

INTERNATIONAL VIEWPOINT

April 12, 1982

ISSUE No 4

EXPLOSIVE STRIKE
WAVE IN BELGIUM



**WHAT AWAITS REAGAN IN EUROPE?
NO SUPPORT AGAINST SALVADOR BUT
GROWING CRISIS AND RADICALIZATION**

8 FF, British Pound 0.65, Irish Pound 0.70, Skr 9, Dkr 12, Nkr 10, Ikr 17, US dollars 1.50, Canadian dollars 1.70, Australian dollars 1.35, DM 3.50, Dutch fl. 3.25, Austrian schillings 24, Drachmas 14.8, IS 25, Mexican Pesos 40, Cypriot Pound 0.65, Yen 400, Leban. Piastres 6, BF 65, SF 2.5, Portuguese Escudos 90, Rand 1.30, Pesetas 145, Italian Lire 1 700.

Reagan visit to Europe: Focus for Mass Protest Against Imperialist War and Capitalist Austerity

Following the imposition of martial law in Poland last December, the imperialist ruling classes had two immediate common policy objectives. The first was to take advantage of the new international situation to crush the revolution in El Salvador and, more broadly, in Central America. The second was to defeat and break up the anti-missiles movement in Western Europe.

Reagan's trip to Western Europe in June 1982 will illustrate not only that he has not defeated the Central American revolution but that he has not derailed the anti-missiles movement either. The support for both these causes will combine to produce the largest demonstrations ever seen in Europe against a U.S. president.

The development of the struggle in Central America and the worldwide rise of a movement in solidarity with it have been reported in a number of articles in *International Viewpoint*. In this article, I want to deal with the anti-missiles movement since the crackdown in Poland, its increasing intertwining with the movement in support of El Salvador, and the important insights into the state of world politics today that can be gained from looking at this development.

UNITED STATES MILITARY STRATEGY

The imperialist powers have understood very well right from the beginning the objective interrelationship between their moves in Central America, and against the colonial revolution in general, and the anti-missile movement in Europe.

The vast increases in the U.S. military budgets carried out by Carter and Reagan have focused around two items. The first is to create the infrastructure for the so-called Rapid Deployment Force--which in reality is nothing more than a colossal interventionist force that can be sent in with great speed in any part of the colonial world. This involves an accelerated buildup of the U.S. navy, in particular new aircraft-carrier forces, the construction of foreign military bases, and the development of sophisticated conventional weapons of virtually every type.

The second focus of the new U.S. arms drive is to build and deploy a whole new generation of nuclear weapons aimed against the Soviet Union. This includes in particular the MX missile, the B1, and the so-called Stealth bombers, as well as the Cruise and Pershing II missiles, and the neutron bomb.

The relationship of these two types of armament is very clear. It is not the aim of U.S. imperialism today to move toward rapid all-out nuclear war with the Soviet Union. As the U.S. ruling class is well aware, this would, in the present international relationship of class forces, lead to its own destruction.

The sort of war that the U.S. ruling class is preparing for today is not a vain attempt to restore capitalism in Eastern Europe. It is preparing, in fact, for war against the colonial revolution. The situation that the U.S. ruling class finds unacceptable and which it must reverse is that it was unable to intervene militarily to defend its positions in Vietnam in 1975, in Angola in 1975-76, and in Iran and Nicaragua in 1979. In all these cases, the local agents of imperialism proved too weak to defend U.S. interests, but the strongest military power on earth was not able to act on its own behalf. This is the state of affairs that the U.S. imperialists must turn around.

In order to achieve its goals, however, the U.S. and its allies must achieve three objectives--all of which are interconnected:

1. They have to break the hostility of the working classes inside their own countries to imperialist wars. This is the most fundamental precondition, since this mood among the workers has been a major obstacle to open U.S. military intervention since 1975.

2. The U.S. has to have what it considers the necessary technical military capacity to crush any colonial revolution rapidly. This second precondition is obviously connected to the first. What finally led to the development in the U.S. of overwhelming opposition to the war in Vietnam was the fact that it went on so long and involved such huge sacrifices. The U.S. ruling class, therefore, believes that it must have the means to crush any revolutionary outbreak with great speed before opposition to its policy can mount inside the imperialist states--and above all inside its own country. For this reason, the U.S. is undertaking colossal expenditures to acquire weapons of qualitatively greater destructive power than those used in Vietnam.

3. A significant factor determining how long a colonial revolution can sustain its struggle and whether it can achieve victory is the military and material support given by the Soviet Union and other workers states. For example, although Soviet assistance to Vietnam was grossly inadequate by

comparison with the needs of the situation, and although this significantly prolonged the war, the aid it did give was sufficient to allow the Vietnamese people to win in the final offensive of 1975.

It was the intervention of Cuban troops, airlifted and supplied by the Soviet Union, that played the decisive role in defeating the 1976 South African invasion in Angola.

It is Soviet economic and military aid that makes possible the survival of the Cuban workers state and its leadership--which is itself a decisive fact in the development of the Nicaraguan and Salvadoran revolutions and all the other revolutionary struggles in Central America and in the Caribbean islands.

The aim of the massive imperialist buildup is not to launch immediate war against the USSR, but it is designed to put the U.S. in a position to blackmail the Soviet leadership into cutting off its material aid to colonial revolutions.

Once the aims of U.S. military and political policy are understood, then it becomes clear why the anti-missiles movement in Western Europe is a threefold threat to such plans. First, it increases anti-war sentiment inside the imperialist centres. At the same time, it combines with the impact of the colonial revolution to reinforce anti-war sentiment in the United States itself. Secondly, this movement makes it harder for the U.S. to deploy some key elements of its technologically most advanced weapons systems. Thirdly, it makes it much harder to blackmail the Soviet Union into cutting off material aid to the colonial revolution.

This whole objective interrelation of the anti-missiles movement with the colonial revolution has been reflected in the dynamic of the movement itself. The broadest mass mobilisations, involving between one and a half and two million people last autumn, were against the Cruise and Pershing II missiles and the neutron bomb. But the development of this broad mass movement has gone hand in hand with wider and wider sections of the vanguard explicitly taking up solidarity with the revolutions in Central America.

Already in West Germany in 1981, where the anti-missiles movement is particularly developed, more than twenty thousand people have taken part in a demonstration in support of El Salvador, and \$500,000 has been raised there to help the revolutionary forces.

With the new moves by U.S. imperialism in 1982 and the advance of the FMLN's

struggle, this movement of solidarity has extended rapidly into other West European countries. As could be expected, it found a fertile ground prepared by the anti-missiles movement.

Given these developments, it is little wonder that one of the chief aims of all the imperialist ruling classes was, and is, to breakup the West European anti-missiles movement. The issue they chose to try to accomplish this was Poland. How and why they failed offers a major insight into the state of world politics today.

THE PRETEXT OF POLAND

There is no doubt that the imperialist ruling classes had already selected Poland as an issue they intended to use to break the anti-missile campaign even before the imposition of martial law. More than a year ago, for example, the London Sunday Times explained that a Soviet intervention in Poland would not be such a bad thing because it would deflate the movement for nuclear disarmament.

Interviewed by Newsweek magazine in December following the crackdown in Poland, NATO General Secretary Luns expressed clear satisfaction with the course of events: "I believe what has happened in Poland has certainly not weakened the (NATO) alliance. On the contrary, the power relationship of the U.S. and Europe vis-a-vis the USSR is stronger than before; the Soviet Union now has a turbulent country aside its umbilical cord between East Germany and Moscow."

Luns then went on to outline what was clearly NATO's objective. It was to move ahead with its programme swelling still more the already massive arsenal of U.S. weapons in Europe: "The new U.S. administration has taken the offensive with regard to Soviet moves, and Reagan's rearmament programme has, in a political way, strengthened the hands of the U.S."

The British and French governments also took the occasion of the Polish events to justify their own nuclear weapons programme. West German Chancellor Schmidt has major differences with the United States on the question of economic sanctions against the USSR, but not on missiles. He made it clear that he was maintaining his threat to resign and bring down the government if the Social Democratic Party failed to endorse his support for the NATO arms decisions.

With respect to the anti-missiles movement itself, Luns stepped up his perennial 'Red Scare' campaign by declaring that "the Soviet Union is manipulating peace and anti-A-bomb groups through covert actions, funds and infiltration." This line was echoed by the right-wing reformist sections of the British labour movement leadership. Labour Party deputy leader Dennis Healey, for example, felt emboldened to declare in the debate in the British Parliament, openly breaking official party policy, that "What has happened in Poland...struck a fatal blow to the noble hopes of many who believed sincerely that unilateral disarmament in the West would find its echo in the East."

The illogicality of such ruling-class arguments was unusually glaring. Far from defending the Polish workers, the capitalist governments, starting with the United States, made it clear from the beginning that they fully accept the 'right' of the bureaucracy to crush these workers. Although the capitalist powers were undoubtedly well aware of what the bureaucracy planned to do, they consistently urged moderation and austerity on the Polish workers in the face of Kania and Jaruzelski. This was quite in line with their actions in 1968 when, despite the U.S. government's knowledge of the impending Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia, it took not one single step to release information to the Czech workers of what was being prepared. In the current international relationship of forces, the capitalist ruling classes were, and remain, opposed to the overthrow, and particularly any revolutionary overthrow, of the bureaucracies in Eastern Europe. The division of Europe decided at Yalta remains as much a keystone for the imperialist governments in the present situation as it does for the Soviet bureaucracy.

Furthermore, it could be easily understood by most of the participants in the anti-missiles movement that the deployment of nuclear weapons in West Europe has nothing whatever to do with defending the Polish workers. Indeed, many of these weapons are aimed directly at the Polish workers.

Because of the transparency of the real nature of the imperialists' positions on Poland, even at the height of the ruling-class campaign, the anti-missiles movement maintained its underlying strength. This is despite the fact that there was undoubtedly disorientation in reformist circles created by the imposition of martial law and Reagan's 'zero option' fraud.

The basic features of the situation showed up fairly rapidly. At the first mass demonstration on missiles after the crackdown in Poland, 20,000 people came out in Geneva. It was an impressive turnout, despite the fact that the organisers created some confusion by adding many issues besides the missiles question to the platform of the demonstration. In Britain, no significant attempt was made either in the Labour Party or the trade unions to overturn their official position of support for unilateral nuclear disarmament and opposition to the deployment of Cruise and Pershing II missiles.

In West Germany, the key country for the anti-missiles movement, the Hamburg regional conference of the SPD rejected a motion to call for an immediate halt to the deployment of the missiles. But it also voted down a resolution that endorsed the line of Schmidt and Federal Defense Minister Apel--despite the fact that both of them addressed the conference delegates.

Moreover, the 'Green' party, which is popularly seen as to the left of the SPD and is against the missiles, made a spectacular electoral breakthrough in the Lower Saxony vote in March, gaining 7 percent of the vote and representation in the state parlia-

ment. In short, despite the initial confusion that undoubtedly existed, the imperialist campaign did not succeed in diffusing the basic feeling of opposition to the missiles.

POLISH SOLIDARITY

Another important element in the failure of the ruling-class campaign was the reaction to the Polish events themselves. What the ruling classes wanted was a polarization between right-wing pro-capitalist forces, that would come out against the imposition of martial law, and a left that would seem at least not actively to oppose it. This was in fact what the bourgeoisie achieved after the 1956 Soviet invasion of Hungary.

What the ruling classes hoped for from such a polarization was that the left wing of the workers movement would be tarnished by appearing to fail to oppose the Polish bureaucracy. Since this left wing is also the backbone of the anti-missiles movement, if it could be discredited that would open up the way for dealing blows to the campaign against imperialist militarism.

The pro-Soviet Communist Parties, of course, did exactly what the imperialists hoped they would do. When 100,000 French workers took to the streets in support of Solidarnosc, the French Communist Party denounced this as part of an 'anti-Communist campaign'--a claim believed by no one except their unconditional supporters and which totally isolated them in the face of the imperialist attack. The Swiss Communist Party also refused, for example, to participate in the demonstration in Geneva because it took up other issues besides the missiles, including Poland.

Unlike 1956, however, and in contrast to the U.S. imperialists' expectations, no serious wave of right-wing demonstrations developed in response to Poland. In the United States itself, despite the efforts of the AFL-CIO bureaucracy, the clearly right-wing demonstrations were not large. At the same time, the American left was too weak and too politically confused to respond in any significant way.

In Britain, right-wing forces spurred on by the Thatcher government and right-wing Social Democrats and Liberals, did demonstrate. But so also did left-wing forces in the Labour movement, despite the default of the Labour Party leadership. No real reactionary dynamic was generated in the country.

In the other West European countries, where the bourgeoisie were also hampered by their conflict with the U.S. over the question of economic sanctions against the USSR, the demonstrations took on a character opposite to those in 1956. This, in fact, was a major indication of the shift in the relationship of class forces that has taken place. In the solidarity actions, the initiative was taken not by right-wing forces but by the workers movement and its left wing.

The only exception was in Spain where, reflecting setbacks and disorientation that have occurred, sections of the workers and nationalist movement opposed Solidarnosc.

This difference to the situation in 1956, or even 1968 over the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia, was particularly clear in France. The Gaullist demonstration on Poland brought out about a thousand people, and the demonstration of the Socialist Party and the CFDT trade-union federation, about 100,000.

France however was only an extreme example of the general trend in Europe. Right-wing or fascist demonstrations on Poland were notable for their extreme weakness. In general the labour bureaucracy attempted to block action on Poland and in particular to limit the movement to general 'humanitarian aid'. It was the left-wing currents and groups which took the initiative.

These actions in Western Europe were also for the first time accompanied by significant demonstrations in colonial and semi-colonial countries against repression in a bureaucratized workers state (See International Viewpoint No. 1).

The result of these actions in solidarity with Poland in turn has had a significant effect on the scope of the mobilisations for El Salvador. Workers quite rightly see it as perfectly logical that the left-wing organisations that took to the streets in December and January should call in February and March for mass actions in solidarity with El Salvador. If, however, these left-wing organisations and currents had failed to take the initiative on Poland, workers would be far more reluctant to follow their advice to come out against the United States over El Salvador.

Indeed, the whole experience of the Polish mobilisations was an important indicator of the rising level of class consciousness among wide layers of workers. These workers proved quite capable of distinguishing between those who were fighting for

workers interests and those who were not.

The attempts of the imperialists and their servants to exploit the Polish issue, such as Reagan's January 30 day of action and his TV show 'Let Poland Be Poland' were relative flops. In contrast, the left-wing demonstrations in Europe mobilised relatively large numbers of people and had a significant impact in the workers movement.

So, when Reagan comes to Europe the hundreds of thousands who will turn out against him will not be demanding that he take action on Poland but that he get out of Central America and take his missiles out of Western Europe.

NEW UPTURN OF STRUGGLE

Thus, the result of the reactions to the Polish events was, contrary to the expectations of the imperialists, that the left wing of the workers movement was not weakened. On the contrary it gained a certain greater credibility and audience. This helped to lay the basis for the demonstrations that immediately afterwards started to spread to all countries over El Salvador. The workers movement and its left wing appeared to be taking the lead both on Poland and in solidarity with the Central American revolutionists fighting imperialism. This represents a major turnabout compared to the situations arising in the wake of previous repressive outrages in Eastern Europe.

Finally, another factor, and by no means the least important, that will add to the problems of the West European imperialists and augment the scope of the mobilisations against Reagan is that the beginning of 1982 coincided with an upturn in the fightback against austerity by sections of the West European working class.

The strikes against unemployment in southern Belgium constitute the most important struggle in that country since the 1961 general strike. There was also an important success in the general strike in southern Italy. In France, sharp struggles touched off by employers attempts to sabotage the reduction of the workweek from 40 to 39 hours shows that the workers continue to expect and demand significant reforms from the Mitterrand government.

Confronted with this situation, various of the West European governments, notably the West German, have been making demagogic utterances blaming the severity of the recession on high U.S. interest rates, as well as on the perennial threat of 'Japanese competition'. Such claims are of course designed to hide the responsibility of the West European imperialist governments for the austerity policies. But they also reflect the weight of increased inter-imperialist competition and heighten hostility to the U.S. ruling class and its economic policies.

Thus, three elements--opposition to the missiles, opposition to U.S. imperialist policy in Central America, and opposition to austerity--will come together to impell really massive mobilizations against Reagan in June. These demonstrations, in turn, can be a powerful lever for building the movements against imperialist intervention in Central America and against the missiles.

The slogans of these demonstrations should be:

--Imperialist Hands off Central America and the Caribbean!

--No missiles, no neutron bomb!

--No to austerity--jobs not bombs!

Reagan and his imperialist hosts will hear these demands raised by the voices of hundreds of thousands of people when he comes to Western Europe this summer. ■

Country Prepares for Invasion

The following article is from the March 29 issue of Intercontinental Press, a sister publication produced in New York.

By Michael Baumann

MANAGUA--Nicaragua is mobilizing to defend its revolution against further blows from the United States.

