and the weak level of development of the productive forces. The PAIGC remains saturated with the history of its own liberation struggle and its petty-bourgeois origins. The passage to armed struggle (and the mobilization of the peasantry) tore the cadres from the milieu of their social origin for a time and constituted a radical break with traditional reformist nationalism. Beginning from this point, the development of the struggle in the context of a particular social formation (a peasantry for which the problem of land and social differentiation was not intense) limited the PAIGC's understanding of class struggle in the restricted area of the liberated zones. The multiclassist illusions of the PAIGC, which were encouraged by the political weakness of the party's cadres, the weakness of the work toward mobilization in the urban centers, and the PAIGC's political isolation from the historic gains of the international workers movement, were in part determined by the exclusive relations with the peasantry of the liberated zones. The failure to take into consideration the reality of class relations in the cities explains the PAIGC's inability to advance anticapitalist slogans and to develop mass mobilizations in the urban areas. It also prevented it from formulating clear axes for mass mobilization in the Cape Verde Islands, where the social structure is more complex.

Nevertheless, the quantitative weakness of the proletariat compared to the peasant mass is not enough

to justify the assertion that the class struggle is secondary. There is a speculating and trading petty bourgeoisie in the urban centers, and the introduction of money can favor the emergence of accumulation in the countryside. In face of this social situation, the PAIGC's multiclassist conceptions find a social base around which they become concretized. Pedro Pires affirms that the party's return to the urban centers “will strengthen the participation of the petty bourgeoisie in the process of development. Today we are counting on many students and public functionaries.” (Expreso, September 14, 1974.) That is the policy of open arms toward the petty bourgeoisie. Likewise, Luis Cabral told us in eastern Boa that the need for technicians meant that they would have to be granted a privileged economic status (“everything necessary to have them agree to work in Guinea”). And when we expressed surprise that the PAIGC already envisages such social differentiation, this same person responded that this was inevitable and that “our peasants will understand the necessity for such social inequalities.” These conceptions go along with an economistic and technocratic view of the current problems. Thus, the state and the administration are held to be neutral instruments standing above social divisions and able to give expression to “all social layers,” according to Pereira's formula. In the same way, when we asked about the political control that would have to be exercised over these technicians who are going to benefit from a high living standard, we were told (by Nino Vieira) that “politics and technology must not be mixed.”

The corollary of the PAIGC's pragmatism is a “moralistic” view of the struggle against neocolonialism. This point of view is maintained on the one hand through an opportunist vision of the relations among classes and on the other hand through a quasimystical belief in the effectiveness of the party's principles as an insurmountable rampart against any deviation. Thus, when we asked what would be the party's position in a social conflict between the workers of a factory and their employer, the response was that such a conflict would be impossible, because all classes will have to struggle shoulder to shoulder for national reconstruction. All these factors add up to the existence of a favorable terrain for a right-wing nationalist deviation within the PAIGC. All the more so in that the apoliticism entails a massive tail-endism toward the leadership of the party. During discussions with militants, we were able to observe a sentimental confidence in the leadership “because it will not make any compromises and will remain faithful to the principles of the party.”

It is not our intention to pass judgment on the honesty of a leadership that has proven its militant courage in fifteen years of struggle; but rather to point out that, confronted with questions like foreign in-

vestment, for example, the PAIGC will have to play it very close to the vest. Tail-endism is generally not a solid cement for a party. All the more so in that, as Amílcar Cabral used to say, the PAIGC is more a movement than a party.

Furthermore, Luís Cabral defined the PAIGC as "a broad front of national liberation. All those who are fighting in our armed forces are members of the party. To live in our liberated regions is practically to be of the party. The vanguard of the party are the proven cadres." (*La nouvelle revue internationale*, September 1971, p.95.) Given the objective elements tending to determine the future of the Guinean revolution (the weakness of the proletariat, the weight of the urban petty bourgeoisie, the PAIGC's lack of political preparedness) and given the multi-classist and economic conceptions of the PAIGC leadership, only the elaboration of an anticapitalist program permitting the independent mobilization of the workers and the launching of a debate within the party on these themes can enable the PAIGC to avoid the impasse of the "noncapitalist road" and the "democratic national state" in Guinea-Bissau.

