

International VIEWPOINT

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Turning point in Pakistan
Botha's crackdown
Rightist breakthrough in Austria

INTERNATIONAL VIEWPOINT

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Fund and subs drive off to a good start

WE ARE STILL overwhelmed by the response to our appeal for contributions and new subscriptions. It will take us another two weeks to count them up to see where we are. Our readers certainly took it to heart when we asked them not to forget us over the summer.

We hope we didn't scare anyone when we explained that with money getting tighter we will have to do more systematic fund-raising and promotional drives in order to maintain and develop *International Viewpoint*.

One reader in Seattle in the US wrote us, saying "What do you mean you might stop publishing? *You can't!* This check represents 10 per cent of my monthly salary — use it well!"

That's our master's voice. Our reader in Seattle hit the nail on the head. A revolutionary publication, even an international one like *IV*, serves working people and has to be financed by them. They typically don't have a lot of largesse to distribute, especially these days, and so we not only have to convince them that *IV* is indispensable but to remind them that we can't do anything without their scarce and hard-earned cash.

Some contributors promised to keep sending money, like one in Australia, who wrote: "I, too, am very concerned that you are having financial difficulty . . . You are the only magazine now left in the world that gives a truly international point of view."

Our basic problem is that *IV* was launched in a difficult period, with a minimal base, and now we have to make a special effort to expand that. Our advantage is that we have had nearly five years to show the role such a magazine can play.

The initial response to our appeal has come mainly from a relatively small group of loyal readers. To meet our goals, we need also to widen our support. That means appealing to people who share our aims but have not been active in recent years to subscribe and donate to the magazine. It means convincing more people who are active now of the importance of an international magazine. For that also, we depend on our readers around the world. If all our present readers could win just one new subscriber to *IV*, many of our financial difficulties would evaporate. We hope our supporters will be as energetic as they are generous.

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Problems for Zia regime following Benazir Bhutto's return

SINCE THE military coup in July 1977, the Pakistan dictator Zia ul-Haq is experiencing increasing problems in the face of mass opposition to his regime. Three years ago, the military government was confronted by demonstrations of popular opposition. Now, the regime has succeeded in limiting the movement to the Sind province, at a cost of many hundreds of lives.

In the absence of popular support, General Zia has had to take measures intended to give himself a democratic facade. Elections for the National Assembly were held in February 1985. Political parties were excluded from standing and most of them called for a boycott. Nevertheless in April, following these elections, Zia named a civilian prime minister, Mohammad Khan Junejo, and on December 30, 1985, martial law was lifted.

But opposition to the regime has not been defused. March 1986 saw the first political general strike since 1977 in the Liyazi region of Karachi. April 10 this year also saw the return from exile of Benazir Bhutto, daughter of the previous prime minister, Zulfikar Ali Bhutto who was executed by Zia in 1979. Like her father before her, Benazir is the leader of the Pakistan People's Party (PPP), the principal opposition force to the regime.

The popular response to Benazir's return was spectacular. In Lahore, the capital of the province of Punjab, she was greeted by almost a million people. In Rawalpindi, the military headquarters of the country, the crowd was the same. In Peshawar, capital of the north-west frontier province, Benazir addressed the largest political rally in living memory when over a quarter of a million people turned out to cheer her. But it was in Karachi — the industrial capital of the country where a large section of the working class is concentrated — that she received the biggest welcome of her tour. Almost two million people, from a population of around five million, crowded the streets and parks to receive her.

Tariq Ali, a well-known journalist and author of a number of articles and books on the Indian sub-continent, analyses the impact of Benazir Bhutto's return and the development of the anti-Zia opposition in a context of growing US support for the regime. He was interviewed by David Cameron for our French-language sister publication, *Inprecor*, on August 21, 1986.

Question. What is the significance of the massive demonstrations following the return of Benazir Bhutto?

Answer. There were a number of factors. First, the masses were fed up with the Zia dictatorship and Benazir's return represented the first opportunity they had since the lifting of martial law last December to show their hatred and distaste of the military regime.

Second — and this was made clear in the slogans that were raised — this was the masses' first chance to voice their disapproval of the execution by hanging of the country's first and last elected prime minister, Zulfikar Ali Bhutto. This was their way of showing that the time had come for General Zia to depart. Benazir herself insisted on treating these mass turnouts and rallies, which

were not only held in the big cities but in small towns and villages as well, as a major referendum against the regime. She appealed to the powers who were backing General Zia, in particular the United States, to withdraw him from the country and enable a peaceful transition to democracy to take place.