In the space of only four days, Reagan's threats have been backed up by the bombing of two bridges near the Honduran border, an attack on two fishing vessels in Nicaraguan territorial waters, and the killing of three soldiers in a clash with a counterrevolutionary band.

This is obviously just the beginning, and from factories to farms, the entire working population is preparing to assure defense of the country and continued production of the essentials of life under conditions of war.

Hundreds of meetings have been held at workplaces throughout the country to dis-

cuss the gravity of the situation and the immediate measures that need to be taken. One of these meetings, held in Managua on March 17, brought together representatives of every single union in the city. Similar gatherings have taken place in other areas.

Emergency networks of defense, production, food distribution, price control, information, health and sanitation, and construction are being set into place.

There is wide popular support for this decisive response to the U.S.-backed attacks, including measures in the decree establishing a state of emergency in the country March 15.

"The situation in the country is tending rapidly toward a situation of war," explained Lucio Jimenez, secretary general of the Sandinista Workers Federation (CST).

"The workers have been asking for such a decree for some time, because while we were raising production, the bourgeoisie was echoing whatever the imperialists said. With the decree a blow can be struck

against the agents of Yankee imperialism in Nicaragua, and we are demanding that it be applied against them."

On the legal front, the government decreed a suspension of the constitution, suspended news broadcasts on capitalist-owned radio stations, and ordered pre-publication review of all newspapers and periodicals. Also suspended was the broadcast of "opinion programs of political parties and all other organizations."

These measures are to remain in force for thirty days, at which time they may be renewed if deemed necessary.

MASSIVE RESPONSE TO MILITIA APPEAL

Response to appeals for militia volunteers has been massive. Eighteen thousand members of the Sandinista Youth alone have enrolled.

Here in Managua, thousands have turned out three nights a week for training in each of the several centers.

In Matagalpa, a city of 40,000 to the north, 2,500 volunteered March 16. After several hours of evening training, the new recruits held a march through the main street of the city in answer to Reagan. In Juigalpa, a city to the east, a similar demonstration was held the same night after the evening's training.

In Leon, a city of 250,000, five centers of militia training were required to accommodate all the volunteers.

In addition to joining the militias, the people of Nicaragua are contributing whatever skills they have to the defense of the revolution.

Doctors and nurses are being organized into medical brigades to assure battlefield care and general medical care for the population under conditions of war.

A brigade of engineers and geologists is being formed to aid the population in constructing bomb shelters.

And in a country where the battle for culture and literacy remains one of the highest priorities, special brigades of artists, performers, teachers, and journalists have been formed to ensure support to the means of communication, accurate news and historical accounts, and mobile cultural events.

Special attention has been paid to the critical task of guaranteeing continued

supply and distribution of food.

"If we don't assure our people gallo pinto,* especially those on the frontline, it will be a disaster. Hunger, not the enemy's bullets, will defeat us." These were the words of caution of Narciso Gonzalez, president of the National Union of Farmers and Ranchers (UNAG), following a national emergency meeting of the organization March 17. The meeting was held to discuss precautionary measures that are already being taken to assure food supplies as well as to work out plans for provisioning the cities during an invasion.

The National Executive Committee of the Rural Workers Association (ATC) met the same day to discuss how branches of the ATC would ensure continued agricultural production, particularly of such major items as coffee, cotton, rice, and beef.

Established at the same time were plans for vigilance committees of ATC members to prevent sabotage of crops and machinery, and attacks by counterrevolutionary bands.

Special attention has also been paid to distribution of food once it has reached the cities.

In the large central markets where most food is sold, a major effort has been made to enroll individual market-stall proprietors in the militia and vigilance committees, and in some cases to fortify the markets against military attack.

Trenches have been dug at the Roberto Huembes outdoor market in Managua, where two-thirds of the proprietors have already joined the militia or the Sandinista Defense Committees (CDS).

Price-watch committees have also been established to ensure that no one takes advantage of the heightened tension to artificially hike food prices.

In Managua's Eastern Market, thirty-four CDSs are already on duty for precisely this purpose. In the large supermarkets, the supermarket workers' union is fulfilling the same task.

All of these steps are proceeding calmly, in a highly organized way.

The watchword was given by Junta of National Reconstruction member Sergio Ramirez, in a nationally televised speech March 17.

"Defense is not solely a military matter; it also requires production, work, and above all order and discipline. That is what the country needs at this time."

And that is what it is getting.

*Literally, "spotted rooster," a popular Nicaraguan term for rice and beans.

Nicaragua, Cuba Prepare for U.S. Intervention

In its April 5 issue, Inprecor, our sister publication in French, carried an interview with Jean-Pierre Beauvais, a leader of the French section of the Fourth International who recently visited Central America and Cuba.

The following are excerpts from this interview that have to do with the preparations in Nicaragua and Cuba to meet possible U.S. military moves against the Central American revolution:

* * *

One thing has to be clear first of all. Imperialist aggression is already an everyday reality in Nicaragua. Clashes occur every day on the Atlantic-coast Honduran border. In recent weeks, they have cost the lives of dozens of Nicaraguans. The incursions of reactionary gangs are multiplying and compelling the Sandinistas to deploy major forces in the area.

In these last weeks, they have been intercepting more and more infiltrating commando units, equipped with powerful weapons and plans to carry out terrorist attacks, sabotage, assassinations of leaders. I could give a very long list of examples.

When Nicaragua is already facing enormous economic problems, aggravated by imperialist reprisals, it is obliged to devote more and more of its resources to protecting the population.

In this respect, the imperialist propaganda campaign over Nicaragua's increased mili-

tary capacities is particularly scandalous.

In these last weeks, a lot of imperialist propaganda has been concentrated on the question of the Misquito Indians. In this case, as in all those where you have native populations that remain marginalized, there are specific cultural, economic, and social problems. But if several thousand Misquitos have been moved, it was to protect them from attacks coming from Honduras.

It seems that the majority of the Misquitos agreed to this. The imperialist campaign is based largely on the statements of the Catholic bishops in Managua. However, several American senators and representatives visiting Nicaragua were invited to go to the first Misquito camp. Their general impression was that the Indians agreed with this move and felt more secure.

But these televised statements by U.S. legislators were not picked up to any extent by the American press. However, they are confirmed by the testimony of priests who went to the areas affected and who contradict the bishops. Moreover, the Sandinistas have invited the Vatican and the OAS to come and investigate.

Facing the dangers that are growing, the FSLN leadership is basing itself on the mobilization of the masses, on the strength of the political and military apparatus that grew out of the revolution, and on the advances of their Salvadoran comrades. This is obviously the fundamental thing. But the road they have to walk is a very narrow one. More than ever, the future of the Nicaraguan revolution depends on other victories

in Central America and on the support of the world workers movement and of revolutionists throughout the world.

The mass mobilizations in Cuba against imperialism and in solidarity with the revolutionary struggle of the Salvadoran people are on a very high level.

In speeches, discussions, and information meetings on El Salvador the importance of the struggle in El Salvador for the Cuban revolution, for its future, and for strengthened it is systematically explained.

Another aspect concerns the U.S. The population is being educated that an imperialist military intervention is possible at any moment. This is explained not on the simplistic basis that imperialism is aggressive by nature but on the basis of a concrete analysis--the fear that the crisis of bourgeois leadership may lead to an adventure.

The general impression of those who can compare the two periods is that the present mobilization of the masses in Cuba was equalled only at the time of the Missile Crisis in 1962. That is, it is extraordinary. This takes the form of expanding the numbers, and speeding up the training, of the militia; the placing on permanent alert of many reservists at their workplaces; and the mobilization of the mass organizations and the Committees to Defend the Revolution (CDRs). In Havana, evacuation committees have been formed, linked to the CDRs, for every neighborhood and every building. An entire people is in a state of alert.

Local Elections Show Results of Mitterrand's Class Collaboration

The French local elections in March became an important test of the political relationship of forces in the sharpening class struggle since the victory of the left in the Presidential elections in May 1981.

The voting, held in half of the country's cantons, took place in two rounds, on March 14 and 21. Candidates winning more than 50 percent of the vote in the first round were elected; in other seats a "run off" second round was held.

Of 2,014 seats at stake, the left won only 816, gaining around 50 percent of the vote, compared to 54 percent at the time of the Presidential election. Some important areas, however, were not electing local councillors, including Paris.

This article, reviewing the outcome of the elections, is taken from the April 1982 issue of *Critique Communiste*, monthly review of the Ligue Communiste Revolutionnaire (French section of the Fourth International). The translation is by IV.

* * *

After the second round of the local government elections, the balance sheet is indisputable. The moral capital that Mitterrand, the SP, and the CP enjoyed after the May 10, 1981, elections is diminishing. Cries of victory are being raised by the Giscardian (liberal bourgeois) and Gaullist right, the political representatives of big business. They see these elections as a first step toward regaining control of the government.

The right is hoping to end the "interlude" opened by the May 10 election, because it considers that it is a natural law that it should hold the government, just as it is that the capitalists should have the economic power.

By claiming to be a "majority" after the March local government elections, the bourgeois parties are implicitly recognizing that the SP and CP were a majority after the last local government elections in 1976! At that time and after the successive elections that followed, Mitterrand and Marchais (the CP leader) were more modest than Pons (Gaullist) and Lecanuet (Giscardian) today.

It is true that the important thing about the local government elections now is that for the first time in six years the SP and CP were outvoted by the right. In the working-class districts, their vote went down as the rate of abstention went up. In the rural districts, there was a swing toward the bourgeois parties, the RPR and

the UDF. (1) Contrary to what a lot of the commentators are saying, there is one underlying cause for both developments.

A lot of wage earners, both blue- and white-collar workers cannot see much of a change in the ten months since May 10. They do not see any shortening of the unemployment lines; any change in pay, which is falling behind prices; or any change in working hours, since the bosses are taking back more with their left hand than the one-hour cut in the workweek that they are supposed to be giving with their right.

Moreover, before these latest elections a sizable layer of small peasants and small-business people, victims of the capitalist trusts and credit institutions, shifted away from the bourgeois parties and toward the SP and the CP. Now a lot of them have gotten the unfortunate impression that "the left isn't any better than the others," and that they have been swindled.

The SP and the CP are still blaming the difficulties on the legacy of Giscard, the "inertia" of unemployment, and the behind-the-scenes sabotage of the bosses. The premier, Pierre Mauroy, talks complacently about the seven-year term Mitterrand has ahead of him and about "establishing a measured pace" of reforms. These are the notions that promote the passivity and stolidity that marks his government.

This sort of talk is echoed in the trade-union movement, where various leaders speak and act as if May 10 had settled everything, as if there were nothing to do now but to roll up your sleeves and march ahead "at a measured pace," since "now we're in charge." Prudence and patience are becoming the watchwords.

The local elections were a clear reminder that this is not the real state of affairs. A situation in which the working-class parties have a majority in parliament, where a CP-SP cabinet heads the government, and where these traditional workers parties are feeling the pressure of millions of workers anxious for change, is a situation fraught with contradictions that are likely to become explosive very quickly. No, this government is not a stable one!

Last June, Jospin, the SP general secretary, said that he was proud of the government's success in maintaining "ambiguity." A lot of SP members, often well-intentioned ones displayed knowing smiles, indicating that they thought they could advance "tranquilly" to challenge capitalist power, and--why not?--establish socialism. But

at its congress in Valence the SP adopted a policy of seeking compromise between the "political authorities" and the holders of "economic power," that is, the bosses. The SP leaders explained that this had to be done.

The government is following the Valence policy when it treats the capitalists and bankers with kid gloves, when it bestows handsome presents on them in the attempt to convince them to invest and to put their money on an upturn. At the same time, it tries to give the appearance that it is meeting democratic demands, often symbolic ones, such as the abolition of death penalty, the suspension of the Peyrefitte law (2), or the abolition of maximum security sections of prisons.

But these democratic reforms are quickly pushed into the background when the interests of the capitalists dictate a resumption in building nuclear power stations and anti-nuke demonstrators are clubbed in Chooz, when layoffs continue and the workers who sit-in to oppose them are cleared out by the police.

The real power remains in the hands of the capitalists, and day by day they are wearing out the government, chipping away at its credibility. They are careful not to break off their dialogue with the government but to get it, of its own accord, to take the decisions that suit their interests. To this end, they are making full use of the economic levers they control and the key posts they occupy in the state apparatus.

The ordinances on the workweek are the best example of what is happening. Mauroy claimed that he was resorting to issuing these ordinances in order to speed up changes that were being blocked in parliament by the right. In fact, these measures were dictated and applied by the national employers organization.

Within the SP, some people will certainly defend the "truce" (3). If the changes

1. Rassemblement pour la Republique, Rally for the Republic, the right-wing Gaullist party led by Jacques Chirac; Union des Democratres Francais, Union of French Democrats, the liberal Gaullist party of Giscard and Lecanuet.
2. This law reduces the traditional protection of defendants in court cases and gives the police additional powers for surveillance.
3. A social truce, the formula that Mitterrand and the government use in calling for class collaboration.

had been more radical, they will say, the rejection at the polls would have been greater. This argument reflects a failure to understand the depth of the old government's policy, which is what produced the surge of votes for the left on May 10 and June 21. It represents a failure to understand that the SP-CP majority was elected to carry out a different sort of policy, to do away with austerity and unemployment. That was also the attitude of the "moderate voters," long vulnerable to the crudest anti-Communist propaganda, but who came to understand that they had been hoodwinked by Giscard and Barre.

These moderate voters were ready to give the left a blank check to do something. They expected real transformations, not face-lifting reforms. By refusing to move decisively, the SP-CP majority has kept the petty bourgeois layers in the strait-jacket imposed on them by the capitalists and driven them back toward the right.

The fact that Mauroy and Marchais did not get these moderate working-class or petty-bourgeois votes does not mean that the government has to find a better balance between those who think that the changes are too rapid and those who think they are not rapid enough. In fact, it lost both the moderate and the more radical voters for the same reason--it does not seem to have the necessary will to take on the capitalists.

However, it would be too much to expect the SP and CP leaders to draw the lessons from the local elections. That would mean that they would base themselves on mobilizing the workers, that they would attack the profits of the capitalists and challenge the laws of capitalism by outlawing layoffs, for example, and nationalizing plants abandoned by their owners, such as the Bella doll factory in Perpignan or Elastelle in Puy. They would challenge the EEC economic agreements dictated by the trusts. They would immediately cut the

workweek to 35 hours without letting the bosses take a penny off the workers wages.

These are realistic steps. But the SP and the CP are not prepared to take them, any more than they were in 1936 or in 1945, or than their political counterparts were in Chile in 1972.

The May 10 victory belongs above all to the workers. Leaving it in the hands of Mitterrand and Marchais means letting it be taken away. A force has to be organized in the country that will say loudly and clearly that this is no time for a truce. More than ever, the capitalists have to be forced to pay in order to meet the workers demands. The local elections were a warning. The policy of concessions to the employers can only lead to defeat. It is action for real change that will create confidence and mobilize people.

In the coming months, the LCR will strive harder to build such a force. ■

by Christian Picquet

Workers Confront the Crisis of Capitalist Europe

(The following article is from the April 2 issue of *Rouge*, the weekly paper of the Ligue Communiste Revolutionnaire, French section of the Fourth International. The translation is by IV.)

No one can deny any longer that today, 25 years after the signing of the Treaty of Rome, the Common Market is undergoing a grave crisis. The Twenty-Second European Summit meeting on March 29-30 only confirmed this.

The disputes over the British contribution to the EEC budget and over agricultural policies were only the most spectacular reflections of this crisis. The underlying factors are a decline in investment, which is speeding up the decline of industry; galloping inflation; and the trade deficit with American and Japanese imperialism.

Everywhere the ruling classes have tried to deal with the recession by coordinating their austerity policies. In most countries, buying power has dropped sharply. Industries have been restructured at the cost of millions of jobs. Today, there are already 10,700,000 jobless in the EEC, and this figure is expected to increase by 15% over the coming year.

The Belgian steelworkers have just reminded us of the way the capitalist experts and Brussels Commissions operate to limit productive capacity, and sacrifice jobs and social needs.

Despite the capitulations of the trade-union apparatuses and the reformist parties, this policy is proving more and more difficult to apply. Belgium has become the flashpoint of the resistance. There is the struggle of the steelworkers, several

one-day general strikes since February, the spontaneous launching of an unlimited strike in the Mons Borinage region near the French border, the call for a similar action in Charleroi, and the teachers' work stoppage. Such mobilizations have not been seen in Belgium for twenty years, not since the general strike of 1961.

If it were not for the divisions between Flanders and the Walloon country and between the Catholic and Social Democrat union confederations, and the lack of political perspectives to unite around, the workers movement could quickly dump the Martens government.

Although it was far less explosive than the workers actions in Belgium, the demonstration of 300,000 engineering workers in Rome on March 26 testifies to the breadth of discontent in the working class. Everyone agrees that it was the largest demonstration in years.