The cities and the petty bourgeoisie

"When a city liberates itself, a festival breaks out. But a city liberated by the intervention of external forces generally passes through a period of bewildered torpor that indicates that the population is asking itself how to act. That is what is happening in Guinea-Bissau." (B. Davidson, *Le Monde Diplomatique*, October 1974.) In fact, the urban population is today taking a wait-and-see attitude. There was no real urban mass movement saluting the accession to independence. No phenomena of mass spontaneity testified to any mobilization. There was nothing symbolizing the fact that Portuguese colonialism had been attacked or destroyed (like emblems, monuments, flags); the transfer of power occurred smoothly. This is an indication of the PAIGC's weak implantation in the cities (in part due to colonial repression), the weakness of the proletariat (in Guinea, there is no equivalent to the industrial proletariat of Angola or Mozambique), and the isolation of the urban masses from the armed struggle, which was waged principally in the countryside. An important problem for the PAIGC is to win an implantation in the urban centers, where the main social bases for any reactionary project are located. The social differentiation in the cities runs along the following lines:

*The speculating and commercial petty bourgeoisie, composed above all of Mestizos and Lebanese, which was built up as a commercial intermediary by colonial exploitation and by the local colonial market (retail commerce), but which had only a limited capacity to accumulate, being blocked by the presence of Portuguese colons and the monopoly of the

CUF. Although this layer collaborated with Portuguese colonialism during the struggle, today it is adopting the thesis of national independence, in the framework of which it hopes to prosper. (In Batafa the only external signs of independence were the portraits of Amílcar Cabral hung up in all the shops of the town.) The main danger for the future of the Guinean revolution lies exactly in the economic and social weight of this petty bourgeoisie.

*The functionary petty bourgeoisie, including black mercenaries, members of the colonial administration, and functionaries. Those who were in the Portuguese military have been disarmed and sent back to their native villages. The pay they had been given (up through December) constitutes a small piece of capital that will allow them to take up agriculture again. Nevertheless, they are a potential counter-revolutionary force that must not be ignored. The members of the colonial administration have generally been left at their posts. This petty bourgeoisie can hope to use its privileged position in the administration to spread through the state apparatus and take on a political weight there, thus strengthening the most right-wing elements of the PAIGC.

*The embryo of the proletariat is concentrated mainly in commercial and port facilities (dockers, fisherman, shipping), in retail trading (low-level employees), in some para-agricultural enterprises (rice-shelling factories, sawmills, breweries), and in construction and services (chauffeurs, cleaners, hospital orderlies). During the national liberation struggle the urban proletariat was isolated by colonial repression, which gave rise to a certain apathy that ruled out the development of workers strikes like those that took place in Luanda in Angola or Lourenço-Marques in Mozambique.

*The lumpen proletariat originated from the presence of the colonial market (shoeshine boys, peddlers, prostitutes, chronically unemployed), from the unstabilized state of the Guinean proletariat (part-time workers), and from urbanization (refugees from the war). The consumption habits and idleness of this lumpen layer that lived on the monetary hand-outs of the military make it to some extent susceptible to counterrevolutionary reactions. Nevertheless, newly created employment in the small industries and return to the countryside, with the assurance of a decent life for all, could be effective means of mobilizing this layer. That is the objective that has been set by the PAIGC.

The PAIGC's frontist strategy finds material for its concretization in the urban centers where a significant petty bourgeoisie exists. There has been no effort to develop forms of self-organization of the urban masses. In the urban centers the problem is immediately posed in class terms. The PAIGC has

set up "political-administrative committees" composed of militants in order to achieve an implantation in the cities. "Wherever the need was felt, they integrated former African functionaries of the colonial administration into these committees." (Davidson, *Le Monde Diplomatique*.) Unlike the committees in the liberated zones, which are democratic organs of collective decision-making (units of cooperation and production), the city committees are not the expression of self-organization of the urban masses on a class basis. There is every possibility of these committees becoming transformed into bodies of municipal management. Only the organization of the workers at the point of production or in the neighborhoods, and their federation on the city level, can lend a different class content to these "political-administrative committees" and allow for a mobilization of the urban masses. But that does not seem to be the present orientation of the PAIGC. Thus, an important problem is raised by the risk of a political conjunction or coalition of interests between the urban petty bourgeoisie and the administration of the state and the party. The osmosis among these various milieus is an element that we were able to observe in some places where a genuine small local elite was beginning to emerge out of the local petty bourgeoisie and the cadres of the PAIGC. In the absence of a clear PAIGC strategy, it appears inevitable that the economic and political power of the urban petty bourgeoisie will be strengthened, and that it will quickly gain a grip on the bodies of the party and the state. That would be preparation for establishing neocolonial relations. Today this process is not complete, but the definition of a coherent strategy abandoning multiclassist illusions will engender a political battle that will decide the future of the Guinean revolution.