Q. After authorizing the demonstrations to greet Benazir, why did the regime decide to ban the rallies planned for August 14 and arrest the leaders of the opposition?

A. From the beginning, everyone was asking the question: What would happen after the mass mobilizations ended? Would a new phase of the struggle commence in order to force Zia out of power? In the event, the second phase of the struggle began unexpectedly and without preparation as far as the opposition parties were concerned. These parties, including Benazir's PPP, all work under an umbrella organization known as the Movement for Restoration of Democracy (MRD). After the success of the initial mobilizations, the MRD parties agreed that a new movement would be launched this September which would incorporate elements of civil disobedience to force Zia out. In the event, independence day — August 14 — was chosen by the opposition to announce the September movement to the people.

The government at first thought that they could organize their own demonstration on the same day. Two days before August 14 the regime panicked and cancelled its own demonstration and banned all others, thus throwing down a challenge to Benazir Bhutto and the opposition. The leaders of the opposition parties met and announced that they were not prepared to accept the ban and that the demonstrations would go ahead as scheduled.

The government of prime minister Junejo attempted to pre-empt the opposition on August 13 by arresting all its major leaders and activists, and going into working class suburbs to arrest potential ringleaders of the revolt. They left Benazir alone. On independence day itself, Benazir decided to defy the government and went out on a demonstration and addressed a public rally in Karachi which was teargassed and attacked with bullets. When she returned from the rally, she too was arrested. The movement was now, in effect, leaderless. In Lahore, when news arrived of Benazir's arrest, there were spontaneous battles and eight people were shot dead by the police.

In Karachi, two people were shot dead and the riots spread to the interior of the Sind province. Sind is a minority province where Sindhis

have a great deal of national grievances against the dominant Punjabi ruling elite, and here the movement became very militant.

In the town of Thatta, a police station was attacked and crowds raided the prison, overwhelmed the guards, occupied it and released all the political prisoners. In other small Sindh towns the militancy was very great: four policemen were shot dead.

The army finally moved in to surround these towns and at this moment there is a news blackout from the interior of the Sind, though Sindh activists claim that casualties have reached between 40 and 50. Ten thousand people marched peacefully in Lahore while the same time in Rawalpindi there were clashes between demonstrators and police and government buses and vans were set on fire. The train service between Karachi and Lahore has been disrupted — Sindh activists have blown up railway lines en route and some railway stations and post offices have been burnt down.

Q. What direction do you think the mass movement will take after this first wave of mobilizations?

A. The central question seems to be this: Will the millions who turned out to welcome Benazir join the vanguard which has been fighting on the streets? Or is their attitude to Benazir "we are prepared to vote for you, but we are not prepared to die on the streets just yet?" This does seem to be the attitude of the masses,

Benazir Bhutto at a meeting in May, 1986 (DR)



who are not demoralized, or passive, but waiting. One reason why the masses have not come out in my opinion is that the PPP has not yet advanced strong class demands as it did in 1970-71. The programme that the People's Party has put forward in recent months has been, in general, moderate. As a result they have not set up cadre organizations in the factories or the countryside, and this is now revealed to be a big, big weakness.

Another factor is that the United States is not at all convinced that it can do a deal with Benazir Bhutto. Despite some statements demanding a return to democracy, the Reagan administration in Washington is firmly committed to the present regime. One reason for this is that General Zia's government has permitted the use of Pakistani airbases for US P-3 surveillance aircraft. This is part of a much more ambitious plan by US military strategists which sees Pakistan as replacing Iran in geo-political terms for American imperialism in the region. Pakistan is now second only to Israel in the amount of military aid which is being supplied from the US. The Pentagon has budgeted for more than 14 billion dollars to be spent until 1988 on such facilities.

Last year, outlining policy for the region, US secretary for defence Caspar Weinberger said that the project for south-west Asia included: "Gaining approval for and developing land-based pre-positioning sites for the enormous supply requirements of military material which will be

required for US forces once deployed. Obtaining both over-flight rights and all route access from countries within the region who have not granted permission. Obtaining access to and improving selected airfields and sea-ports in the theatre. Obtaining additional host nation support agreements with countries en route to and in south-west Asia." The access of P-3 flights to Pakistani airbases, therefore, has to be seen within this framework.