And in Luxembourg, you have to go back to the 1930s to find anything like the mobilization of 40,000 persons in the streets on March 27.

In all countries, the same demands have been raised--no cuts in wages and past social gains, end layoffs, and reduce the workweek drastically. The victory of the Socialists in France and Francois Mitterrand's call for establishing a "European showcase of social reform" aroused great hopes in the workers in other countries and among trade-unionists....

Thus, the French government has major responsibilities. Any measure adopted here will immediately have a chain-reaction effect on the European workers movement and bring the other governments under strong pressure. In his election campaign, the president of the republic

said that a 35-hour week would mean 800,000 more jobs. He has no excuse now for not setting out to achieve this objective. And by responding to the aspirations of millions of workers throughout Europe, such action would give impetus to a similar movement throughout Western Europe.

In drawing the balance sheet of the European summit, Mitterrand said that he was pleased to see a convergence of economic and social steps in the various countries. But in the official conclusions of this meeting, it says the following about unemployment.

"Concerted action (between the unions, government, and employers) must be accompanied by increased efforts to control the rise of production costs, which includes wages. The stress has to be put on productive investment, both private and public, rather than consumption."

Doesn't this mean austerity and reducing wages? In paraphrasing such a document and not saying a word about cutting the workweek, and in advocating "restructuring of the industrial sector" of the EEC, isn't Mitterrand accepting fundamentally a coordinated attack on the working class and on the level of employment? Doesn't this mean maintaining the plans that were worked out under the Giscard government and pushing them harder?

Once again, it has been shown that declarations of good intentions cannot be implemented through the EEC institutions. Setting in motion a process of change favorable to the workers will depend, in the final analysis, on mobilization, on cross-border coordination on all levels of the trade-union organizations. ■

Chronology of Belgian Strikes

December 14, 1981. The government declares its intention to carry out a drastic austerity program. This includes reducing the total wage bill by 3%, dismantling the system of automatic cost-of-living increases, a "tightening up" of unemployment insurance, and a major cut in plant production costs. To accomplish this, the government says, it is going to ask parliament for "special power."

Beginning of January 1982. The FGTB (the Social Democrat-led union confederation) declares its opposition to special powers and to the austerity measures, whose precise provisions have not been made public. The CSC (the Catholic union confederation) announces that it is prepared to accept austerity, but it is against any tampering with cost-of-living increases. At the same time, it does nothing to prepare for action.

The FGTB announces that it will hold a special congress to prepare for action. Several regions and districts pass motions calling for a 24-hour general strike.

January 14. The FGTB holds its national congress, which declares its opposition to the austerity measures and the special powers. But it does not decide on any immediate action in order to leave time for trying to get unity in action with the CSC.

January 20. The FGTB organizes a national meeting in Heysel in Brussels. Instead of the 5,000 shop stewards expected, there are 10,000. As Debunne, the general secretary of the confederation speaks, the crowd shouts "general strike!"

January 26. The General Council of the CSC agrees to talks with the FGTB on common action.

January 27. The talks between the FGTB and the CSC break down. On the following day, the Walloon CSC releases its regional organizations to join in common action with the FGTB.

February 8. Twenty-four-hour national general strike by the FGTB. It is total in the Walloon country, as a result of the formation of the Trade-Union Common Front. In Brussels and Flanders, the effect of the strike varies according to industry and from plant to plant. There are no demonstrations in the Walloon country, only flying pickets. But there are militant demonstrations elsewhere in Belgium.

February 11. The first "March on Brussels" by Walloon steelworkers belonging to both the FGTB and the CSC. They are worried about the rationalization plans of the EEC and the Belgium government. A violent confrontation takes place in Rue de la Loi, the street on which the government offices and the parliament are located.

Mid-February. Confronted with this working-class upsurge, the Martens government is forced to call the trade-union lead-

ers in to get their "advice" on changing the cost-of-living index. At the same time, he dangles the possibility of "a jobs plan" in front of them. The FGTB first, and firmly, and the CSC later and in a more conciliatory tone, reaffirm their previous positions. Their answer is "no."

February 15. Agitation starts in the Walloon steel centers.

February 20. The government announces its intention to devalue the Belgian franc. Immediately afterward, the EEC agrees. A climate of "national unity" (the fatherland in danger) is whipped up. The government decides to depart drastically from the cost-of-living increase system for the rest of 1982.

February 22. The CSC, openly, and the FGTB, diffidently, revise their positions on the cost-of-living index. "The devaluation has to be done right!" The slogan now becomes one for a strict and prolonged price freeze (which the government anyway refuses to grant).

February 22-26. At the moment when the FGTB national apparatus wants to make a retreat, a social explosion takes place in Liege and threatens in Charleroi. For two, three, and sometimes five days, nearly 100,000 Walloon workers strike. There are spontaneous demonstrations in the cities, massive flying pickets, attacks on banks, burning of headquarters of the ruling Liberal party, occupations of railroad stations, bridges, highways, and so forth. The trade-union bureaucracy blocks a general strike. It backs an all-out strike by the steelworkers of the Cockerill-Sambre complex in Liege and Charleroi but opposes the extension of the strike to the whole of the Walloon steel industry.

The Cockerill-Sambre strike will last through March. The national FGTB tries once again to engage in discussions for unity in action with the CSC. The Walloon FGTB is forced by the power of the social explosion to immediately announce a week of action in the Walloon country.

March 1-5. Revolving 24-hour strikes successively paralyze all the provinces of the Walloon country. In general, the CSC participates in them. Very militant mass demonstrations. Often the workers overshoot the "program." The national FGTB in turn is forced to announce "a national action plan," in which for the rest of March every 24-hour general strike in a Walloon province is coupled with one in Flanders.

March 6. National "Women Against the Economic Crisis" demonstration supported by both the FGTB and the CSC (15,000 participants) in Brussels. The action develops a strong antigovernment thrust.

March 8. In response to a drastic plan for tightening up on the railroads, a wave of railway station occupations develops

throughout the country, continuing throughout March. Joint action throughout the country by the FGTB and the CSC.

March 9. The whole province of Liege is paralyzed by one of the 24-hour revolving strikes.

March 9. The movement has gone over the head of the Walloon CSC and the leadership is beginning to lose its balance. As an alternative to "ineffective" strikes, it proposes a march on Brussels.

March 11. The Bureau of the Walloon section of the FGTB responds positively to the proposal of the Walloon CSC, but continues the 24-hour revolving strikes.

March 11. Five thousand Sabena workers, who are facing an enormous cut in their real wages (from 15% to 30%) come into the Brussels streets, and also clash with the police on the Rue de la Loi.

March 12. The National Bureau of the FGTB says "yes" to the proposal of the Walloon CSC to organize a big national union demonstration in Brussels.

March 12. In response to the rationalization plan in education, the National Committee of the CGSP (the public sector workers union) announces an unlimited strike to begin on March 29 (the date will later be changed to March 31) and demands that the FGTB proclaim an unlimited general strike.

March 15. The national CSC tips over into opposition to the government. It declares its rejection of "certain measures affecting unemployment insurance" and proposes a national demonstration in Brussels on March 27 "with the FGTB, if possible."

March 16. Twenty-four-hour general strike affecting the provinces of Antwerp, Limburg, and the Flemish Brabant, plus the Charleroi region. In Flanders, the CSC is beginning to participate in the actions despite the opposition of the national leadership.

The second big demonstration of Walloon steelworkers, backed by a common front of the FGTB and the CSC. Violent confrontations lasting several hours. Then large groups leave in cars to join the mass demonstration in Antwerp.

March 16. Under the impact of the steelworkers demonstration, a militant mood grips the Mons-Borinage region: the Jemappes rolling mills to on strike, drawing behind them progressively the entire region. A strong all-union general assembly of the FGTB goes over the heads of the bureaucracy and proposes an unlimited general strike beginning March 23 (which was designated as a day of action in the FGTB's national plan). The bureaucracy agrees to call an emergency congress for the end of the week.

March 18. Strike in the provinces of Namur, Luxembourg, and Eastern Flanders (Ghent).

March 19. It becomes known that the negotiations between the national bureaus of the FGTB and the CSC for a common national demonstration on March 25 have failed. The FGTB decides to call off the last two 24-hour revolving strikes (Western Flanders, Mons-Borinage, Mouscron, Brussels, and Walloon Brabant.) Instead, it decides to organize a national general strike for March 26 without the CSC.

March 19. Special congress of the Mons-Borinage FGTB. At the gathering, the delegates learn about the calling off of the 24-hour revolving strike planned for March 23. The hall explodes. The bureaucracy is forced to issue a call for a general strike and to demand that the Walloon FGTB join it, and to propose a discussion in the National Bureau of the FGTB.

March 20. The Walloon CSC (with "its" national demo in its pocket) organizes a general assembly of its 850 shop stewards. Its program is against the government's measures and against the FGTB's strikes, and for "new forms of struggle as consumers and savers".

March 22. The general strike in the Mons-Borinage area begins. Blockades on all the roads, occupation of the train stations, workers control over postal-check payments exercised by the postal and bank

workers. Formation of a central strike committee with the union executive committee as its core. Massive flying pickets. Dispatching of a delegation to visit the other Walloon regions.

March 23. All-trades general assembly of the FGTB in Charleroi. After the report of the delegation from the Borinage, all but seven of the 1,100 delegates vote for a general strike beginning March 26.

March 23. Enlarged Executive Committee meeting of the Mouscron FGTB. After the report of the delegation from Mons-Borinage, the tide turns toward calling a general strike. But the bureaucracy managed to prevent a vote on the question.

March 24. The first major setback. The steel union bureaucrats form a common front--to force the Charleroi steelworkers back to work. In Liege, the strike continues.

March 24. The government reverses the firings of 500 railroad workers while maintaining its rationalization plan.

Second major setback. The union bureaucracy decides to reject 24-hour national general strike, which would have paralyzed the entire country.

March 24. A historically unprecedented mass march of 15,000 workers in the Borinage. The entire region is paralyzed.

The mobilization spills over into the neighboring region, the Center.

March 26. Twenty-four-hour national strike of the FGTB alone. Success in the Walloon country. Progress in Flanders and the industrial suburbs of Brussels. Failure in several Flemish provinces and in downtown Brussels.

In the evening, the union bureaucracy manages to overturn the votes in favor of a general strike in Charleroi and in Mons-Borinage after unbelievable manipulations (fights in the hall, workers storm the platform, the bureaucrats slip out the backdoor, etc.). It is clear that the momentum toward a general strike in the Walloon country has been stopped.

March 27. National demonstration by CSC alone. Forty thousand march. FGTB plant delegations participate to show their desire for unity. It is an ambiguous demonstration, because it is in opposition to the government but also to the FGTB strikes and actions.

March 29. A general ebb sets in, except among the teachers, who start a determined action, and in the steel industry in Liege.

March 31. Massive demonstration of 30,000 teachers in the streets of Brussels. The national strike call is largely followed. In many places, the CSC participates. ■

Blowup in Belgium Sparked by Antilabor Offensive

BRUSSELS--From the beginning of January to the end of March, the Belgian working class waged a struggle unprecedented since the general strike of December 1960-January 1961.

Nonetheless, this upsurge of struggle failed to culminate in a full-scale general strike. The divisionist policy of the CSC (the Catholic union confederation) and the sabotage by the FGTB (the Social Democrat-led confederation) deprived the workers of the victory they earned by their fighting spirit.

The "trains" of antilabor measures are going to go through. It is undeniable that the government has won the first round. But it is equally clear that the workers have not been beaten. And this is not just a generality. Aside from the steelworkers, who engaged in a fight to the finish ("our last battle," as some of them say), the workers have a clear feeling that they didn't get the chance to really start fighting.

So, the score is one-zero, with the bourgeoisie ahead, but the match is continuing. In fact, the bourgeoisie is engaged in a long-term austerity offensive. It will have to continue this course.

The general results that emerge from three months of intense struggles is rather a strengthening of the workers organizations, a radicalization of the forms of struggle, a very extensive politicalization among thousands of vanguard workers, growing opposi-

tion to the bureaucracy in the trade unions, and an expanded audience for the revolutionary organizations.

The fifth Martens government, which was formed with great difficulty after the special parliamentary elections of November 8, 1981, is the result of the political turn the bourgeoisie made in the middle of last year.

The first workers upsurge in the winter of 1980-81 had kept the union bureaucracies from going along with a sharper austerity policy. The capitalists drew the balance sheet of this experience. They decided to dispense with the ponderous and costly mechanism of parliamentary debate and negotiating with the unions.

Thus, the bosses shifted from a gradual austerity carried out on the basis of deals with the bureaucrats to imposing a drastic austerity by force. To accomplish this, they were counting on one big advantage. The Martens-5 government, a coalition of the Walloon and Flemish Christian Democrat and Liberal parties, had gotten the support of the Flemish wing of the CSC. Thus, a dangerous division had been created in the workers movement.

The fundamental strategic problem, therefore, for a counterattack by the workers movement was to overcome the unevenness in the level of consciousness, combativity, and organization of the workers. The basis for solving it was achieving unity in action

between the FGTB and CSC which amounts, more or less, to unity in action between the Walloon and Flemish workers (the FGTB being in the majority in the Walloon country, the CSC in Flanders).

In view of the nature of the government (a homogeneous and determined bourgeois coalition) and the scope of the attack it launched against the main gains of the workers movement, only a decisive response by the workers movement as a whole--unity in action up to and including a general strike--could force the government to retreat. This, in turn, could only lead to the fall of the government. And so the defensive struggle of the workers raised from the outset the questions of a programmatic and governmental alternative.

The national leadership of the FGTB (the current led by Debunne, the general secretary) realized from the start the terms of the problem. It came out quickly in opposition to special powers as a method of governing and against the measures envisaged. But it also defined the limits of a struggle against it. It could not be mere protest, because that was now useless; but it could not be an all-out fight either.

The objective to which the FGTB bureaucracy remains attached is a return to balanced, gradual, and negotiated austerity.

How could this knotty contradiction be untangled? Debunne aimed, through a

measured application of pressure, to draw the Flemish CSC into opposition to the Martens-5 government. This was a sound political calculation. The problem was that to do this the only effective means was direct action by the workers, since the Flemish leadership of the CSC was determined to keep the Martens-5 government in office.

The national leadership of the FGTB cautiously launched the movement at the end of January. In doing so, it unleashed a special kind of dialectical relationship between a numerous and combative working class, mass unions (the rate of unionization is 85%), a militant working-class and trade-union vanguard, and a trade-union apparatus reflecting a variety of positions.

The movement grew, generating increasing pressures for united action at the rank-and-file level and leading to more and more audacious methods of struggle. The union apparatuses were temporarily thrown off balance. By the end of March, the country was on the verge of a general strike.

Unlike the general strike of 1960-61, this development was not the result of a social explosion rapidly going over the heads of the bureaucratic apparatuses and immediately determining the alignment of forces in the struggle. To the contrary, it was the outcome of an escalation of militancy that swept away one obstacle after another, to arrive finally at a convergence of three elements:

--Hard-fought struggles of specific sections of workers for their own specific demands in which the steelworkers played the main role. These were centered in the Walloon country, and the railroad workers acted as a transmission belt relaying this

social agitation between Flanders, the Walloon country, and Brussels.

--A creeping general strike in the Walloon country, with successive surges in Liege, Mons-Borinage, and Charleroi.

--Progress toward unity in action between the FGTB and the CSC in Flanders (but which finally proved to be too slow).

The rise of this movement went through seven stages, which are outlined in the accompanying chronology, until March 27. At that point, the CSC succeeded in breaking the development of unity in action on a national scale. And the Walloon FGTB managed to break the creeping general strike in its part of the country.

Each union confederation played its own specific role to prevent the unification of the struggles and their growth into a full-scale general strike.

Thus, an important opportunity was lost. The question has to be asked, Why? It is true that the union bureaucracy was going to do its utmost to prevent a general strike. But on the other hand, the workers had every reason, given the scope of the attack on them, to fight to the finish.

The answer seems to be that the upsurge from below did not have the inherent drive to overcome rapidly enough the inertia created by the union bureaucracy, which relied essentially on the still great unevenness between the Flemish and Walloon workers, between the FGTB and the CSC.

The bureaucracies were bypassed, but the most conscious workers looked for this upsurge to be oriented toward the organized structures of the trade-union movement. To undertake a fight to the finish, the workers were waiting for directives from their organizations. They wanted the struggle to be waged in a united way, an essential

condition for effectiveness against a tough bourgeois government and in conditions of severe unemployment.

The main conflict was not between the class and the trade-union structures, but within these structures themselves, between the shop stewards (and sometimes certain sections of the apparatus) and the union bureaucracy.

The decisive role fell, therefore, to the shop stewards and certain union activists. They had at the same time to give leadership and confidence to the rank-and-file workers and fight the bureaucracy's policy of division and sabotage. To play the role demanded of them, they had to develop a sophisticated strategy to achieve unity in action on the ground and to find ways to get the official cover of the union movement for extending the struggle, without offering any opening for repression by the bosses or the bureaucrats.