Bureaucratic tendencies within the PAIGC

There is no crystallized bureaucracy as such within the PAIGC. There are several reasons for this. First of all, the necessity of mobilizing the peasants compelled the cadres of the party to cut themselves off from their social origin, the petty bourgeoisie, in order to go to live among the peasantry. Further, the relations between the peasant masses and the party were very close. The period of armed struggle did not offer objective bases for the formation of a bureaucracy cut off from the masses. Likewise, the relations between rank-and-file militants and party cadres were fraternal — all the more so in that the PAIGC took measures aimed at limiting the external apparatus of the party as much as possible (by rotating responsibilities and making cadres spend a certain amount of time in the interior). Thus, there was no development of a bureaucratic apparatus external to the struggle, as there has been with the MPLA

in Angola, for example. (The latest congress of the MPLA included a good number of "militants" completely out of the struggle.) Nevertheless, in spite of all this, there are some problems, such as that of the borderline elements who "postponed" their return to Guinea after missions abroad and the development of small-scale military potentates in some regions. The latter problem was raised at the 1964 PAIGC congress, which reaffirmed the following principle: "We are not military men, but rather armed militants."

Threats of bureaucratization have already appeared in the party's mode of functioning and recruitment. The PAIGC is characterized by an administrative type of functioning, in which the division of tasks entails a specialization and an extreme concentration of decision-making power; this is tied to the party's weak functioning on the political level. Thus, when Pedro Pires was asked who was responsible for the negotiations with Portugal and what was the social structure of Guinea-Bissau, his response was preceded by the following warning: "I am not a specialist. I am more adapted to the military aspect of the struggle than to its social aspect." (*Expresso*, September 14, 1974.)

It goes without saying that such functioning strengthens tail-endism and apoliticism in the party, all the more so in that the party's standards of membership are very broad. "For us the party is a national liberation movement," said José Arango, state commissioner and member of the Executive Committee of the struggle. "Any man more than fifteen years of age who wants to struggle for the total liberation of our people can be a party member. There is no ideological inquiry to pass. In this phase of our struggle, recruitment is very broad." (*Afrique-Asie*, No. 66.) Today, the strengthening of these tendencies can be seen in the following elements:

*Concentration of decision-making in the hands of a very small number of individuals, which entails tail-endism and blind confidence in "the fidelity of the leadership to the principles of the PAIGC." Moreover, before April 25 (and even since then), only a minority of cadres were able to have national appreciation and knowledge of the development of the situation.

*The danger that members of the state apparatus will become independent of the masses. In fact, a corps of state representatives is developing today (ambassadors, state commissioners in Bissau, etc.) that already no longer maintain the same relations with the masses that they did during the armed struggle. One reason for this is that it is more difficult for the peasant masses to control their activity (because of the distances that separate the peasants from the town); another is that the absence of self-

organization of the urban masses does not allow for direct control by the workers over the party cadres. The struggle molded a certain type of cadre having a close relationship to the masses; "national reconstruction" and the PAIGC's taking over the colonial state apparatus will mold other sorts of cadres. In the cities, the gap is already growing between the living standards of the PAIGC soldiers and the living standards of the cadres. The arrival of young elements who come out of the petty bourgeoisie, have not broken with the petty bourgeoisie, and did not experience the struggle itself (technicians returning to the country, students) will strengthen the weight of this tendency within the party.

Nevertheless, some militants of the PAIGC have reaffirmed the necessity of transforming the PAIGC from a movement into a real vanguard party taking on the task of politicizing the masses. Discussion has been opened within the PAIGC on this point. But for us revolutionary Marxists, the necessity for a politically homogeneous vanguard organization armed with precise orientations for the development of self-organization and active mobilization of the urban and rural workers is on the order of the day right now in Guinea-Bissau. The struggle against neocolonialism must be waged consciously; it is not automatic.