A report published by the Washington-based Carnegie Endowment for International Peace entitled "India, the United States and the Indian Ocean", quotes an American participant as saying: "General Kingston and the central command hope to draw Pakistan into a network of understandings . . . This does have implications for the sub-continent since Pakistan is covered by anti-submarine warfare planes which are occasionally using Pakistani airfields, and there will be pressure for more access of this type." So it is very clear that the United States now regards Pakistan as being of critical importance militarily, especially given the present situation in Iran.

Francis Fukuyama, a leading member of the state department's policy planning division, repeated in 1981 what he had already established in a Rand Corporation study on Pakistan. This study, produced in September 1980, has now become the basis of US policy vis-a-vis Pakistan: "The United States is currently building a rapid deployment force (RDF) to protect western access to oil . . . Pakistan could serve as an extremely important *entrepot* for the RDF moving into the . . . Gulf from the east, i.e. from Diego Garcia or the Philippines . . . Current RDF plans call for the prepositioning of armoured vehicles in so-called roll-on/roll-off ships in Diego Garcia which would require several days to arrive at the head of the Gulf. Were these ships to be based in Karachi, distance and deployment times would be considerably reduced. Furthermore, there is the possibility that the Pakistan army could serve as a proxy force fighting in the Gulf." These observations from Mr Fukuyama make it extremely plain that the Pentagon and the State Department are not going to permit General Zia to retire — or the Pakistani army to stop playing a central role in Pakistani politics — unless there is a pre-revolutionary or insurrectionary crisis in Pakistan where a transition to democracy becomes unavoidable.

The present policy of the US is essentially to encourage the military to maintain a puppet civilian government, as in Turkey, and to hope that this will defeat the aspirations of the common people and at the same time

deceive them into imagining that they have democracy. But the Pakistani people have not been deceived at all and will carry on the struggle, albeit intermittently. Once the political leaders and activists begin to be released, the movement will start up and spread again in earnest — although it has not completely petered out at the moment.

Whatever happens, there is no doubt that within the army there will be growing discontent with the present situation. In this sense, the choices facing the state in Pakistan are very limited. Either they have some form of representative democratic government or there will be a return to martial law. What I cannot conceive of as lasting indefinitely is the present Zia-Junejo setup which satisfies neither the army nor the overwhelming majority of people in Pakistan.

Q. *Although it is quite small, has the left in Pakistan been able to play any role in this situation?*

A. The bulk of the left today is working inside other political parties of a nationalist type. There are small groups of communists and other leftists in some of the main towns, but these by no means add up to a major force.

The real danger in the situation is that the people of Sind, who have been in the forefront of the struggle, might be isolated and defeated, as they were in 1983. Were this to happen then the national question in Pakistan would become uncontrollable, and there would be massive pressure for Sindhi independence which would have repercussions in other regions, most notably in Baluchistan. □

Pakistan is not the Philippines

THE AMERICAN press coverage of US policy towards Pakistan has been raising far more doubts than genuinely exist in the minds of officials, either in Islamabad or Washington, to the questions that have been raised about Pakistan's nuclear programme, negotiations over the war in Afghanistan and control of narcotics. The Reagan administration and US Congress quietly agree on the same set of answers. These amount to a calculated wink in the direction of Islamabad, intended to minimize frictions and keep the Pakistan government and armed forces happy. [This article first appeared in the August 14, 1986 issue of the Pakistan weekly, *Viewpoint*.]

CLAUDIA WRIGHT

By any standard, the official consensus in Washington towards Pakistan has never looked more solid or more generous. The votes on July 24 and 30 by the House Appropriations Committees to earmark United States military aid for Pakistan for the next year at 340 million US dollars and economic aid at 250 million US dollars elevates Pakistan into the big league of US aid recipients who are, in congressional terms, safe from cuts. Pakistan joins Israel and Egypt, and steps ahead of Turkey, the Philippines, and the Central American allies in the war against Nicaragua, each of whom face cuts of up to 50 per cent. The appropriations votes are the tangible,

real policy-making. The criticism that has appeared in the US press is a token display, a safety-valve for those officials and congressmen who have had far tougher things to say about the "Islamic bomb" in the past.