Where these conditions were achieved to any extent, the workers demonstrated a marvelous initiative, including in Flanders.

One of the most important results of the struggles was an unprecedented rise in political consciousness. Large layers of workers came to understand the role of the banks and trusts in the crisis; the role of the Social Democracy, which was completely absent from this struggle; and the need for a political solution, which cannot be a new class collaborationist government of the Christian Democrats and Social Democrats; and the role of the union bureaucracy, in the forms that it takes both in the CSC and the FGTB.

An intense discussion has now begun throughout the country on a working-class strategy to meet the economic crisis. ■

Mass Workers Movement Reorganises in Poland

Three months after the military crackdown in Poland, it is clear not only that the mass workers movement has not been crushed but that it is reorganizing.

Peter Jonsson, Polish correspondent of the Swedish magazine ETC reports in a recent issue (No. 3): "Solidarnosc has been able to reestablish functioning organizations in the factories and on the regional level.

"That is also true in such regions as Lodz and Lublin, where the organization was broken up last December.

"Today, there are 1,700 underground bulletins being published in the country....

"Cells have been set up in the big factories in the Warsaw region--FSO, URSUS, the Rosa Luxemburg works, and Huta Warszawa. Most of these cells have their own printing apparatus and publish their own information bulletin....

"For about a month now, the Warsaw regional leadership has also been publishing a bulletin, Tygodnik Mazowsze."

Jonsson wrote that the regional Solidarnosc leaderships were discussing the possibilities for launching extensive strikes.

"According to the information that ETC has got from Poland, the mood on the fac-

tory floors is for such actions. These reports are substantiated by the solid support for limited strikes that have taken place around the country. In Warsaw, there was a ten-minute strike in the big FSO automotive plant against the price rises.

One of the underground bulletins, Informacja Solidarnosci regionu Mazowsze published a confidential government report in its February 12 issue. Among other things, the document said: "In the Czerwone Zaglebie mine in Sosnowiec, about 115 leaflets inciting to revolt have been distributed in which such things as the following can be read:

"After the black night of terror, a day will dawn, made bright by the power of Solidarity.... Citizens, do not let yourselves be intimidated. Lift your heads and you will see that thousands of trade unionists are waging a new battle for a free and democratic Poland."

In the March 22 issue of our sister publication, the French-language Inprecor, Cyril Smuga writes:

"In four regions, Gdansk, Cracow, Warsaw, and Wroclaw, regional Solidarnosc leaderships have been reconstituted,

made up of leaders who escaped arrest."

Smuga quotes the February 12 issue of Informacja Solidarnosci regionu Mazowsze

which says: "We see a tumultuous development throughout the country of Social Resistance Circles (Kola Oporu Spolecznego--KOS), each made up of five people. Every member of a KOS forms a new KOS, a clandestine resistance circle that circulates the press, collects and spreads information, and organizes mutual aid and solidarity actions."

On January 29, Solidarnosc called a strike in Wroclaw that stopped work briefly in most of the factories in the city. Informacja Solidarnosci (No. 21, February 2) published an account by an eye-witness in the DOLMEL factory:

"The action was very well received among the workers. This was not an open protest, but the people did not work, and the management and the guards were afraid. Since January 28, there has been a certain nervousness in the factories. Everybody had gotten a leaflet. This was a great satisfaction to the people. They had overcome fear; the action restored people's courage and the links among them." ■

Tens of Thousands of Jewish Youth in Tel Aviv March Against Zionist War and Oppression

Is the Zionist monolith cracking? The Begin government's policy of mass repression is provoking unprecedented reactions inside the Jewish population of Israel. The activity of the Committee for Solidarity with Bir-Zeit, the Palestinian university on the West Bank closed by Israeli government officials, is a good example of this. Hundreds of activists have been mobilized by the Committee and its activities have had a wide impact in university and intellectual circles.

The most significant expression of these changes in the Israeli Jewish population was the massive March 27 protest in Tel Aviv. Between thirty and forty thousand persons demonstrated their opposition to the repression in the occupied territories. A good indication of the mood of the crowd can be gauged from the fact that the Committee for Solidarity with Bir-Zeit sold some 6,000 buttons of the Committee, which carry the colors of the strictly illegal Palestinian flag, something which would have been unthinkable a few years back.

Maia Edri, a leader of the Revolutionary Communist League (LCR, Israeli section of the Fourth International), discusses the current situation in the interview below. The LCR is popularly known by the name of its newspaper, *Matzpen*.

This interview was given to Fernando Zamora in Paris on April 5. The transcript has been translated and edited by IV.

* * *

Question. In what political context did the recent demonstrations over repression in the West Bank Arab communities arise?

Answer. There is a very deep political crisis in Israel today. Basically, it reflects the inability of the Israeli bourgeoisie to continue to maintain the principal imperialist fortress in the Middle East, and to crush the Palestinian people as an organized political entity, as was called for by the Camp David Accords.

This political crisis combines with an economic one. Israeli capitalism is unable to offer the people security, either physical or economic.

While it is true that we have entered a period of worldwide capitalist crisis in general, in Israel this crisis assumes particularly acute forms, because 60% of the national budget goes for the military. That is, the political needs of Israeli capitalism make it impossible to achieve lasting economic stability.



March 27 Demonstration in Tel Aviv. (DR)

The 1967 War was Israel's last major victory. From 1948 to 1967, Zionism reinforced its state, formed its bourgeoisie and its working class, and expelled the Palestinians from their lands. And with the conquest of the West Bank, Gaza, and the Golan Heights, it dealt a severe blow to the Arab revolution. At the same time, it opened up new markets for its goods as well as sources of cheap unskilled labor.

After the 1973 war, it became evident that the whole Zionist project was beginning to break down at every level.

The Palestinian people organized massively, and they are waging an ever stronger struggle against Zionist and imperialist oppression. The economic crisis is forcing the bourgeoisie to deny the workers even the crumbs it offered them before. War has become a constant danger weighing on the people who live in Israel. And the first signs of opposition to Israeli occupation of the Palestinian lands are beginning to appear among the Jewish population.

An ideological crisis is beginning to develop. The sacred truths of Zionism are starting to crumble. It cannot be denied any longer that the "Palestinian People Lives and Fights." And the claim "Israel is the safest place in the world for a Jew" has become associated with the remote past.

In general terms, these are the roots of the present crisis.

Q. What concrete signs are there that the Jewish population is starting to oppose the occupation of Arab lands?

A. Since the demise of the Camp David Accords, Israel is looking for any opportunity to launch a new major war against the Arab world.

In July 1981, the Israeli government bombed the south of Lebanon. And it had to withdraw and sign a cease fire with an organization whose existence it had refused to recognize--the Palestine Liberation Organization. This step was taken not simply because of the U.S. pressure that was applied at the time but also because the Jewish population itself was against a war.

The people of the three largest cities in the north of Israel, who would have suffered directly from such a war, did not line up behind the government, as they would have in the past. They left their homes en masse.

In December 1981, Israel annexed the Golan Heights and tried to force the native population to accept Israeli citizenship. This was an obvious provocation to force Syria into a war. The immediate response was a general strike in the four Syrian towns in the area. Although these towns were sealed off by the Israeli military and subjected to a total siege, this strike is continuing into its eighth week. The

Israeli army has not been able to break it, although these towns have only thirteen thousand inhabitants.

The fighting spirit of these people is extraordinary. They have said that they are not going to give up their Syrian citizenship under any condition.

At the same time, the Israeli government provoked a confrontation with the Palestinian people by setting up a so-called civilian administration in the occupied territories. They claimed that they were replacing the occupation government with an authentic Palestinian leadership. In fact, the new administration was made up of armed gangs of collaborators with the Zionist government.

Since Professor Milson became head of the West Bank administration in November 1981, the University of Bir-Zeit was shut down, the mayors of Ramalah, Nablus, and El-Bim were removed, and more than thirty Palestinians have been killed, most of them youth under the age of twenty-five. Hundreds of persons have been arrested. Palestinian public property has been confiscated.

The West Bank cities and towns have been put under state of siege fifteen times. This is the balance sheet of the civilian administration that the government mouthpieces said was going to put an end to military government by the occupation authorities.

It should be noted that the struggle that is taking place today on the West Bank has a crucial political importance not simply because it reflects the conflict between the government and the democratic aspirations of the people.

The demonstration that was organized for "Peace Now" went far beyond the political line of its organizers, who limited themselves to criticizing the government for following a policy not conducive to the stability of the Jewish state.

The Committee for Solidarity with the University of Bir-Zeit is a movement that works in the major Israeli cities and fights for the national rights of the Palestinians. This movement participated in the demonstration and gave it its political character.

Its main slogans were "Stop the Occupation," "Golan is Syrian," "We Don't Want Another War," "Army Out of the West Bank," and "The Elected Palestinian Leadership is Not Going to be Defeated." The majority of the demonstrators marched under these slogans although they were not members of the Bir-Zeit committee.

While it is true that most of the demonstrators were students and youth, it is important to note that the workers also, although more slowly, are beginning to take up the same questions and raise criticisms of the government.

Q. What are the major political forces involved in the movement against Zionist expansionism and repression?

A. In the recent period, all the national political organizations have increased their strength considerably. Along with this, we have the Committee for Solidarity with Bir-Zeit, which is a united-front organization. It encompasses all the left organizations, including the Israeli Communist Party.

Joint work of the entire left on a stable basis and on such fundamental issues as war and the Palestinian question is a completely new factor in Israeli political history. This indicates the importance of this movement, which is continually growing in numbers and influence.

The Peace Now movement has been undergoing a serious crisis. Its leadership, still tied to the Labor Party, remains within a bourgeois framework. But the masses of youth attending the demonstrations it calls are going beyond the line of the leadership and taking more and more radical positions.

Q. What role is the Israeli section of the Fourth International playing in this process?

A. The Revolutionary Communist League of Israel is still a small group, but lately we have considerably expanded our work, taking advantage of this growing political ferment.

The main political axis of our work today is opposing war and the Israeli policies toward the Arab population. This is the context in which we place the other struggles that are unfolding today in Israel. We do work in the factories where we have comrades. We work in the secondary schools and universities through our Jewish-Arab youth group.

In the Committee for Solidarity with Bir-Zeit, we play a decisive role. We are active in the Haifa, Tel Aviv, and Jerusalem groups. This work is already bearing fruit for the organization, not only in the sense that because of our activity we have gained respect but we are also beginning to recruit from it.

Q. You said that you thought the previous wave of demonstrations represented a breakthrough, a first major breach in Zionist political domination of the Jewish masses. What do you think is going to happen now in the immediate period ahead?

A. The weakness and isolation of the bourgeoisie and its isolation within the country and internationally will increase. It has no answer to the central political problems that exist today. But the weakness of the Israeli bourgeoisie will not diminish the danger of war. On the contrary, a major new war is the only solution that either Likud (Begin's party) or the Labor Party can see. The bourgeoisie has no resilience.

At the same time, the Arab population in Israel and the occupied territories is more and more united in struggle against the Zionist government as the March 30 Day of the Land actions showed.

The struggle of the Palestinians is having an increasing influence on the Jewish population. Opposition to war and oppression of the Arab people can become a growing mass movement, particularly among Jewish youth, as the danger of war becomes increasingly evident. ■

INTERNATIONAL MARXIST REVIEW

Since July 1980, the United Secretariat of the Fourth International has been publishing, on a regular three-monthly basis, a new series of its theoretical journal Quatrieme Internationale.

Readers of International Viewpoint will be interested to know that an English-language version of this is now appearing. The first issue, with the name International Marxist Review, has just been published as a spring 1982 issue.

Articles include "Revolution and Counter-Revolution in Central America," Ernest Mandel on "Poland and the Bureaucracy," Jeanette Habel and Jacques Kergoat on the election of Mitterrand and his government, Claude Gabriel on "Soviet Policy in Africa," Daniel Bensaid on the politics of the now-split "International Committee" of the Fourth International of Lambert and Moreno, and Ernest Mandel and John Ross on the necessity for an international revolutionary

organization.

International Marxist Review will be published three times a year. Single copies are £1.25 plus 30p postage in Britain, and \$4 including postage for the United States. Subscriptions are Britain £4.50 and U.S. \$12. Money, and enquiries about rates for other countries, should be sent to P.O. Box 50, London NI 2XP, England. Cheques and postal orders should be made out to International Marxist Review.

Building a World Party of Socialists

Blanco

Death Threat

A Lima daily reported March 17 that it had received a death threat against the Trotskyist leader Hugo Blanco.

La Republica wrote: "The call came at 4:14 yesterday afternoon. It began:

"Good afternoon. This is the Commandos of the White Right.

"We have decided to take action against Sendero Luminoso (a Maoist guerrilla group that announced plans for a terrorist campaign shortly before--IV).

"Our first victim will be Hugo Blanco."

Blanco has nothing to do with any group like Sendero Luminoso, anyone in Peru should know. His so-called involvement in guerrilla warfare in the mid-1960s was in the context of a self-defense campaign of the peasant union he led, which was crushed by the military.

His long political career has been tied up with mass struggles of workers and peasants for a better life. That is what has made him the single most loved and respected political figure in the poor neighborhoods of Lima as well as among the rural poor. And that is what has made him the target of repeated attacks by both the police and the rightist gangs that work with them, in blatant disregard for every law.

In 1978, a rightist gang tried to kidnap him, along with two other members of FOCEP, an electoral front of socialists and anti-imperialists. Despite the fact that more than twenty persons armed with machine guns, transported in cars without license plates, took part in this attack, there was no police investigation.

Only a few months before this latest death threat, Blanco was singled out for brutal beating by the police, as he led a peaceful march of street sellers in the center of Lima. Again there was no official investigation, although Blanco is a member of Parliament. The parliamentary immunity he is entitled to was disregarded arbitrarily by a state in which the police act like gangsters, and gangsters take care of the jobs the police do not want to have to take responsibility for.

In the 1960s, under the same president who currently holds office again in Peru, Fernando Belaunde Terry, Blanco was sentenced to death. His life was saved only by a worldwide campaign.

The Partido Revolucionario de los Trabajadores (PRT--Revolutionary Workers Party), Peruvian section of the Fourth International, issued a statement on the death threat saying:

"The defense of companero Blanco must be taken up today with the same method that has proved successful before. We are calling on the workers to mobilize actively against both official and unofficial repression....

"The PRT is calling for a mass meeting for April 7 in the Plaza 2 de Mayo."

The PRT also issued an appeal for international protests against the threat to Hugo Blanco's life. Telegrams should be sent to President Fernando Belaunde Terry, Lima, Peru.

Toward a New Socialist Party in West Germany?

In an article in its March 18 issue, Was Tun, the fortnightly paper of the West German section of the Fourth International took up an attempt by leftward moving forces that have been driven out of the German Social Democracy to form a new and more authentic socialist party.

The main figure in this effort, Manfred Coppik, was expelled from the Social Democratic parliamentary fraction for opposing Chancellor Schmidt's nuclear policy. He later left the party.

Was Tun wrote:

"Those who predicted (and hoped) that Manfred Coppik would quickly disappear from politics after he left the SPD have been disappointed. He is still in politics, trying to form a new party left of the SPD, together with Karl-Heinz Hansen.

"The national congress of those who want to build such a party was held on March 20 in Recklinghausen. It was preceded by an extensive series of public meetings, which stressed the need for a socialist party.

"Thus, a discussion has been opened up about what the basic points of a socialist program have to be today and what sort of organizational forms are necessary to carry out this program.

"Already today, it is fairly clear what circles are well disposed to this project--the Initiative Demokratische Sozialisten (Democratic Socialists' Initiative Group) and what ones are not.

"Definitively hostile are the three established parliamentary parties (the SPD, Christian Democrats, and the liberal FDP) and the DKP (German Communist Party), which see such a new party as a potentially dangerous rival.

"Interested in the project are the following elements: A) A layer of Social Democrats who in recent years have been dribbling out of the party to the left. B) A thin stratum of left activists in the factories and unions, who have been repelled by the SPD but from their practical experience have come to see the need for political action. C) Those on the left wing of the Greens (the environmentalist party) who are clear about the limitations of the Green program and see it only as a temporary alternative, as well as many supporters of 'alternative' slates and groups, who see the need for a national organization, a unifying structure, and a clear program.

"A lot of questions still remain open in the development of the Democratic Socialists. The programmatic theses for the Recklinghausen congress have not yet been published.

"Nonetheless, any qualitative advance over the SPD's Bad Godesberg program and the programs of the Greens and the DKP must include the following points:

"--Identification with the working class as the social force that can achieve social change up to, and including, socialist revolution. The entire program must be based on the interests of the workers.

"--An international dimension that points up the common interests of workers in all countries.

"--A rejection of German and all other imperialism and solidarity with the oppressed peoples.

"--A focus on the priorities of the class struggle, in particular on building a class-struggle alternative in the unions.