The PAIGC and internationalism

"It is permanent and intransigent respect for the fundamental principles of African and anti-imperialist unity that has continued to inspire the confidence of the progressive forces of the world in our party and to guarantee, in the final analysis, the political, military, economic, financial, and diplomatic aid that we have received to advance our struggle. That is why unity and struggle have been the watchwords of our party for a long time." (A. Pereira, September 23, 1973, in a speech to the People's National Assembly.) This conception of internationalism bears more resemblance to a petty-bourgeois utilitarian conception of pan-Africanism than it does to a clear understanding of the unity of the struggle of the peoples of the whole world. Is intransigence about the "fundamental principles of African and anti-imperialist unity" supposed to be seen in the opportunism of the PAIGC's "practical diplomacy," which led the party to send representatives to the congress of the reactionary Senegalese party (the UPS) and to the Islamic conference in Lahore (side by side with Iran and Saudi Arabia), and was responsible for the declarations of friendship for Chad President François Tombalbaye and Haile Selassie at the Eighth Conference of African Heads of State? Does not the expression "positive neutralism" utilized by Pedro Pires in defining the international policy of the state of Guinea-Bissau

betray a profound lack of understanding of the nature of imperialist domination and of the neocolonial states? The desire to maintain independence from the possible political pressure of the "socialist camp" is a healthy sentiment; but when it is expressed as a "neutralism" that makes an abstraction of the character of the neocolonial regimes and their ties with imperialism and the international economic market, it appears in contradiction with proletarian internationalism. In regard to African unity the PAIGC will have to make a choice:

Either clear support to the revolutionary movements that are struggling against colonialism and neocolonialism,

Or an orientation toward petty-bourgeois positions of pan-African solidarity that will integrate Guinea into a process of osmosis with the surrounding neocolonial economies through the African Development Bank, the West Africa Association, and the Organization of African Unity.

It is obvious that the development of Guinea cannot be conceived in a narrow national framework. Guinea will thus have to establish commercial agreements with the neocolonial states that surround it. But it is appropriate to analyze the political terms that accompany these agreements. When Vasco Cabral, commissioner of the economy and finances, explains that in Africa itself the state of Guinea will belong to "the CDEAO (Committee of West African States), which is now being organized and whose aim is to establish economic independence from other countries," it is easy to see that "intransigence in principles" will not be enough for the PAIGC to avoid all the traps of neocolonialism. The neocolonial countries that surround Guinea-Bissau can act as mediators for imperialism. When Luis Cabral writes to Houphouët-Boigny to express his desire for "active cooperation with the Ivory Coast," we are entitled to ask whether that is really the term that ought to be applied when addressing this strong link in the neocolonialist chain. Today the PAIGC is taking refuge behind the "principle of noninterference in the internal affairs of others" in order to refuse to express a point of view on the nature of the neocolonial regimes. But tomorrow, when the state of Guinea will have to take a position on the events of international politics, what will its attitude be? How would its press or radio report events like those of 1968 in Dakar (Senegal) or of 1974 in Ethiopia, if Guinea is maintaining good relations with both these states?

Will the PAIGC respond to the rise of the African revolution with active solidarity with the masses oppressed by the neocolonial regimes? If there is a revolutionary crisis in the region, if revolutionary militants suffer repression at the hands of some neo-

colonial puppet, the PAIGC will have to choose between the African bourgeoisie and the masses.

The Guinean revolution: how far along?

It would be utopian to speak of socialism for Guinea-Bissau before the country has attained a minimum level of economic development. This view doesn't come from an economic notion of the transition to socialism; it is simply based on a lucid view of the economic and social state of the country. As we were able to see, the objective situation in Guinea today imposes a certain number of compromises on the PAIGC. Nevertheless, this does not justify any random political explanation for these compromises or the assertion that the class struggle is secondary. The principal task of revolutionary Marxists today is to analyze the class nature of the new state and to make contributions to the debate now opening within the PAIGC over the question: socialism or neocolonialism? Because its power is not based on a real mobilization of the urban working masses, because it has not destroyed the colonial state apparatus in the cities but instead has been content to occupy its key posts, and because it has called for the participation of all classes in the management of the country, thus denying the reality of class antagonisms in Guinea, the PAIGC today represents only a left nationalist regime. But many contradictions will be brought to bear on this heterogeneous movement.