There is one question, however, that hasn't been settled in Washington: is there any reason to believe that the Reagan administration, or its successor, will view the democratic opposition in Pakistan in the same light as it has regarded the Philippines opposition that brought down the Marcos dictatorship early this year? More specifically, is the co-chair of the Pakistan People's Party (PPP), Benazir Bhutto, likely to attract the kind of

official US support Corazon Aquino achieved before she became president of the Philippines?

There are several similarities between Bhutto and Aquino, and in a profile of Bhutto's views which the *New York Times* published last month — at the start of Prime Minister Junejo's trip to the United States — the newspaper reported that "many politicians say that Miss Bhutto hopes that Washington may see her as a credible alternative to President Zia and encourage him to yield power to her, such as the way President Ferdinand E Marcos was pressed to withdraw in favour of Corazon C Aquino." For the American media, whose attention span on Pakistani and Filipino politics does not stretch beyond the dramatic images of street rallies, both Bhutto and Aquino have been projected to the US audience as courageous women battling an unpopular dictatorship.

There are other obvious and dramatic parallels. Both women have suffered terrible, personal ordeals at the hands of the dictatorship — through the imprisonment and judicial murder of Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, and the assassination of Benigno Aquino. Both women have themselves been threatened with injury, imprisonment and death. Both are from the landed elite of their societies, and draw on substantial political support of a traditional kind from their home areas. Both have also shown they can mobilize enormous shows of public support of a decidedly nontraditional kind.

Similarities between Benazir and Cory

Less obvious in the press coverage, but equally important in the official calculations, is the similarity between the two women in their approach towards the US government. When Benigno Aquino flew back to Manila on his ill-fated return from exile in 1983, he thought he had State Department and CIA backing to run against Marcos for the presidency without threatening the tenure of US military bases at Clark Airfield and Subic Bay. Last November, classified documents from the US embassy in Manila confirm, when Cory Aquino was contemplating her election campaign against Marcos, US officials told her their support for an honest election was contingent on her agreement to accept as her vice-presidential candidate Salvador Laurel (now the vice-president), and her pledge to keep US bases out of contention. In the final showdown with Marcos last February, it was Aquino's alliance with Laurel, with the defence minister

Juan Enrile, and with the vice-chief of staff, General Fidel Ramos, that reassured Washington, and overcame White House reluctance to give Marcos the shove.

US officials believe that Benazir Bhutto is trying to follow this script by elevating General Tikka Khan in the PPP, by making overtures to other military officers and by giving a variety of State Department and congressional visitors the assurance that she would not be hostile towards the US, that she would "keep the door open" to US aid and that she would not oppose the current US and Pakistani negotiating posture toward Afghanistan and the Soviet Union.

These issues were discussed when Bhutto met on May 26 with Representative Stephen Solarz, chair of the House Sub-Committee on Asian and Pacific Affairs. The significance of this meeting is threefold. Solarz was one of the most vocal congressional critics of the Marcos regime in the Philippines, and a strong advocate of free elections to replace Marcos. If congress is to be persuaded to regard Bhutto as Aquino, Solarz is invaluable.

He is also Jewish and the principal advocate of Israel in the House of Representatives. In that role, Solarz has been a consistent critic of Pakistan's nuclear programme in the past. Yet now, following US press reports of Pakistani breakthroughs in achieving weapons-grade enrichment of uranium and in testing a lead-core nuclear device, Solarz has quietly dropped threats of US sanctions. Although publicly and for media consumption Solarz is still committed to holding Pakistan's aid hostage to the nuclear programme, in practice he believes that preserving the US position in Pakistan is more important now than confrontation over the nuclear issue. In that respect Solarz has moved rightward to embrace the administration's policy.

Finally, Solarz is the self-appointed candidate to be secretary of state if a Democrat is elected president in 1988. To that end, the Brooklyn congressman has shifted ground, endorsing administration-sponsored "freedom-fighters" in Afghanistan and Cambodia, and seeking headlines as the Democrat who stands up for

democracy in the third world. That is the pose Solarz struck in a widely reported BBC interview of June 14, following his meeting with Bhutto. In calling for "mid-term" parliamentary elections on a "party basis" in Pakistan, he deliberately appeared to be endorsing Bhutto's call and throwing the weight of the US Congress against Prime Minister Junejo.