"Programmatic differentiation from the SPD and its political line is, of course, very important. But there is also a danger of a sectarian self-isolation from the processes going on in the SPD.

"The departure of many of its left members is not going to restore peace and quiet inside the SPD. To the contrary, new sharp clashes are on the horizon, first of all over the NATO rearmament proposal, but also over the decree that unemployed

workers have to accept the 'best available' offers for jobs, and over the cuts in social services.

"There are still many thousands of people in the SPD who are opposed to the Schmidt line, but think that the direction of the party can be changed.

"The possibilities for the growth of a party to the left of the SPD will be determined largely by the developments in that party itself. What the SPD leadership wants from the upcoming congress is ratification of the NATO decision, the removal of Eppler from the presidium, and a free hand for Schmidt to make further cutbacks. If it gets this, it seems likely that there will be a new wave of departures. If, on the other hand, the left wins some victories, then there will be a sharpening of the conflict within the party.

"For socialist forces outside the SPD, it is very important to be able to exert an influence in this confrontation and not to cut themselves off from it. In this respect, appeals to the left in the SPD to leave the party will not help. As for the many who have already left the party, the decisive think will be their own experience in the struggle for socialist policies.

"In Germany, it is far more important than in most other countries to have a clear position on the kind of society socialists are striving for. In a part of Germany, there is a state that claims to embody socialism, and it represents everything that the German workers don't want.

"The only thing that socialists can endorse in the East German system is the nationalization of the means of production. The political regime in East Germany has nothing in common with socialism or with actual control of production and the society by the workers.

"The self-organization of the workers is forcibly restrained. The workers have no independent unions to defend their immediate interests. And the Polish example has shown how necessary independent unions are in state-owned industry as well. On the political level, the East German workers can only join the single state party, in which there is no internal democracy. Over the formulation of the economic plan and its implementation, they have no real influence. And the result is that the entire economy is inflexible and marked by a low productivity.

"In contrast to this system, it is necessary to stand clearly and unequivocally for self-management of the producers on both the economic and political levels.

"The Recklinghausen congress must open up discussion on these questions. It would not hurt to do this publicly, with an invitation to all those interested in the various parties, groups, citizens' initiative committees, and unions to participate."

German Democratic Socialists

About twelve hundred people attended the conference on March 20 to discuss the founding of a party to the left of the West German Social Democratic Party.

The discussion was open, and representatives of the International Marxist Group, the GIM, German section of the Fourth International, participated.

The main debate was over proceeding to form a new party. Many supporters of the Green, or environmentalist, party argued that there was no room in West German politics for a "second protest party."

The Greens have become established as the main protest party and are in sight of getting the 5% of the vote in elections necessary for representation in parliament.

However, the Greens at the conference divided between those who were oriented toward working-class solutions and those who were essentially cultural radicals.

A large percentage of those in attendance came from formerly or still big Maoist groups that are now in the process of breaking up.

A motion calling for the founding of a new party won a considerable majority, but the discussion was dominated by the expression of hesitations about this. It is not yet clear when the proposed founding congress will be held.

In its April 1 issue, Was Tun commented on the congress. It said that the initiative had raised the discussion of forming a mass left alternative to the Social Democratic Party to a qualitatively higher level. But that this assembly did not yet represent such an alternative, for the following reasons:

"--The participants were agreed only about what they did not want.

"--The Democratic Socialists are not the expression of a broader left development in the SPD itself. The bulk of critical SPD members and voters remain untouched by this initiative.

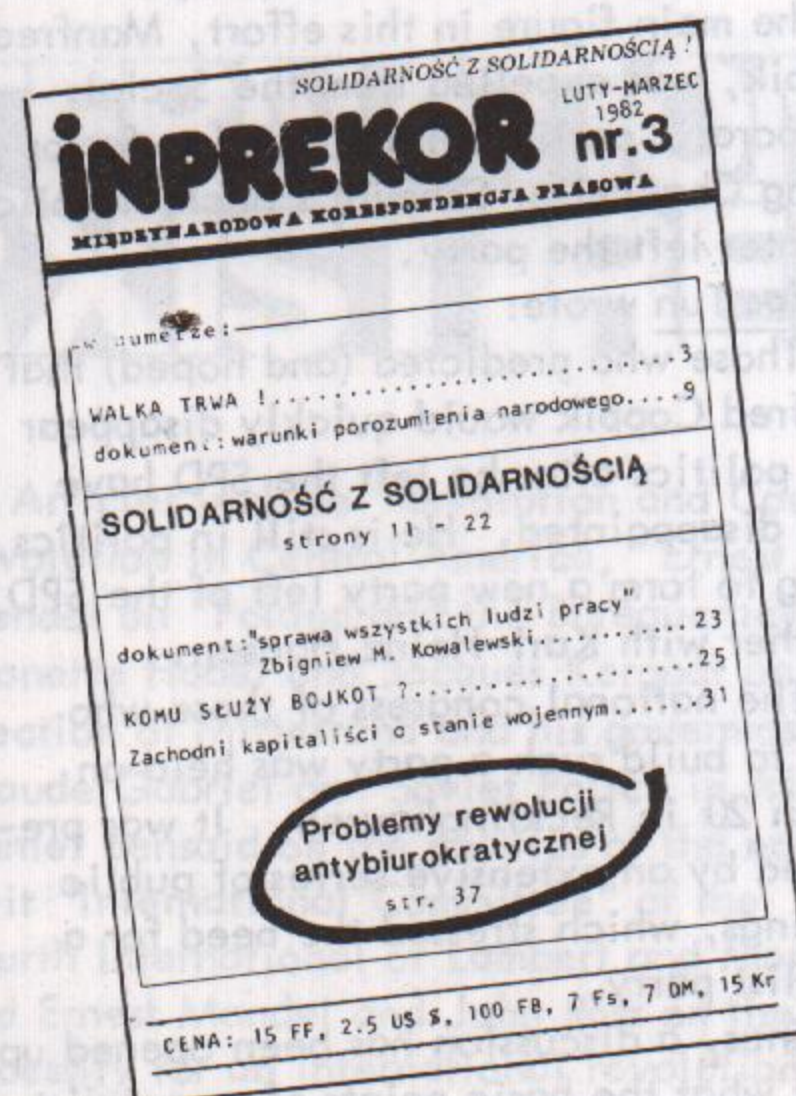
"--The Democratic Socialists is not a project of the youth. Thirty- to fifty-year-olds dominated the discussion. Moreover, it has not drawn in the most important activists and leaders of the independent mass movements (the peace and environmentalist movements). They remain outside the Democratic Socialists and the discussion in which they are involved."

The important thing, according to Was Tun, was the continuation of the discussion about how to build a mass socialist alternative:

"The GIM will take part in this discussion about the future of the Democratic Socialists, insofar as we are permitted, within the framework of the Democratic Socialists themselves. We have already proposed a common front of all those who reject the policy of the SPD and who have not wandered off into the fog of the Greens, which obscures the reality of the class struggle."

The GIM spokesperson at the conference also stressed that any mass socialist alternative had to be tied to building class struggle leaderships in the factories and unions.

THIRD ISSUE OF POLISH INPREKOR IS NOW OUT !



The third issue of the Polish language magazine of the Fourth International has just appeared. Its small size is intended to give members of the security services in Poland a good excuse not to notice it.

The issue contains articles summarizing the facts of the resistance to the crackdown in Poland as well as solidarity actions in other countries. There are also articles detailing the lessons of the rise of Solidarnosc and of the bureaucratic attack on it.

To get copies or subscriptions or to give contributions to expanding this effort, send checks made out to PEC, to Inprekor, 2, rue Richard Lenoir, 98108, Montreuil, France. Single copies cost U.S. \$1, British 50p. Yearly subscriptions by surface mail, U.S. \$12, British £6.

The Guatemalan Indians in the Fight Against Imperialism

(The following article is from an issue of *Companero*, the theoretical journal of the Guerrilla Army of the Poor, the EGP, one of the main Guatemalan guerrilla organizations. It appeared early last year. The translation is by IV.)

For more than a half century, Guatemala has held a sort of fascination for foreign visitors, whether they were researchers, artists, tourists, or businessmen. In our country, archeologists, ethnologists, and linguists have discovered old Mayan cities, little societies with pre-Colombian features, a living laboratory of Mayan languages. Artists have been enchanted by the colorful markets of the *altiplano* (the uplands) with their singularly beautiful fabrics and craft products.

Ordinary tourists could amuse themselves and relax in the midst of this Indian local color, without realizing what lay hidden behind this travel agent's scenario. Many young people imagined that they had found a paradise of simplicity and calm among the Indians, and went to live in the villages.

Businessmen, with more pragmatic concerns, found favorable investment conditions, in the tourist industry, among other things.

All these visitors took back to their countries new experiences, a certain inspiration, and plans. The tourists went home with stories to tell and luggage filled with gifts, without realizing that the travel agencies had sold them a watered-down product, a deformed view of the Indian element in Guatemala.

In recent years, however, the more perceptive travelers have returned to their countries with a lot of questions and with serious concerns about the Indian population in Guatemala, about its living conditions, its role, its future.

More recently, the hotels in such cities as Antigua, Panajachel, and Huehuetenango have begun to empty of tourists. Archeologists and other foreign researchers have become more scarce. Businessmen have stopped investing in the country. And the youth who were hoping to find peace, have come to realize that the countryside is in a state of war.

A year ago, on January 31, 1980, the atrocious massacre of thirty-six people in the Spanish embassy in Guatemala City was on the front pages of newspapers around the world. The repressive forces of General Lucas Garcia turned the building into an inferno. Of these thirty-six persons, twenty-seven were staging a peaceful occupation of the embassy. They did so as a

last recourse to draw the attention of the civilized world to the genocidal repression that the army was carrying out in the north-eastern part of the country. Among them were twenty-three Indians from the Quiche, Ixil, and Cakchiquel groups--all peasants from the areas devastated by a depraved soldiery.

In May 1978, in Panzos, a village near mines run by the International Nickel Company (INCO), a multinational centered in Canada, more than 100 Kekchis were slaughtered by the army in the public square, where they were protesting the theft of their lands. Every day, in this area, more Indian families are driven from their plots.

These two events are only two of the more publicized examples of the struggles of the Indian people in Guatemala, and of

What has happened, and what is happening? How can you explain the contrast between the deceptively peaceful picture of a market day in Chichicastenango or some other place on the *altiplano*, and that of thousands of cane cutters--mostly migrants from the mountainous regions of the country--gathered at a crossroads somewhere along the southern coast, demanding a fairer wage with their machetes in their hands?

What has transformed the taciturn sowers of maize in the provinces of Quiche and San Marcos into determined guerrilla fighters? What has turned the hands of quiet Ixil, Mam, or Kanjobal women weavers from their looms and made them take up guns to fight against the oppressors of their peoples?



Mass Burial in Guatemala. (DR)

the criminal way in which the government responds to any expression of discontent.

There has been much less talk about the work stoppages and strikes by the agricultural workers and cane cutters, by the coffee and cotton pickers, a majority of whom are Indians. Alongside the non-Indian workers, these Indian laborers are demanding respect for their rights and they are organizing and mobilizing for struggle.

Likewise, little is known abroad of the temporary occupations of villages or plantations by armed Indian guerrillas who are spreading the ideas of the Guatemalan revolution in the Quiche, Ixil, Mam, Kanjobal, and other languages. Still less is known about the battles being fought by Indian guerrillas across the length and breadth of the country.

THESE MINORITIES ARE A MAJORITY

Of the seven million inhabitants in Guatemala, four million are Indians, descendants of peoples who lived in Guatemala at the time of the Spanish conquest, who were in turn descendants of the older Maya-Quiche stock.

In 1524, these peoples, of which the most numerous were the Quiches, the Mams, the Cakchiquels, and the Kekchis, were nationalities. They were related by their common origin. But their languages and customs had to a certain extent diverged. They were contending for territory and dominance.

At the time of the conquest, the Maya-Quiche peoples were undergoing processes

of transformation and generalized conflicts. They formed socially and politically well-structured groups. They were skilled agriculturalists. They were familiar with architecture and astronomy, as demonstrated by the Maya calendar that they used. They had varied and complex forms of cultural expression, centering around the cultivation of maize.

Their military defeat at the hands of the Spanish was followed by the expropriation of their land, and their subjection to laws and institutions that reduced them to serfdom. A religion and a culture were imposed on them. Spanish domination was total--military, economic, political, and ideological. The Maya-Quiche people were totally subjugated.

In the beginning, they were reduced to slavery and their numbers dwindled drastically. Later, they were subjected to other forms of exploitation. They were divided up among the various conquistadores, along with their lands. The conquerors got the ownership not only of the soil and the subsoil but of the labor of men, women, and children. The Indians were obliged to pay a whole variety of tributes.

Throughout the three centuries of the colonial period, the Spanish imposed forms of supervision and segregation that fragmented the Indian population, already divided into different ethnic groups with their own languages and customs. The Spanish regrouped the Indians into small communities, which are called "Indian villages," and they forced the inhabitants of these communities to wear clothing that distinguished them from the others. That is, they split each ethnic group into small concentrations. The Indians were obliged to go where the Spanish wanted them, and they were forced to work on the estates of the conquistadores, in accordance with the need for labor.

It was with the forced labor of the Indians that the cities, roads, bridges, and aqueducts were built. On the basis of this system of exploitation and in order to justify it, a conception developed that the Indians were inferior beings, full of faults and incapable of governing themselves--in short, people who in no way could be entitled to the same rights as the conquistadores. The end of the Spanish colonial system in 1821 and the independence of Guatemala brought no change for the Indians. They continued to be oppressed, exploited, and to suffer racial discrimination.

The concentration of the land in the hands of a few landlords--the latifundistas--accelerated with the growth of capitalist agricultural enterprises that began after the liberal revolution in 1871.

For a long time, the Indian peasants of the altiplano, where large reserves of land still existed, were obligated by law to come down to the coastal regions for the coffee harvest. As land became scarcer, owing to expropriation, exhaustion of the soil, and the growth of the Indian population, the smaller and smaller plots became

insufficient to feed the families that depended on them.

Then, poverty and necessity did the job of the old laws and forced the Indians to seek seasonal work on the coffee plantations. Many communities, however, resisted this, and to avoid having to come down to work on the big plantations, they began to clear land in the still more remote wooded areas, or to cultivate marginal lands, such as steep slopes. As the available land shrank and the needs of the impoverished Indian population increased, whole families, including women and children, had to come down to the big plantations.

Since then, the poor peasants, the "minifundistas," have had no other way out--if they want to survive--but seasonal migration to the coastal regions. This is one aspect of the interrelation between the latifundia and the minifundia. The other is the need the big landowners have to be able to count on this labor power, and the need that they have therefore to keep the small peasants poor.

This system, which requires the hiring of additional labor at harvest time, increased the mobility of the Indians, who were forced periodically to move to the coastal regions. This phenomenon, combined with the development of trade, expanded the contacts among the various communities and ethnic groups, and this in turn promoted a greater common Indian consciousness.

In the framework of this process of capitalist transformation, the Indian peasants were converted into wage workers for a part of the year, into semiproletarians. This rural semiproletariat, which grows every year, is now estimated to include at least 650,000 Indian families. It makes up the basic workforce in the agricultural enterprises that produce for export, which are the backbone of the country's economy.

THE PRESENT SITUATION OF THE INDIANS

In becoming agricultural workers, the Indians came to know a new way of life. They learned about an exploitation quite different from the poverty that they experienced on the altiplano. For the first time, they were working for someone else, the landlord, the boss, and for insufficient wages.

At the same time, they could see with their own eyes the sumptuous homes of the landlords (since they lived on their estates and not in the towns, unlike landlords in other countries). The Indians could see fancy cars, private airplanes, machines. They discovered that the money they got in exchange for their labor was not enough to buy the necessities. This was true both on the plantations, where the food rations were inadequate, as well as afterward in their villages.

These meager wages offered even less possibility to pay back the debts they accumulated to buy medicine, fertilizer, and seed. The Indians saw that they were

badly treated at work and were cheated. There were abuses in the assignment of jobs and in weighing the produce harvested. They had to put up with constant surveillance and violence from the repressive bodies of the landlords and the government. They realized that such exploitation was also the lot of the poor Ladinos (Spanish-speaking people of all, or part, Indian blood), who were also robbed of land and forced to work as day laborers on the big plantations.

The Indians' view of the world became transformed, and the way they looked at themselves and others changed as they incorporated into their daily lives a series of elements that were unknown before or had been interpreted differently. Even their concept of time and how it should be used was altered since the long hours they spent in the fields left them little time for their religious rites and craft work.

Furthermore, their crafts tended to be drawn into capitalist relations, becoming a cottage industry dependent on local commercial capital in the first instance, then on national capital, and even international capital.

In the villages, a process of proletarianization developed. In the provinces close to the capital, Guatemala City, thousands of Indians come into the urban area every day in search of some cash income, since land is scarce. They try to find marginal jobs, some for an hourly wage, others in forms of contract labor.