The trajectory that the new state will follow will depend on the relationship of forces between those elements favorable to the well-being of the bureaucratic petty bourgeoisie and those elements who are conscious of the present impasse and will thus opt for the road of mobilization of the masses on an anti-capitalist basis.

Since April 25 we have already written that a dotted class line runs through a movement like the PAIGC. Little by little this line is becoming more precise — around such decisive questions as whether to develop a classical army or peoples militias, what compromises to make with neocolonial Africa, and even on the question of democracy in discussions. It is to be expected that there will be a Maoist development in the Cape Verde section of the PAIGC as a result of emigration of intellectuals to Europe, and there will be an attraction among the petty-bourgeois layers to the economic power of the USSR.

Nevertheless, in the present phase, these political expressions are not presenting any resistance to the tidal wave of nationalist ideology. Rather, they are adapting to it. It remains to be seen whether in the course of events there will emerge genuine class-struggle currents that, basing themselves on the fifteen years of struggle, seek to remobilize the Guinean masses around anticapitalist objectives and foster a clear comprehension of the regional and international implications of the revolutionary process. □

DENMARK

WORKERS DEMAND:

OUT WITH GOVERNMENT

The slogan "Out with Hartling! Out with Hartling!" was heard throughout a large part of Copenhagen on November 26. The cry against the Liberal party head of government was shouted continually by the 120,000 workers who assembled in front of the parliament building to protest the high rate of unemployment and the government's economic policies. The November 26 demonstration was the largest in Denmark since 1956, when 200,000 workers took to the streets to protest against a Social Democratic government that had enacted a wage agreement after the workers had rejected it. Workers came to the demonstration from all over the country, some leaving early in the morning to reach the rally at



the parliament, which began at 3:00 p.m. In Copenhagen itself, more than 25,000 workers walked off the job earlier in the day to march through the city and converge on the rally site in factory or trade-union contingents. The demonstrators stood for more than two hours in the rain listening to speeches by trade unionists and representatives of the workers parties.

The November 26 action had been planned for some time. It was initiated by the construction workers unions in Copenhagen, Århus, and Odense and by the Arbejdernes Fællesorganisation, an umbrella organization for all the trade unions in Copenhagen.

The major force behind the action was Formands-initiativet (Chairmen's Initiative), a body of local trade-union leaders dominated by the trade-union fraction of the Danish Communist party, which saw it as a means of outflanking the Social Democrats. And in fact, the Social Democratic leaders remained hostile (or at best neutral) toward the demonstration until the last moment, when they won concessions on its technical organization and then decided to participate.

The November 26 demonstration was the third major manifestation of working-class militancy this year. In May more than 200,000 workers went on strike against a government-sponsored tax reform (see INPRECOR, No.4, July 18) and in October more than 35,000 workers launched solidarity strikes with 400 workers who were fined by the Labor Court for having engaged in "illegal" strikes (see INPRECOR, No.11, October 31). The significance of the three mass actions against the government's anti-working-class policy is more than simply conjunctural. It represents a more profound turn in the Danish social situation. The current wave of worker militancy in capitalist Europe is now affecting even traditionally peaceful Denmark, where the workers are beginning to organize opposition to the bourgeoisie's attempts to make the workers bear the costs of stagnation and the general crisis of capitalism.

The roots of the government's antiworker policy lie in the worst recession in the Danish economy since the 1930s. Because of the structural weakness of the Danish economy, the international capitalist crisis is being felt very sharply. Throughout the 1960s the Danish government had problems with an increasing balance of payments deficit. These problems were acutely intensified by the rapid rise in oil prices, because Denmark depends on oil for 90 percent of its total energy consumption. Unlike the other Scandinavian countries, Denmark does not produce any commodities that are currently scarce on the world market, and the result has been a 20 percent decrease in the terms of trade for the Danish capitalists during the past ten months. This in turn has meant a drastically worsened competitive position for Danish export industries, a problem that can now be solved only through an extremely tough policy against the working class. Caught between rapidly rising production costs and increasing competition on the world market, the Danish capitalists have said "no" to any wage increases. Government policy has been aimed exclusively at bolstering the export industries; the effects of the recession on the industries producing for home consumption have been allowed to assert themselves without any government interference. In fact, there have been drastic cutbacks in public spending. The result has been a massive wave of layoffs (running at an average of 4,000 workers a week during the

past three months) and an unemployment figure of 8 percent of the registered work force; in some industries, like construction, the unemployment rate is as high as 12 percent. In addition, the government has threatened to take another step against the workers during the upcoming national wage negotiations, declaring that if so-called zero-solutions are not reached (that is, agreements providing for no wage increase at all), the regime itself will intervene to impose such solutions. And this at a time when the annual rate of inflation is running at 18 percent! It is this development that has impelled the Danish working class to militant class struggle and even to massive political demonstrations demanding the ouster of the government.