In the weeks that have followed the controversy in Pakistan over this statement, Solarz has tried to preserve the image of the defender of democracy, while emptying his call of its practical political significance. He now says he did not mean elections in Pakistan this year — perhaps, in 1987 or 1988 instead. "Sooner than the government intends but later than Miss Bhutto hopes" he wrote in the *New York Times* on July 13. After Prime Minister Junejo refused his request for a meeting in Washington, Solarz claims he was too busy, and the prime minister's schedule too crowded, to make a private meeting possible. He defends Bhutto but refuses to mention Asghar Khan, who, Solarz's aides say, declined their request for a meeting in Pakistan last May.

"Now that democracy has been restored in the Philippines," Solarz claimed in his *Times* article, "the United States needs to consider how best to promote political pluralism in Pakistan if we are going to protect our strategic interests on the sub-continent as effectively as we protected them in south-east Asia." The "we" in this statement is the royal plural. Solarz is setting himself up as the candidate who appears just as tough as the Republicans but more intelligent and sympathetic in dealing with the third world. While Solarz's rhetoric is vague enough to satisfy almost anyone, his pose as the advocate, counsellor and defender of Aquino in the Philippines, and now Bhutto in Pakistan, is calculated to make him look more potent than the White House or the State Department. It is interventionism with a human face — for US electoral purposes.

Solarz's ambitions are no secret in Washington, and his manoeuvring

is clearly understood by his Republican opponents, as well as by Ambassador Deane Hinton. In their view, the question of political pluralism has already been settled in Pakistan, and Junejo is the democratic choice to head the government, not Bhutto.

The Reagan administration does not regard General Zia ul-Haq in the same way as it regarded Marcos. They believe he is a much more modest man, with a far more humble wife, less given to grandiose illusions, less corrupt, and more willing to rule by the consensus of his generals. According to US officials, the Pakistani officer corps is "reformist" in the way they have sought to encourage in the Philippines under General Ramos — that is, with professional motivation and morale, and loyalty to the regular hierarchy of command, not to personal cliques and patrons like Marcos and his General Fabian Ver. The US embassy in Islamabad and the administration in Washington also like Junejo, and believe that he — in alliance with Zia and the military — can be trusted to preserve US strategic interests.

Stable understanding

Personal trust is the key here. The administration is confident it knows exactly how far the Pakistan nuclear programme has gone, and the point beyond which Islamabad will not go, so long as US aid continues to grow, as anticipated between now and 1993. US officials believe they have a stable understanding with Islamabad, and see no reason to upset that. They do not trust Benazir Bhutto to maintain the aid relationship, and if that were to be disturbed, Washington fears Bhutto would make her own decisions on the nuclear programme.

But there is an even deeper reason for the distrust. According to a senior administration appointee, "it is the Russians. Benazir's brothers went to the Russians. We would never support her because of that. We would never support Cory Aquino if she or her family went to the Russians." According to another official, the Pentagon is "torn between an absolute preference for dictators and a dislike of Muslims with the bomb." As an alternative to Zia's martial law administration, Junejo can be trusted with the bomb, but if he fails to counteract Bhutto, martial law would once again be the American preference. Accordingly, the Washington consensus is that the present political arrangements in Pakistan are the optimum ones, and they will resist any deal Bhutto may offer them. □

General Zia
with
Prime Minister
Zulfikar
Ali Bhutto
in 1977
(DR)



Unions targeted

THE RISE of the Black unions clearly represents a major advance in the organization of the Black masses, and they have been a special target of the repression unleashed by the state of emergency.

Several statistical studies show that imprisoned trade unionists make up more than ten per cent of the persons arrested over the last three months. The bulk of them (80 per cent) are members of the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU). And within COSATU, the unions hardest hit have been the metalworkers (MAWU) and the commercial workers (CCAWUSA).

Clearly, the regime is trying to disorganize the trade-union movement in general and more particularly to hit those who, like the leaders of MAWU, have taken an active part in the struggles and self-organization of the township people.

After an initial phase of surprise and disarray, the trade-union movement has rapidly recovered. Many struggles have been waged for the release of jailed unionists and in defence of rights won by the unions in the plants. Some well-known leaders have been freed. Others, who had gone underground, have resumed public activity. At the start of July, MAWU held its congress.

The COSATU unions face a combination of problems. First, they have to relaunch union activity despite the arrests. Second, they have to fight back against the bosses who are taking advantage of the situation to try to cut into the gains made by the workers. In this context, international labor solidarity can be an important help to the independent Black union movement.

The accompanying interview with the general secretary of COSATU, Jay Naidoo, gives a balance sheet of the challenge posed to the union movement and its response.