The majority of these Indians do not give up the peasant life, since they return regularly to their communities, or some members of the family continue to cultivate land that belongs to them or which they rent.

The proletarianization of the Indians has been a violent process, marked by abrupt starts and stops and by suffering. It is a doubly difficult one for the Indians because it has been accompanied by racial discrimination. In fact, it is in the context of this process that many Indians have become conscious for the first time of the discrimination against them as individuals and a people. While this exploitation brings the various Native ethnic groups together as Natives, it also brings them closer to the Ladino workers as workers.

ETHNIC AND CULTURAL OPPRESSION

The ethnic and cultural dividing lines that exist between the Indians and the Ladinos do not represent racial distinctions, since there is Indian blood in the veins of the majority of the Guatemalan population.

In Guatemala, the name Ladino was given to the descendants of the mixed-blood people who developed in the colonial period--the children of Spanish fathers and Indian mothers. At that time, the mixed-blood people were also subjected to discrimination by the Spanish and their descendants, the Criollos, that is, people of pure Spanish blood born in Latin America.

Later on, the name Ladinos was also given to Indians who adopted the language and customs of the Spanish. The difference between Indians and Ladinos is thus largely one of culture. Indians are those who speak Indian languages, and dress and live in the traditional Indian way, and also those who while they do not do this still consider themselves Indians. Ladinos are those who speak Spanish and dress and live in the European manner, even though they may not be--in a biological sense--a product of mixing between Spanish and Indians. With time, the racist attitude toward the Indians became part of the ideology of the Ladinos. The Indian culture became a culture of the oppressed, looked down on even by the Ladinos, who themselves were poor and oppressed.

This ethnic and cultural contradiction is rooted in the domination of the Spanish over the Indians of Latin America. It was later reinforced by the ideological mechanism that the Conquistadores set in motion to justify their oppression of the Indians. Today, the racist aspect of this contradiction has been moderated by the extent of racial mixing.

Nonetheless, an ethnic and cultural contradiction subsists, as a result of the old ideological mechanisms, even though the forms of domination have been transformed. Moreover, the ethnic dividing line between the Indians and Ladinos no longer corresponds to the class structure of Guatemalan society. Despite this, the present system of exploitation utilizes the cultural oppression and discrimination that developed in times previous to the development of capitalism.

The culture of the Indian peoples today is the product of four centuries of a way of life centered around communal maize growing, and of the interaction of this way of life first with the Spanish world and then the Ladino one. It is also combined in a peculiar way with elements of European culture, in particular Christianity.

There are differences in the level of development and vitality among the cultures of the various ethnic groups. At first, the sense of identity was linked to the ethnic group itself--the conquered nationality--Quiche, Cakchiquel, Mam, or Tzutuhil. Later, it became linked to a smaller community, the "Indian village," of the Spanish colonial period--Chichicastenango, Nahuala, or Patzun. The conditions of capitalism are breaking down the barriers between the local communities and opening the way for the development of common feeling among all Indians, an affirmation of the "Indianness" in a broad sense, without wiping out the special identity of each group.

The path of development that the capitalist system has imposed on the native groups--from a peasant economy and way of life to selling their labor power for wages on the plantations or in industry, and increasing assimilation into the Ladino life style--offers the Indians no perspective.

Their poverty will increase, and they will more and more lose their culture, as

a result of the loss of their lands and the destruction of their communal life. And along with this, racial discrimination will go on.

Revolutionary people's war and the assertion of Indian ethnic consciousness through the spread of this struggle are today the only possible alternative for the Native people and future solution for the complex ethnic and cultural contradictions of the country.

THE ROLE OF THE INDIANS IN PEOPLE'S WAR

For several years now, Central America has been undergoing a process of revolutionary transformations. The Sandinista people's revolution in Nicaragua is an irreversible advance. The Salvadoran people are now in an open war that is nearing its decisive stage. In Honduras, the people's organizations are making more and more of an impact. The Panamanian people are determined to force respect for the Canal treaties and to eliminate the North American presence from the heart of their country. The Costa Rican people, in the midst of an acute economic crisis, are joining their struggles to those of their neighbors, with which they are in solidarity.

In Guatemala, revolutionary people's war is on the march, and it will not halt until the enemies of the working people fall from power and until the bases are laid for a more just society.

In the midst of this sustained and ascending struggle, Guatemala has a special feature that distinguishes it from the other countries of Central America. In our country, it is impossible to make any revolution without integrating the Indian population into the war, and without its full and equal participation in the new society that the Indians must help build.

The twenty-two Indian groups in Guatemala together form the majority of the population. What is more, the Indians are the fundamental force in the production of agricultural products for export (coffee, sugar cane, cotton) and in the production of food. They represent the bulk of the rural semiproletariat. Their role as producers gives the Indians both power and a right--the strength for war and an inalienable right to participate in the building and leading of the new society.

The Indian and Ladino are fighting together in the struggle against the present regime. After hundreds of hopeless and quickly crushed rebellions and local uprisings, the descendents of the Maya-Quiches who have been exploited, repressed, and discriminated against for more than four centuries, have risen up

**SUBSCRIBE TO
INTERNATIONAL
VIEWPOINT**

today to fight for clearly defined revolutionary objectives. This development is the central fact in the history of Guatemala today. This is the first time that the Indians have joined in fully in a revolutionary political undertaking that takes account of their most deeply felt demands.

The Indians are not simply participating in the revolutionary people's war, they are assuming the leading role in it that belongs to them. They are the guerrilla fighters and cadres of the revolutionary organizations. It is their integration into the struggle that has made it possible to advance the conceptions, methods and organizational forms of revolutionary struggle. It is their fighting spirit that has impelled the massive growth of the revolutionary and people's organizations.

In their villages, on the big plantations, and in the mountains, the Indians are fighting and successfully accomplishing the tasks of the war, in conjunction with their Ladino comrades.

The armed actions that are continually inflicting heavy losses on the army and the other repressive forces--the ambushes, the occupations of villages and big estates, the attacks against enemy military posts--are being carried out by military units made up essentially of Indians, who base themselves on the Indian population in the areas where they operate.

The involvement of the Indian people in all aspects of the revolutionary people's war is a political and military fact. The present incompetent, corrupt, and criminal government cannot deny it or stop this process. It is essential to understand this specific feature of the Guatemalan revolutionary process in order to comprehend the breadth and depth of the revolutionary transformation the country is now experiencing.

The system exploits and reproduces the discrimination practiced against the Indians by the exploiters of other ages, the ideology that they imposed on the entire people. The system maintains the idea that the Indians are inferior in order to divide the Indian and Ladino workers and to maintain the attitude of submission and resignation in the Indians. It is why eliminating cultural oppression is a central objective for the revolution, and why it is impossible to eliminate it except in the framework of a revolutionary process. The Guatemalan revolution must solve the two-fold problem of the exploitation and cultural oppression inflicted on the Indian ethnic groups, or it will not be a genuine revolution.

In fact, the basis for resolving this problem is already being laid in the revolutionary struggle that today unites the Indian and Ladino workers around the same objectives and against the same enemy. It is in the course of the revolutionary struggle that the Indian ethnic groups will recover their own identity, as revolutionary Indians, as brothers in arms in the war of all the Indians and poor Ladinos, who will build the new society. ■

by Lars Palmgren

Six Years of Military Rule in Argentina

Over 10,000 people demonstrated for "peace, bread and work" in Argentina on March 30. This first public demonstration at such a scope since the military coup in 1976 was brutally broken up by police. Reports estimate that around 2,000 people were arrested and several were badly wounded. One demonstrator was killed.

This demonstration was the most significant sign yet that the hold of the military regime on the country is weakening. Whatever the outcome of the occupation of the Falkland Isles, clearly an attempt to mobilize national feeling in support of the regime, resistance to the economic and social policies of the military is growing.



BUENOS AIRES--With the exception of Peron, military officers have never been especially popular in Argentina.

Today, after six years of unrelieved military rule, they are even less so.

The contemptuous caricatures in the newspapers are only a pale reflection of the comments you hear in cafes, bus lines, and wherever people gather.

The reason is not hard to find: "Two months ago, I used to drink a couple of cups of coffee and read an afternoon paper before going home from work," a civil service clerk said.

"Today, I can't afford either coffee or newspapers, and I have to spend all my free time looking for extra jobs. I'm afraid I'm not going to be able to pay the heating bill."

In 1981, Argentina's GNP went down by 6% and industrial production dropped by over 16%. In industry, short time and three-day weeks are common. Joblessness, which was never very high before, is nearing 20%. Real wages are nosediving.

"We have never had it so bad," he said. "My father says it is like the 1930s."

The military are blamed for the economic crisis in Argentina, although it did not begin with the military coup of March 24, 1976. In fact, the coup was the bourgeoisie's way of trying to solve the structural crisis that was already in evidence.

In March 1976, the bourgeoisie had already exhausted all of the economic remedies available within the framework of parliamentary rule.

Everything they had in mind meant that the workers had to pay, through unemployment, lower wages, worse working conditions. But in 1976 and before, the working class was strong. The workers refused to accept the bourgeoisie's solutions, although their own union leaders tried to get them to do that. The working class showed that it was ready to challenge the whole existing social structure rather than give up the gains it had made earlier.

"We are going to let the market be the factor that decides the distribution of resources and income, and we are going to limit the intervention of the state in economic life."

That was the economic recipe for solving the crisis offered by Martinez de Hoz, the military's first economics minister.

The "social costs" of this, increased unemployment and lower wages, were "necessary," Martinez de Hoz explained.

In order to apply this recipe over the opposition of the workers, what was necessary was about fifteen thousand "missing persons," a similar number of known dead, and hundreds of thousands of people driven out of the country.

The free market policy moved on like a steamroller. Soon it rolled over other sections of the population besides the workers. This policy favored the already big, the already wealthy enterprises.

The big got bigger. The not-so-big quickly went to the wall. The large but outmoded Argentine industrial plants faced a mortal threat from the international monopolies.

The effect of the international economic crisis on the specifically Argentine one did not make things any better. Instead it helped to generate an open political crisis.

Factional struggles developed within the bourgeoisie and within the military itself. These conflicts came to the surface when the first chairman of the military junta, General Videla, was to be replaced by General Viola in 1980. Argentina had three different presidents in one day.

Viola tried to dampen down the conflicts by bringing representatives of various sections of the bourgeoisie into the government. But that did not bring a rebirth of unity. Instead, the clashes became sharper.

The bourgeois parties took the opportunity to form a "multiparty front." Within the government, representatives of various factions of the bourgeoisie took advantage of their positions to apply various economic recipes--all at the same time. The government's economic policy became more and more chaotic and contradictory.

After less than a year, General Viola was replaced by General Leopoldo Galtieri, who tried to present himself at the same time as a strongman and as the man who would lead Argentina back to democracy.

Galtieri's minister of economics followed in Martinez de Hoz's footsteps. The central thing in his economic recipe was privatization, partly of the many state-owned enterprises (In Argentina, the government's direct involvement in the economy is much greater than in Sweden), and partly of mineral resources.

Galtieri also tried to present himself as "open" and "democratic" by lifting the

ban on films such as The Front and Norma Rae, and by letting the popular folk-and-protest singer Mercedes Sosa come back to Argentina.

But after six years, the military are more unpopular than ever in Argentina. The trade-union movement remains weak and split, but it is much stronger than it was in 1976. The leaders who try to make deals with the junta are losing ground, and those who have refused to do that are gaining support. A number of regional union leaders decided in mid-March that "We have to wage a serious struggle now, not to throw out an economics minister but to throw out the military... We need a program of our own that deals with both political and economic questions."

The growing rejection of any kind of agreement with the military poses a dilemma today for both the junta and the bourgeois opposition.

The military need a pact with the bourgeois opposition (and thereby an influence on the working class) in order to be able to pursue their economic policy without running into too many problems.

The bourgeois opposition wants to make a deal with the military so that the feeling against the junta will not continue to deepen and maybe turn against it as well.

As the present situation drags on, the bourgeois opposition is steadily losing its influence over the working class. And this is not only a result of the economic crisis.

Another factor is that the military has not been able to get the Argentine people to forget what its failed attempt to solve the economic crisis has cost. The "Mothers of the Plaza del Mayo" have made the struggle for the fifteen thousand "missing persons" a central political question for all groups in the society.

For a long time, the military refused to talk about the "missing persons." "These are people who have changed their names, emigrated, or else they are terrorists who were killed when they struck a blow against their country," the generals maintained.

But now, only a week into the sixth year of the military regime, the new minister of the interior has said that he is thinking about proposing that the junta publish a White Paper to clear up the question of the missing persons.

Words are one thing, actions are another.

The day after the minister of the interior made his promise, the police attacked a demonstration organized by the Mothers of the Plaza del Mayo and six other human-rights organizations.

Every action such as this outweighs a thousand promises, and a deal with the military seems more and more unlikely. ■

(ETC. Issue No. 4, 1982.)

The First Hundred Days of the Left Government in Greece

(The following article is from the April 2 issue of *Rouge*, the weekly paper of the Ligue Communiste Revolutionnaire, French section of the Fourth International.)



Little more than a hundred days ago, the Pan-Hellenic Socialist Movement (PASOK) roundly defeated the right, winning an absolute majority and forming the first "socialist" government in the history of the country. This reflected the fact that like the SP in France a few months earlier, Andreas Papandreu was able to channel the aspirations of the masses for change toward his party.

In announcing his program on November 22, the new head of government declared that he wanted to carry out a series of democratic reforms. These included nationalizing industries that constitute "public utilities," along with the pharmaceuticals industry, transport and communications, and the cement factories, steel, fertilizer, and some shipyards.

Papandreu said that he was for organizing a referendum on Common Market membership and announced his intention to negotiate with Washington a "time-table for dismantling the American bases" set up on Greek territory since the 1950s. In the meantime, they were to be put under the supervision of the Athens government.

These promises were enough to set the international press ringing the alarm bells about Papandreu's so-called radical and leftist intentions.

However, this program was no sooner presented than it was buried. In January, Papandreu announced an important series of measures for getting the economy going again. He officially dropped his nationalization plan and, more broadly, all the structural reforms that had originally been projected. In the place of all that, Papandreu announced the setting up of "Inspection Councils."

These councils were to include representatives of the local authorities, of the national government, and the workers. They were to be set up only in certain factories, and their task would be to establish "a system of inspection of the key sectors in order to assure that the economy serves the broader social interest and that resources are more efficiently utilized."

Papandreu justified his retreat by pointing to the economic problems left behind by the past right governments. These include a

9 billion dollar foreign debt and a balance-of-trade deficit exceeding 2.5 billion, an inflation rate approaching 25% and a growth rate under 2% for 1981, as well as a situation of multiplying bankruptcies.

This disastrous picture is primarily the result of the economic development options taken earlier, which gave priority to building up a parasitic tourist industry and to assuring higher profits for the subsidiaries of international trusts that infest the area. But in order to deal with this situation, the left government chose not to attack the capitalists' interests but to seek "benevolent cooperation" with the private sector, to use the term used by one of Papandreu's economic experts, Ioannis Papanikolaou.

Everything is being done to promote foreign investment "as long as this creates jobs, protects the environment, generates exports, and brings in new technology," the government's representatives hasten to add, to forestall comparisons with the economic policy of the preceding regimes.

Some concessions have been made to the mass movement--lowering of the voting age to eighteen, repeal of the measures taken against Communist Party members who were participants in the resistance to Nazi occupation, repeal of the antitrade-union laws, the introduction of a system of adjusting wages for cost-of-living increases.

These measures are far from negligible, of course, but they pale by comparison with the problems facing the working people. Wages are 30 to 40% lower than in the other countries of capitalist Europe. The incomes of the peasants, because of pressures from the EEC, are constantly dropping. A lot of workers are obliged to take two jobs to survive. "The road to change will be a long one," has now become the watchword of the PASOK leaders.

On the international level, the retreats of the PASOK leaders are no less marked. They no longer talk about consulting the Greek people about Common Market membership but only of getting some improvement in those clauses in the Treaty of Rome that are disadvantageous to the weakest economies. Negotiations on closing the U.S. military bases are not yet envisaged. And Papandreu's latest statements seem to indicate that what he is mainly interested in is getting more definite backing from the Reagan administration in the conflict with Turkey.

Compared with this, what is the value of a few spectacular diplomatic operations (a noisy departure from the NATO Defense Committee at the end of last year, an invitation to Yasser Arafat and recognition of the Palestine Liberation Organization, refusal to cutback trade relations with the East European countries after the Polish events)?

Such moves seem, rather, fundamentally to be an attempt to compensate for a moderate domestic policy with radical-appearing words and gestures, to try to appeal to the anti-imperialist feelings that in recent months have brought tens of thousands of people into the streets.

If more proof were needed of the real intentions of the Papandreu government, Greece's decision to support Spain for NATO membership should be enough.