The economic crisis and the response of the workers have also had big repercussions within the labor movement that have posed life-or-death questions for the Social Democracy. The Social Democracy has been the major governmental party in Denmark since the second world war, and the Social Democratic leaders have grown so senile that they have difficulty even understanding what is going on. Up to now they have maintained their right-wing positions in spite of the left turn among the workers. They are still publicly advocating an incomes policy, telling the workers that they have to tighten their belts in order to save the economy. This was clearly expressed even during the November 26 demonstration. Anker Jorgensen, chairman of the Social Democratic party, who spoke for his party at the demonstration, was jeered throughout his whole speech. And no wonder! He told the 120,000 workers that "if it is okay to demonstrate, but demonstrations shouldn't be held just for their own sake. What is also needed is serious politics," which means a Social Democratic government carrying out an incomes policy. These words from a labor "statesman" were greeted with the derision they deserved.

The policy of the Social Democrats is probably aimed at achieving a coalition government consisting of themselves, the present government party, and eventually the Radical Left, another bourgeois party. Given the present developments within the working class, this policy places in jeopardy the Social Democracy's traditionally hegemonic position within the workers movement. If the Social Democrats continue their present course, it is likely that this position will be lost. Already the two other large working-class parties, the SF (Socialistisk Folkeparti — Socialist Peoples party) and the Communist party, particularly the latter, are rapidly gaining ground. Although each of these parties has a purely reformist policy, they are both seen by broader and broader layers of workers as real leaders of the struggle. That is because they are the ones that have created the opposition bodies within the unions and are taking the initiatives in the workers' response to bourgeois attacks on their real wages and employment.

The process of recomposition in the workers movement will most probably be accelerated in coming months. National wage negotiations begin in January. If the Social Democratic bureaucracy yields to the employers' demands or accepts government intervention to bring about a "zero solution," the SF and the CP will gain further ground. Already several CP-controlled local unions and the Forwards-initiative have threatened to call for a general strike against any government intervention in the wage negotiations. The way the workers answered the message of Anker Jorgensen on November 26 indicates that such a call would get a big response. Just before going to press we received the news that the Danish government has called a new election for January 9, 1975. Some days after the Novem-

ber 26 demonstration the government presented a plan to parliament calling for a total freeze on wages and prices, a reduction in cost-of-living increases for the workers, and a halt to increases in dividends. After having seen the reactions of the working class, the Social Democratic and trade-union leaders decided to come out against the plan. The SF and the CP also opposed it. The government used this stated opposition to the plan to call for a new election before the plan comes to a vote in parliament. This can be considered a direct result of the massive working-class protests, which forced the Social Democrats to take a stand against the proposed incomes policy and state intervention, even though they themselves had previously called for such a solution. □

REVOLUTIONARY MILITANT MURDERED

The following statement was issued November 17 by the Secretariat of the Liga Socialista (Socialist League), a sympathizing organization of the Fourth International in Mexico.

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Our comrade Antonio Maldonado Franco and two other students of the Universidad Nacional Autónoma de Puebla (UAP — Autonomous National University of Puebla) have been murdered in Tlaxcala City by a gang known as "Los Gavilanes" (The Hawks). One of the students was Guillermo Ramirez; we do not yet know the name of the other compañero who was murdered.

The three were teaching in the Rafael Ramirez normal school in Tlaxcala City, which has been subjected to repeated attacks by the "Gavilanes," who represent a faction in the PRI (Partido Revolucionario Institucional — Institutional Revolutionary party), the government party in Mexico.

The "Gavilanes" serve as a goon squad and have been trying to drive radical activists out of the Rafael Ramirez normal school.