Obviously, by such a moderate policy the new government wants to forestall opposition by the reactionaries, who maintain important strong points in the state institutions. The army still holds the position of arbiter, and the president of the republic has powers modelled on those of the Gaullist constitution.

The conflicts that have arisen over the attempt to carry out certain reforms show that Papandreu is far from having succeeded in his attempt to avoid a right-wing backlash.

When a bill was drawn up permitting civil marriage, the Orthodox church rose up to defend its monopoly. Likewise, the attempt to revamp the administrative system to eliminate the traditional corruption and sabotage of government decisions and the setting up of the inspection councils have run into furious resistance.

It remains to be seen how long Papandreu can keep postponing payment on his election promises in an attempt to conciliate a capitalist class that is in no mood to compromise.

He does have the advantage that the trade-union movement is weak and that there is no real internal political life in PASOK. But Papandreu cannot forget that he came into office on the crest of a mass upsurge that was marked by a series of strikes and demonstrations. Isn't there a danger that his present policy will exasperate broad sectors anxious to end super-exploitation and the pillage of the imperialist trusts? ■

Six Years of Military Rule in Argentina

Victories of Japanese Capitalists

Lead Down a Blind Alley

Over 10,000 people demonstrated in Buenos Aires for "peace, bread and work" on March 30. This first public demonstration at such a scope since the military coup in 1976 was brutally broken up by police. Reports estimate that around 2,000 people

A major turning point in the situation of the Japanese workers movement occurred in 1975. Sohyo, the more militant union federation, found itself facing both a deep recession and the conservative bourgeois government of the Liberal Democratic Party. It caved in.

This capitulation was reflected by Sohyo's passivity during the "Spring Campaign" of that year, the annual bargaining for higher wages. It was confirmed by the confederation's abandoning the struggle in defense of public-sector workers' right to strike in November 1975.

Since the 1960s, there were two distinct elements in the annual round of wage bargaining that takes place in the spring. One was the manufacturing enterprises. By the early 1960s, the bosses had imposed the total dominance of company unions in this sector.

The other element was the big national unions of the public sector, especially the railway workers, postal workers, and telecommunication workers. The only real struggles were in this latter sector.

To a considerable extent, these struggles were an extension of the youth radicalization that took place in the 1960s and early 1970s.

The youth were defeated, owing to their isolation from the workers movement, which remained under the control of reformist bureaucrats. The special mobile police force set up to deal with student demonstrations proved quite effective.

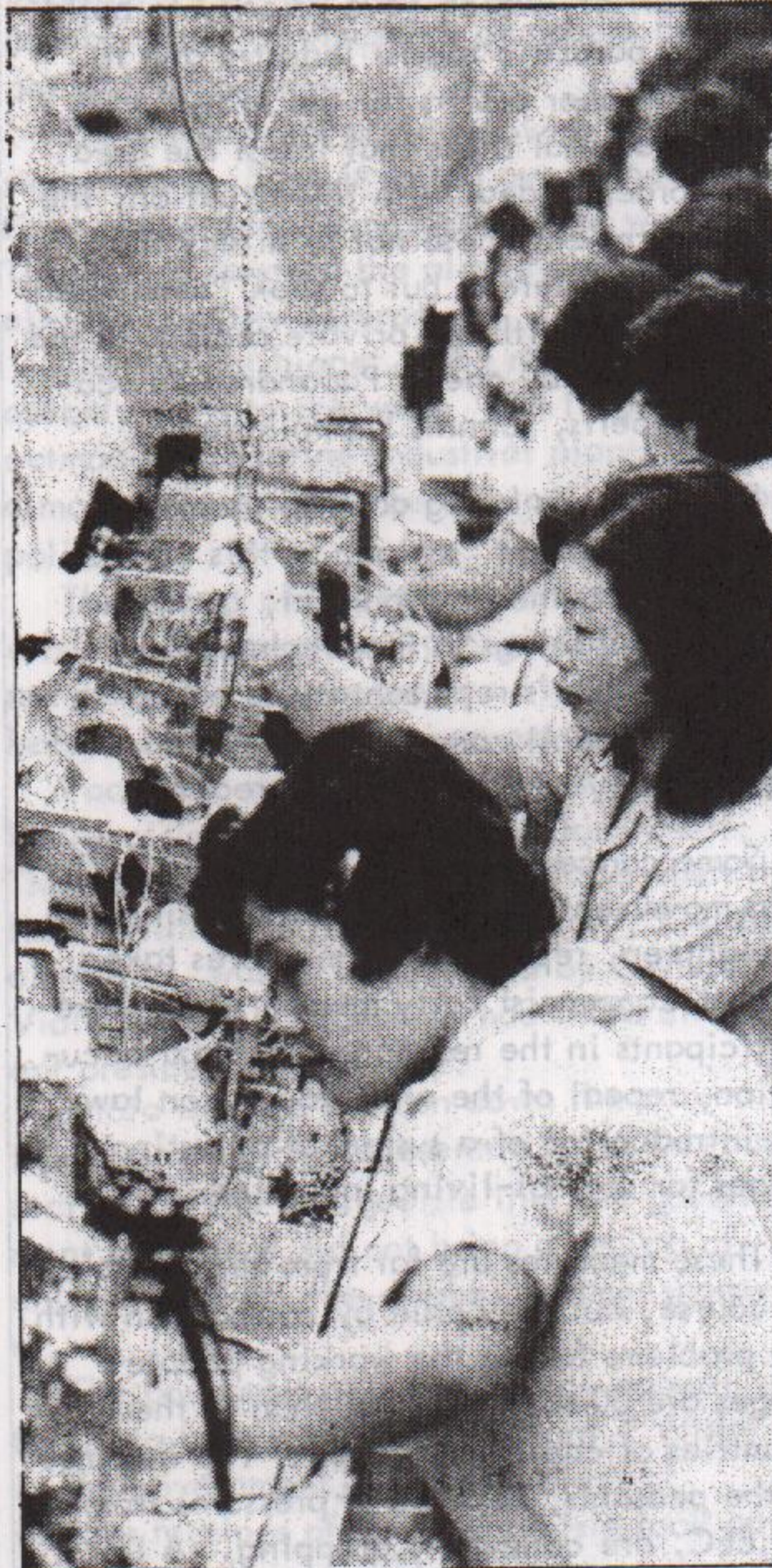
But in spite of the defeat of the campus and street protests, the youth radicalization continued to spread among young workers in the public sector and the small and medium-size factories in the private manufacturing sector. Its most advanced expression were the mobilizations of the railway workers and the young postal workers in 1971 and 1972.

These young workers clashed head on and on a wide scale with the management apparatuses in the work places, winning a decisive victory.

The older workers, who had been feeling the pressure of inflation and were looking for a way out of the prolonged stagnation that marked the union movement in the late 1960s, gave sympathetic support to the young workers. Finally, the union bureaucrats were forced to support them.

Thus, the union movement went on the offensive in 1972-73, at the same time as there was a big new spurt in inflation following the first oil price increase.

The public sector unions gained the initiative, exercising a definite influence over the workers in the big manufacturing enterprises and over the farmers, who were campaigning to get the government to raise the price of rice. There was a general rise of militancy within the bureaucratically dominated channels of the trade unions.



Japanese Women Workers. (DR)

MOMENT OF TRUTH FOR REFORMIST BUREAUCRATS

The result was particularly important wage gains in 1973. A sharp class polarization was developing. Thus, 1974 became a year of decisive choice for the reformist trade-union bureaucrats. They had the opportunity to lead labor in a general offensive to break the straitjacket in which it had been kept historically by the Japanese bourgeoisie.

The union leaders decided to try to pull the workers back. The result was much lower wage increases in the spring of 1975. And in November of that year, the retreat turned into a rout, when the union leader-

ship sold out the public workers general strike. The strike was solid. But after five days, as soon as the government made the least threat of force, the leadership called it off.

THE CAPITALIST OFFENSIVE GAINS MOMENTUM

The 1975 capitulation by the Sohyo leadership began a sharp decline in the annual wage increases. In 1974, nominal wage raises (unadjusted for the high inflation rate) averaged 32.9%. In 1975, they were 13.1%; in 1976, 8.8%; in 1977, 8.8%; in 1978, 5.9%; and in 1979, 6%.

In the manufacturing sector the evolution of wages was as follows: In 1974, the increase in nominal wages was 31.4%, and the increase in real wages was 5.8%. In 1974, it was 15.1% (2.9% in real wages); in 1976, it was 7.5% (-1.6%); in 1977, 9.1% (1.0%); in 1978, 5.8% (1.90%); in 1979, 4.5% (0.95%); and in 1980, 6.5% (-1.6%).

Despite the strong position of the bourgeoisie vis-a-vis the workers in the manufacturing industries, wages had in fact increased significantly in the late 1960s and early 1970s. Aside from the example of Sohyo, the main reason for this was that the long boom had led to the exhaustion of the vast reserve of labor previously locked up in agriculture. This, of course, tended to push up the market price of labor.

For example, between 1955 and 1973, the agricultural workforce decreased from 16.86 million to 8.45 million. In the same period, the number of wage earners increased from 20.10 million to 36.45 million.

Thus, the deepening recession and the capitulation of Sohyo allowed the capitalists to reverse a long-term tendency of wages to rise.

ATTACK ON JOBS

At the same time, a campaign to "cut out the fat," that is, to carry out an intensive capitalist rationalization, gained momentum in the private manufacturing sector. The number of workers fell from 14.43 million in 1973 to 13.26 million in 1978 (an 8.1% decrease). After an initial drop, owing to the upset of the change, labor productivity began to rise again, although at a lower rate than in the boom years.

Thus, in 1973, the increase in produc-

tivity in the private manufacturing sector was 15.3%. In 1974, it was 1.5%; and in 1975, it declined by 3.6%. But in 1976, it rose by 9.7%; in 1977, by 4.5%; in 1978, by 4.6%; in 1979, by 8.1%; and in 1980, by 6.5%.

In this same period, the rate of inflation declined sharply and steadily. In 1974, the official inflation rate, the GNP deflator, was 20.6%; in 1975, it was 7.8%; in 1976, it was 6.4%; in 1977, 5.7%; in 1978, it was 4.6. In 1979, it was only 2.5% and in 1980, 3.1%.

By this rationalizing and lowering of the real wage rate, the Japanese bourgeoisie succeeded in increasing exports dramatically. In 1974, the balance-of-payments deficit was 4.693 billion U.S. dollars. In 1976, the balance-of-payments showed a surplus of 3.68 billion U.S. dollars.

THE POLITICAL REORGANIZATION OF THE RULING CLASS

The political reflection of this was that the bourgeoisie and the "Mainstream Forces" inside the LDP, began to recover their self-confidence in 1976. At the end of that year, T. Fukuda replaced T. Miki as prime minister, the new head of government being an advocate of a hard-line austerity policy in the style of Thatcher in Great Britain. Among other things, he wanted to extend the sort of rationalization that had been carried out in the private sector into the public one.

However, the economic depression cut so deep at home and the pressure from the U.S. was so strong internationally that the Fukuda government was forced to reflate the economy through governmental spending. Over the next three years, the budget deficit escalated. In 1979, it amounted to 39.6% of the total budget, a bit more than 6% of GNP. And the total public debt reached 30% of GNP.

Thus, Fukuda's attempt to impose a program of hard-line austerity failed. Then, in 1978, when the government ran into violent opposition to opening the new international airport in Narita, his cabinet was thrown into political crisis.

The airport was eventually opened in May, as a result of a major effort by the repressive forces. But the fight against the project had a big political impact on the rank and file in Sohyo. It shook up the feeling of hopelessness, that nothing could be done in the present situation.

CRISIS IN THE RULING PARTY

As a result of Fukuda's failure to achieve his economic objectives and the political problems he ran into, a faction fight developed in the LDP in the latter half of 1978. At the end of that year, Fukuda was defeated by M. Ohira, who became the new prime minister.

The primary objective of the new cabinet was to reduce the huge budget deficit. To accomplish that, it introduced a new sales tax bill. Along with that, Ohira wanted to establish a new financial struc-

ture suited to slower economic growth by rationalizing the budget and the public sector.

In September 1979, general elections were held. Throughout the campaign, Ohira maintained his support for a new sales tax. The LDP suffered a serious electoral setback. The result was that the prime minister had to back off from his tax project

GROWING INTERNATIONAL PRESSURES ON THE JAPANESE BOURGEOISIE

With respect to "order" at home and military security abroad, Ohira took a cautious line, as opposed to his notably truculent predecessor. But after he took office, he was faced with multiplying international crises that were more and more threatening to the Japanese ruling class. There was the outbreak of the Iranian revolution, the second oil-price increase, the Soviet military intervention in Afghanistan, the Vietnamese military intervention in Cambodia, and the explosion of the crisis in South Korea.

In particular, the events in South Korea, which has close connections with Japan, created uneasiness in the Japanese bourgeoisie. A public division appeared between the followers of Ohira and those of Fukuda, who favored a more openly imperialist foreign policy. In May 1980, the lower house of parliament passed a motion of no confidence against the Ohira government. The prime minister dissolved it, and went to the country. He died in the midst of the election campaign.

Despite its economic successes, the Japanese bourgeoisie suffered from political weaknesses and divisions in the late 1970s. The LDP "Mainstream Forces" could not impose their policies and the party did not have a strong majority in parliament.

PETTY BOURGEOISIE SHIFTS TO THE RIGHT

However, the 1980 general elections brought unexpected electoral gains for the bourgeois parties, the LDP and the New Liberal Club (NLC), a group that split from the LDP in 1976. The LDP got a safe majority in the lower house, 284 seats out of 511. In addition, the NLC got 12 seats.

The big losers were the Communist and Komei parties. The latter is an opportunist populist Buddhist party of the urban petty bourgeoisie. The CP's seats dropped from 41 to 29; the Komei's from 58 to 33. The Socialist Party made some small gains, going from 104 seats to 107.

What the gains of the big bourgeois parties reflected was a strong right-wing shift among the petty-bourgeois population, layers of which were looking for greater security in what seemed to them to be an increasingly unstable world.

Following the LDP victory, Z. Suzuki, previously an Ohira supporter, became the new prime minister. Under his leadership, the LDP factions were "reconciled." Like

his mentor, Ohira, the new head of government made it his primary objective to reduce the budget deficit.

THE ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE CAPITALIST OFFENSIVE

The Japanese economy emerged from the recession to all intents and purposes in 1978-79. Its recovery was based essentially on a tremendous expansion of exports and government spending. Another important factor was a slower but relatively stable growth of private consumption. Net business capital investment in manufacturing began to grow again in 1978, owing to the superior competitiveness of Japanese manufacturing industries that was based on the extensive rationalization and reduction of real wages achieved by the capitalists.

In the year of the second oil price increase, 1979, Japanese business in particular demonstrated its competitiveness. In 1981, it eliminated its balance-of-trade deficit at the expense of the U.S. and the EEC. In its January 26, 1982, issue, the *Financial Times* of London noted:

"Last year Japan had a record \$10.3 billion trade surplus with the EEC, 10% larger than in 1980, and accounted for substantially more than half of Japan's total exports to the community." It continued: "With the U.S., Japan's surplus more than doubled during 1981, hitting the high level of \$13.4 billion."

In its January 27 issue, the *Financial Times* wrote:

"The Japanese share in the total world exports of manufacturing goods in the second quarter of 1981 was 19.6%; with the U.S. 21.5% and West Germany 13.3%."

THE ACHILLES HEEL OF JAPANESE CAPITALISM

The *DKB Economic Report* of February 1982, however, pointed up a fundamental weakness in the Japanese expansion.

"Since bottoming out in the spring of last year (1981), the Japanese economy has been making a recovery, but the pace of expansion has been very slow... What is more, the economy's growth has taken place almost entirely on the strength of external demand, with domestic demand playing only a marginal role."

In 1980, Japanese net GNP growth was 4.2%. In January-September 1981, it was 3.4%. Of this, the balance-of-trade surplus accounted respectively for 3.6% and 2.6%.

The *DKB* report continued:

"The cardinal reason for the slowness of current business recovery is weakness of private final consumption expenditures... Such expenditures in real terms slipped 0.9% during the first 10 months of last year over a year-earlier period, with all 1981 most certainly having recorded a drop for the second consecutive year. The slow consumption largely reflected a low growth of income after inflation for wage earners as well as independent business operators. Net income of wage earners' households during the first

10 months of last year increased 5.2% but due to a sizable 12.8% rise in nonconsumption outlays, such as tax and social insurance premiums, the disposable income rose by only 4.1%, which represented a drop of 0.9% after inflation."

What these figures show precisely is the bourgeoisie's success in imposing "wage restraints" and intensive rationalization in manufacturing, as well as in rationalizing the budget at the expense of the working people. The other side of this for the capitalists is the weakness of domestic demand.

The DKB report went on:

"Private expenditures on plants and equipment in real terms, on the GNP statistics basis, also have been weak; they dropped 0.0% in the second quarter of last year from the preceding period and 0.2% in the third quarter." Also: "Private housing investment is still very depressed... Any rapid recovery appears ruled out because land prices have soared to a level far beyond the reach of average people." The report continued: "As for exports, their growth in recent months has been notably slowing down... Growth of exports is generally expected to continue flat for the time being as U.S. and European economies remain in a slump and Japan must take steps to resolve escalating trade frictions with them."

As regards the budget: "On the fiscal side, public works investment turned minus after September in comparison with the year ago level and there is considerable concern that they may turn out to be a drag on business in the second half of fiscal 1981. Accelerated disbursement of budgeted funds during the first half is the cause of slowdown in the second half." And further on: "The Government decided on the budget draft for fiscal 1982, up to 6.2% from the fiscal 1981 initial budget. Except for costs of bond issues and allocation for funds to local governments (and except the military budget's 7.75% increase), general expenses turned out almost flat from fiscal 1981, with the rate of increase being 1.8%."

In 1977, the rate of increase of net public capital formation was 15.8%. In 1978, it was 14.5%. But in 1979, it was -1.5%, and in 1980, 0.7%.

THE STATE IS LESS AND LESS ABLE TO PROP UP THE ECONOMY

The recent stagnation/contraction of government spending is a response to the enormous public debt piled up in past years in order to sustain the economy. The budget deficits in fact remained high despite attempts to cut spending. In 1979, as mentioned, the deficit represented 39.6% of the total. In 1980, it was still 32.7% of the total, and in 1981, 26.2%.

Thus, since the end of the 1970s the

government's room for maneuver in fiscal policy has narrowed extremely.

Despite the competitiveness of big Japanese manufacturing concerns in the world capitalist market, the basic contradictions afflicting the Japanese capitalist economy after the end of the boom have not been solved. This is true in the domestic context as well as the international one, both worldwide and regional.

In the present international and domestic context, it remains essential for the bourgeoisie and the LDP government to rationalize the whole system of government income and expenditures. This is necessary to avoid becoming trapped in the dilemma of stagflation in the immediate future. The government's lack of maneuvering room in the field of fiscal policy is a real problem for the bourgeoisie.

International pressure is increasing on the Japanese bourgeoisie and the LDP government to carry out a "faster and larger" military buildup.

The Japanese bourgeoisie now finds itself in a position where it has to finance the East Asian neo-colonial regimes, and this is a major burden.

In 1980, the LDP government gave \$250 million in foreign aid, including a \$30 million "donation" to Thailand, which is the frontline of ASEAN facing the three Indochinese workers states. The South Korean regime has been demanding that the LDP government accord it \$6 billion in government-to-government credits and \$4 billion in commercial credits over the five years of 1981-85. In the 1970s, the Japanese bourgeoisie got their neo-imperialist "East Asian Co-prosperity Zone" and in the coming period they are going to have to pay more and more for it.

JAPANESE EXPORTERS CAUGHT IN SHRINKING WORLD MARKET

The East Asian semi-industrialized export-oriented neocolonial economies

A Battle over the Narita International Airport. (DR)



have their major market in the U.S. and West Europe, which are now economically stagnant. The frictions between these neo-colonial exporters and those who command the American and West European capitalist economies will certainly increase.

It is also a big question how much more the Japanese bourgeoisie can expand its exports to the U.S. and Western Europe in the present state of the world capitalist economy, no matter how competitive Japanese industry is. In this respect, it is very interesting that this year the two biggest car manufacturers, Toyota and Nissan, are concentrating their sales campaigns on the domestic market.

Furthermore, the bourgeoisie and the LDP government are compelled to continue trying to sustain the economy by public spending. This is necessary to maintain the whole massive apparatus of the company unions.

JAPANESE CAPITALISM IN A DEAD END

It seems now, in fact, that the Japanese economy, like that of the other advanced capitalist economies, is drifting toward stagnation. Thus, in its February 13, 1982, issue the *London Economist* writes:

"The motor industry shipped \$30 billion worth of goods abroad last year, accounting for 20% of Japan's exports," and this industry expects to increase the exports by 1.1% and to produce 11.3 million vehicles in 1982, while "capacity to make more than 13 million units has been laid down and capacity for a further 3 million units is on the way."

The signs are appearing of a crisis of overproduction, and in this respect the automotive industry is no exception. The same thing can be said for other manufacturing industries, such as electronics, steel, shipbuilding, and chemicals.

In such a context, industrialists are likely to look to a "faster and larger" military buildup as a way of expanding their market. But new arms spending would run up against the fiscal limitations in which the government finds itself.

The capitalist rationalization successfully carried out in the private manufacturing sector since the mid-1970s has now to be extended to the public sector and local government (the railways, postal system, telecommunications, and tobacco). In order to rationalize all social expenditures, the LDP government and the bourgeoisie will have to attack the farmers, who have traditionally been an electoral bulwark of the LDP.

THE CAPITALISTS MUST BREAK THE INDEPENDENT UNIONS AND WORKERS PARTIES

It is also the public-sector and local government workers who have been the traditional base of the left reformist trade-union confederation, Sohyo, as well as of the SP and the CP since the 1950s.

In their campaign to rationalize the budget structure, the bourgeoisie and the LDP government have made their main strategic objective to attack and try to break up the traditional mass bases of the Sohyo, the SP, and the CP.

Although the Sohyo leadership has taken a capitulationist course, the battle between the masses organized by this union confederation and by the SP and CP, on the one hand, and the LDP government and the bourgeoisie, on the other, has only begun.

The stakes in this struggle are very high both for the proletariat and for the bourgeoisie.

by Paul Lawson

Grenada: Three Years of Revolution

Three years ago, on 13 March 1979, the people of the Caribbean island of Grenada ended the brutal dictatorship of Eric Gairy and began the construction of a free Grenada.

Under the leadership of the New Jewel Movement (NJM) the people of Grenada for the first time in 400 years finally took their destiny into their own hands.

Grenada is a small country with a population of only 110,000. It faces many difficulties--both economic backwardness and the hostility of US imperialism. But the achievements of the revolution have already been formidable.

Since the revolution the self-organisation of the masses has developed apace. Among the mass organisations that have

been established are the National Youth Organisation and the National Womens Organisation.

Foremost has been the establishment of the system of 'people's democracy' which allows the vast majority of Grenadians to participate in the running of their country.

One of the first actions of the revolutionary government was the passing of the Trade Union Recognition Act. Now, about 80 per cent of the workforce has joined the trade unions.

Immediate measures have been taken to raise the living standards of the people. The cost of basic food items has been kept down. Cheap fertilisers have been provided for farmers. Housing materials are provided either free or at low interest rates to



United-Front Demonstration Against Narita Opening. (DR)

In the big manufacturing concerns, the bourgeoisie smashed the reformist trade-union forces in the early 1960s. It achieved a situation where company unions predominate and where it enjoys total paternalistic control over workers who believe that they are established in their jobs for life.

However, throughout the 1960s and into the 1970s, Sohyo remained a militant force. And its leadership retained the initiative in the situation.

Now the bourgeoisie and the LDP government want to break Sohyo, the SP, and the CP, and establish its direct control over the masses that follow them. That is, it is seeking to fundamentally reinforce the Japanese bourgeois state vis-a-vis the working masses.

Since the 1950s, although it lost strength in the 1960s and 1970s, the bloc of the Sohyo, the SP and the CP have been the politically dominant force in the working class. The openly pro-imperialist right-wing Social Democratic Party, the DSP, and the right-wing union federation,

Domei, have remained politically in a minority in the working class.

THE REMILITARIZATION DRIVE

Moreover, the SP-CP bloc has continued to reject the U.S.-Japan Security Treaty and to oppose the Japanese Self-Defense Forces. Since the 1960s, new right-wing currents have developed inside the SP, but they have not yet achieved a dominant position.

Therefore, the bourgeoisie and the LDP government have to break the mass base of the Sohyo and the SP and CP in order to open up a full-scale remilitarization drive. They have to do this in order to be able to revise the Japanese constitution, which prohibits the government from building and using a war machine. This is the general economic, social, and political context in which the recomposition of the Japanese workers movement has been taking place for the last few years. I will take up this process in a subsequent article in International Viewpoint.

workers and farmers. The condition of women has been rapidly improved: they receive equal pay for equal work and paid maternity leave.

Like the Sandinista government in Nicaragua the New Jewel Movement recognised that education is a vital part of the political mobilisation of the people. The newly-established Centre for Popular Education mobilised thousands of volunteer teachers to wipe out the remaining illiteracy. A new nationwide scheme of adult education is well under way.

Despite these advances, the economic difficulties of the island remain very grave. When Gairy was overthrown unemployment was about 50 per cent. As a first attempt to tackle this, Grenada has developed the

'idle lands for idle hands scheme' to cultivate previously unused land, using newly-formed agricultural cooperatives.

Last year the first fruit canning plant and a fish processing plant were opened. One of the most ambitious projects is the building of the island's first international airport. Much of the aid for this project, like the aid for the free health care and other projects, has been provided by the Cuban government.

As the people of Grenada celebrate three years of progress of their revolution, they have designated 1982 as the 'Year of Economic Reconstruction'. Each workplace will be setting up production committees to set up and monitor production targets.

Hand-in-hand with the struggle for production is the need to defend the revolution. Grenada has been the target for numerous threats from the United States. Imperialism regards the example of the revolution as a

threat to its hold over the Caribbean.

That's why the people of Grenada are spending the weeks before the anniversary celebrations engaging in training manoeuvres to ensure that any invasion will be met with the united resistance of the Grenadian people. ■

(Socialist Challenge
March 11, 1982)
issue no. 237)

by Pat Kane

Young Workers Build the Future

ST. GEORGE'S--Queen's Park has been the scene of many important rallies and demonstrations for the people of revolutionary Grenada. Many of their projects, problems, and aspirations have been discussed at huge rallies here. Many of the revolution's battles have been launched from its platform.

The park overlooks Queen's Park Concrete Manufacturers, where an equally important battle is now under way--the battle for production and economic independence.

I was shown around the small quarry and production site by Martin, the company's twenty-one-year-old assistant project supervisor. Martin explained that the gravel taken from the quarry goes to help build Grenada's new international airport, "and to repair and build roads. It also goes to make breeze blocks for building new houses and schools, and is made into concrete culverts for drainage."

REGULAR MEETINGS OF WORKERS

It was a hot day, and about forty women were laboring in the sun. The process is almost completely manual. The only mechanized parts are the loader, or bulldozer, and one small cement mixer. Everything else is done by manual labor. The plant employs seventy-five workers, and of that total sixty are women. Even the screens for sifting the gravel are powered by hand.

The plant produces between five and ten tons of gravel per day, along with breeze blocks and concrete culverts. I asked if they have plans to increase production, since 1982 is the "Year of Economic Construction." "Yes," replied Martin, "we are discussing this in all our meetings."

There are plenty of opportunities for discussing the progress of the plant. There is a monthly mass meeting during working hours for all the workers. They also attend monthly parish council meetings. And there are fortnightly meetings of their union, the Technical and Allied Workers Union. Martin explained that they always have full attendance at evening union meetings. "Workers know that what is discussed at these meetings is in their interests, so they all come along."

Every Thursday, they have a meeting of the National Women's Organization for the plant's sixty women. Again, it is during working hours.

Irva, a young woman worker, told me, "We talk about fundraising, cake sales, what is happening in the country."

I asked, "Do you discuss politics?" Irva smiled, and said, "Of course we do. We have already talked about the new budget, and made our suggestions. We always get reports on defense of the country, and things like that."

She explained that the revolution has brought many benefits to the island's women, including the right to work. "We have had three pay raises, and women are equal in production. If there is a job that a man can do, then a woman can also do it. We have equal pay for work that both men and women do." Irva is also a member of the island's militia.

On another part of the site, they make concrete culverts used to drain away the island's frequent tropical rain storms. I met Brian, another twenty-one-year-old, who guided me around this part of the plant.

His enthusiasm was infectious. I thought he was the supervisor, he was so knowledgeable about the workings of the company. "No, I am the gateman," he told me.

They make culverts up to two feet in diameter and about two feet long. The cement, which comes from Cuba, is loaded along with the gravel by hand into the mixer, which holds half a ton. The cement is poured onto the ground at the other end and then packed by hand into wooden molds. Again, except for the mixer, the whole process is manual.

"We supply culverts to government ministries and to private people," Brian explained. "With all the new roads being built, there is a lot needed. They put them under the roads to take the rainwater away. We make seventeen culverts each day."

As I stood there, someone came in with an order for forty-one culverts. "A lot of work," I said. "The revo's moving forward," replied Brian.

Culverts and gravel are given free of charge to community development projects such as new schools and community centers.

These projects are carried out by volunteer community work brigades.

The work at the gravel yard is hard, but the workers all seemed determined to reach their targets before lunchbreak. They had a little discussion at the cement mixer about whether to stop to talk to me, and they decided to keep on working.

Martin commented later, "That is the difference between socialist workers and capitalist workers. Capitalist workers want to laze, and do as little as possible. Only too right. But we know that we are working for ourselves, our country and the revolution."

I asked Martin and Brian if they were in any other organizations, apart from their union. Both were in the militia and the National Youth Organization. Both had attended the NYO congress as delegates from the NYO Social Projects Unit, which coordinates voluntary work in the community.

Brian added proudly, "Martin has been selected as a New Jewel Movement party applicant." Martin explained, "I have been an applicant for about a year now. It takes between two and three years to join our party. I go to study classes every week."

As I was leaving the plant, I asked Martin what he would like most from the United States for the plant. He thought I had asked him what he wanted for himself personally.

Quickly and decisively he said, "Books. All kinds of books, but especially books about the history of the American Indians, about the history of the unions, about Malcolm X and the history of the Black Power movement. That is what I would like."

These determined young workers are the future of a new and free Grenada. They are also the reason why the U.S. rulers are so hostile to tiny Grenada. Ronald Reagan despises freedom, and there is no one more free than Irva, Martin, and Brian. They mold more than concrete culverts in their little factory--they are molding their country's future. ■

(Intercontinental Press/
Inprecor,
February 22, 1982)

INTERNATIONAL VIEWPOINT

ISSUE No 4

April 12, 1982

Contents

Fortnightly Review of News and Analysis Published Under the Auspices
of the United Secretariat of the Fourth International.

Crises Converge in Europe	1
Reagan Visit to Europe : Focus for Mass Protests by <i>John Ross</i>	2
Country Prepares for Invasion by <i>Michael Baumann</i>	4
Nicaragua, Cuba Prepare for U.S. Intervention	5
French Local Elections Show Fruits of Class Collaboration	6
Workers Confront the Crisis of Capitalist Europe by <i>Christian Picquet</i>	7
Chronology of the Belgian Strikes	8
Blowup in Belgium Sparked by Antilabor Offensive by <i>François Vercammen</i>	9
Mass Workers Movement Reorganizes in Poland	10
Zionism Begins to Show Cracks	11
Building a World Party of Socialists	13
Guatemalan Indians in the Fight Against Imperialism	15
Six Years of Military Rule in Argentina by <i>Lars Palmgren</i>	18
The First Hundred Days of the Left Government in Greece by <i>Christian Picquet</i>	19
Victories of Japanese Capitalists Lead Down a Blind Alley by <i>Yohichi Sakai</i>	20
Grenada : Three Years of Revolution by <i>Paul Lawson</i>	23
Young Workers Build the Future by <i>Pat Kane</i>	24

News closing date 5 April

To save us high clearing charges, please try to pay in bank drafts or postal orders payable in francs. If you pay by check in other currencies, including dollars, add at least 5 %. Make out checks and postal orders to PEC and mail them to International Viewpoint ; 2, rue Richard-Lenoir, 93108 Montreuil, France. Postal cheques to PEC, Acc. No. 2 322 42 T Paris.

Introductory six months subscriptions. Before May 1, the price by surface mail is 6 British pounds, 13 US dollars, Skr 70, French Francs 70, DM 30, Dkr 90. By airmail, the price is for North America, Latin America, Sub-Sahara Africa -- 18 US dollars ; Australia-New Zealand, Asia -- 20 US dollars ; Middle East, North Africa -- 16 US dollars.

For one year, the surface mail is 16 British pounds, 31 US dollars, Skr 175, DM 70, Dkr 225. Airmail for North America, Latin America, Sub-Sahara Africa -- 42 US dollars ; Australia-New Zealand, Asia -- 47 US dollars ; Middle East, North Africa -- 37 US dollars.

Please send the following slip (blank) or a copy thereof with your cheque (check) or postal order. Please fill it out in capital letters.

Given Name ----- Family Name -----

House Address ----- City -----

County, or State, or Province, or Department ----- Postal Zone -----

Country -----

Published by Presse-Edition-Communication (PEC) - Administration : 2, rue Richard-Lenoir, 93108 Montreuil, France
Directeur de publication : Robert March. Gérant : Jacques Girma. Commission paritaire 64324. Imprimé par Rotographie