The first victim was Guillermo Ramirez, who was kidnapped at the end of October. Later he was found dead. His funeral was marked by a mass demonstration in the city of Puebla.

The second and third victims were our comrade Antonio and another student at the UAP. They were kidnapped on October 24 during a "demonstration" organized by the government. It was one of the traditional rallies organized by a faction of the PRI to back its candidate for the gubernatorial nomination. The approach of elections for the governorship of Tlaxcala has unleashed a wave of violence in various parts of this state.

When the "demonstration" passed near the Rafael Ramirez normal school, the thugs grabbed Antonio and the other compañero from the UAP. The details remain unclear, since the news only reached us many days later by way of activists from the normal school who brought the report to Puebla.

We did not know what had happened; our comrade had simply vanished. However, one of those kidnapped on October 24 had to be Antonio, since the description fitted him perfectly (the clothes he was wearing that day, the description of him, etc.).

After being kidnapped, Antonio was taken to the building of the Instituto de Estudios Superiores (IES — Institute of Advanced Studies), which had been seized by the "Gavilanes." We do not know how he was killed. When the police went into the building on November 12, it was reported unofficially that two bodies were found. So far the authorities have tried to cover up this crime. The police have not even allowed the bodies to be identified. Nonetheless, it is obvious to all that Antonio Maldonado and the other compañero were murdered. Comrade Antonio Maldonado Franco was eighteen years old. He went to work in the Rafael Ramirez normal school as a volunteer instructor when the state authorities withdrew the teaching staff, claiming that there was "no money in the budget" to pay them. The repressive government bears the full responsibility for his murder.

In Puebla the UAP activists have mobilized to demand punishment of those guilty of these three murders. □

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The Spanish Communist party's total absence of responsibility for these acts has been affirmed and defended by all the workers organizations, which were agreed in denouncing this aspect of the campaign of the dictatorship. But in the defense of the ETA-V — whose responsibility in the affair has never been proven and was finally denied by the organization itself — a defense that was just as necessary and justified as the defense of the CP, there was much reticence on the part of certain organizations; reticence, if not silence or even implicit accusation. For those who have been the main victims, those who most directly suffered and continue to suffer the effects of the police campaign, only two or three organizations assumed the responsibility and honor of defending them unconditionally against the bourgeoisie, without letting themselves get caught up in the atmosphere the police had succeeded in creating against them among public opinion, sticking to the principle that has guided the revolutionary solidarity of communists in all epochs: Against bourgeois repression a revolutionary is always right!

If today the lives of Eva Forest and Antonio Durán are threatened in the "Carrero affair," it is because solidarity with them was insufficient, because the dictatorship thought that they had been abandoned, left without any support. These militants could barely find a lawyer to defend them. That is why they were chosen as propitious victims; that is why today their lives are being used as bargaining chips among the various political factions of the Spanish bourgeoisie. There is now an attempt to make of them a bloody "retribution" for the execution of Carrero, a retribution demanded and required by the most reactionary political sectors, those who for that very reason had identified themselves most closely with "the admiral."

To abandon these comrades to their assassins would not only be a crime; it would also be an encouragement to new crimes, an encouragement to repression; it would strengthen the effects and impunity of these new crimes. And this increased strength would end up by hitting all those fighting against the dictatorship, including those who are now encouraging the dictatorship by their silence.

If anyone thinks that we are exaggerating, that the death penalty will not be requested in the "Carrero affair" or that if it is requested it will not be granted, let them recall Salvador Puig Antich!

If anyone believes that the danger of the death penalty exists but that it can be averted by gathering signatures on protests and petitions, let them also remember Salvador Puig Antich!

If anyone thinks that nothing can be done, that if the dictatorship wants to murder Eva Forest and Antonio Durán it will do so, let them remember Izko and his comrades!

Yes, it is possible to save the lives of Eva and Antonio; we can do it. But every minute counts. Not a second must be lost; the broadest and most combative campaign of national and international solidarity must be organized!

Right now we must begin organizing a united struggle of all parties, all workers organizations, all bodies of the vanguard in the factories, universities, institutes, liberal professions, in the Workers Commissions around the slogan: **DOWN WITH THE CARRERO TRIAL! Let us struggle for the FREEDOM OF EVA FOREST AND ANTONIO DURAN!**

Let us thus move forward to the formation of a United Front Against Repression in order to begin a permanent struggle against the War Councils, the bloodiest instruments of Francoist repression, the most striking example of the role played by the army in the dictatorship, the most tangible evidence that the mass movement can expect nothing from the army but the most brutal repression.

AGAINST THE TOP (Public Order Tribunal), renamed the "Tribunal Central de lo Penal" by the new Organic Law of Justice, the "incarnation," according to its author, "of the principles of July 18." AGAINST THE LABOR TRIBUNALS, AGAINST ALL THE REPRESSIVE APPARATUS OF FRANCOISM!

For the release of political prisoners, for solidarity with their struggles, which will open the way for the release of Eva Forest and Antonio Durán, for the return of the exiles!

Thus, the struggle against the repression will take the important place it deserves in the struggles of the mass movement, in the present preparation of the general strike leading to the revolutionary general strike that will overthrow Francoism.

The struggle to save the lives of Eva Forest and Antonio Durán can and must be an important step in this direction. The Carrero trial is a new challenge to the working class of our country thrown at it by the dictatorship. Let us rise to the challenge: Let us organize the response and call for international solidarity!

Who will intervene to defend these "terrorists"? the dictatorship asks itself.

We answer, and we will answer in action: We will, the workers, students, doctors, professors, teachers, women!

Eva Forest and Antonio Durán are our comrades. We do not believe your lies. We have seen them at our sides in the struggle. We have seen them in the 1968 strike in Pegaso, in the solidarity struggles with the Vietnamese revolution, in the construction strikes, in the struggle against the Burgos War Council four years ago. We will not abandon them!

**DOWN WITH THE CARRERO TRIAL!
FREEDOM FOR EVA FOREST AND ANTONIO
DURAN!**

save the lives of



and



Eva Forest

Antonio Durán

The comrades of the Liga Comunista Revolucionaria - Euzkadi ta Askatasuna-VI (Revolutionary Communist League - Basque Nation and Freedom-VI) have issued the following urgent appeal on behalf of Eva Forest and Antonio Durán, two militants facing death at the hands of the Francoist dictatorship on frame-up charges of having been responsible for the execution of Carrero Blanco.

Eva Forest and Antonio Durán will soon be brought to trial by the War Council that is to deal with the "Carrero affair." This will be the culminating point in one of the most sinister political farces staged by the dictatorship in its whole history.

The first act of the farce was the police propaganda campaign around the Correo Street attack (see INPRECOR, No. 9, October 3). The BPS (Political Social Brigade, the political police), with the extensive collaboration of the bourgeois news media and the silent complicity of numerous workers organizations, presented Eva and Antonio as being responsible for these acts.

Today we know that this was nothing but lies, the crudest slanders launched against a handful of militants and against the Spanish Communist party and the ETA-V.

The Correo Street attack does not even figure in the pretrial hearings opened against Eva Forest and Antonio Durán.

In their statements to the police neither they nor any of their comrades have acknowledged the slightest participation in these acts or in the assassination of Carrero.

It was only through the pressure of terrible physical and moral torture, which gravely affected the health of these comrades and especially Durán's health, that the BPS was able to establish the existence of "hiding places," that is, perfectly legitimate instruments for protecting revolutionary action from the repression of a bloody and tyrannical dictatorship. But what is the use of evidence when it is the Francoist army that is in charge of "justice"; the Francoist army—this potential instrument of civil war, this active instrument of the colonial war in Spanish Sahara, this apparatus for beating into line, humiliating, and repressing Spanish youth. What good is evidence when the laws, judges, and courts are just auxiliaries in the repression of revolutionaries, when the news media is controlled and manipulated with impunity? **UNDER THE FRANCOIST DICTATORSHIP, EVIDENCE MATTERS LITTLE WHEN IT HOLDS BACK THE POLITICAL ACTION OF THE DICTATORSHIP!**

And the merger of the case of Eva Forest and Antonio Durán into the investigation of the "Carrero affair" is a political action. It must be judged and combated as such!

But if this political action was possible, if the most reactionary sectors of the army, police, Francoist apparatus, and fascist gangs have made this absurd indictment, it is because the campaign around the Correo Street attack had a second act whose consequences were much more serious than those of the first act.

Few, very few voices, ours among them, were raised against this farce in defense of all its victims. We say all and we stress the word all.