The state of emergency and the trade unions

JAY NAIDOO is the general secretary of the 600,000 member Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU). At the time of this interview, July 3, Jay was in hiding after the imposition of the state of emergency in South Africa. The interview was first published in the August edition of the *South African Labour Bulletin*.

Question. What has been the effect of the state of emergency on COSATU?

Answer. During this emergency trade unions have come under quite direct attack from the state — our offices have been raided and trade union personnel harassed. The major impact is that in the initial period our communications were disrupted, and structures were not able to operate normally — meetings were either disrupted or banned outright. In the Western Cape our publications have been banned, and on the highveld our meetings banned.

In local areas, facilities for shop stewards have been denied to us. Scores of key leadership figures involved in sensitive negotiations have been forced into hiding. These were the practical effects in the first period. We sought other means of re-establishing contact and to get our structures operating again.

In the second week of the state of emergency meetings took place at various levels and that was when various steps were outlined. In cases where shop stewards had been detained, the unions should immediately elect a replacement. When officials had been detained, the shop stewards should take over. Communications should be set up at a local, regional and national level. Shop stewards should demand time off to attend to trade union business. Moral and material support should be given to the families of those detained. Our structures, especially the Shop Stewards Councils and Regional Executive Councils should meet regularly in spite of harassment. We called for the return to offices of officials except those being hunted more than others.

Contact at national level was established, and a decision was taken to hold a Central Executive Commit-

tee (CEC) on July 1. A whole range of demands were also prepared and circulated for discussion at all levels of the organization. The CEC meeting also involved local representatives. Arising out of the CEC was a broad plan of action.

The state of emergency was seen as an attack on the people of South Africa and on their democratic and human rights. It was also seen as an attack on COSATU and its affiliates through harassment, detention and office raids. It is a political attack on the labour movement and an attack which we could not allow to go unchallenged. Consequently a systematic programme of action was drafted to achieve the demands that we set out. We called for an end to all harassment of workers, shop stewards and officials; the release of all detained leaders; an end to repression and a move towards democratic solutions to the problems of our country.

We also made demands that related specifically to our continued operation on the shop floor. [The demands included paid time-off for shop stewards to attend to union business; guaranteed jobs and pay for detainees; the right to hold union meetings on company property in company time. These demands were largely conceded by the major employers' federations. *Editor, SALB*].

We further decided that if these demands were not met by July 10, COSATU would be forced to take further action. This would fundamentally place the whole system of industrial relations into serious jeopardy, but our belief is that these structures that have been won through bitter struggle and negotiation depend on there being a balance in the power relations between labour and capital. The repressive actions taken against us have severely disadvantaged trade



unions in their continued participation in these structures. COSATU therefore reserves its right to initiate further action.

After the first spate of detentions there was a spontaneous reaction with thousands of workers coming out on strike, especially in the retail sector, but what began to emerge very rapidly was a more co-ordinated response to the attack on us. The attack on us raised great anger and bitterness among our members. Because of our depth of organization and the way it has developed there is an intense loyalty to our organization and its leadership. Our structures are very deeply grounded on the shop floor and what is growing is an intense pressure from the grassroots to respond to the attack on us.

Q. What has been the response of employers to the emergency?

A. Clearly there are different responses but substantial numbers have distanced themselves from the state of emergency while others have come out in support of it. As workers see it, and for clear historical reasons and experiences, the employers share joint responsibility for the attack being made on us, and for us there is no evidence that they have brought substantial pressure on the state to end the emergency.

Black women at a training school for hotel workers in Bophutatswana (DR)

COSATU launches journal

IN AUGUST, the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU) launched the first issue of its journal, temporarily called *COSATU* until a name is chosen. This independent federation of workers now has an important means of unifying its struggle. The journal will also be invaluable for following the situation in South Africa from the point of view of international solidarity.

The first issue contains articles on: the state of emergency; wage struggles; the recent fusion of the foodworkers' union in order to build a single federation in this sector; the organization of the unemployed; the present development of COSATU; and, finally, a series of articles on the new unions.

In the editorial the general secretary of COSATU, Jay Naidoo, explains: "Today the major newspapers and radio and TV are controlled by bosses. Our children are taught bantu education which prepares them only to slave in factories for the starvation wages we are paid. The state of emergency is also an attempt to hide from us what is really happening in our country."

"COSATU says we must educate ourselves about what we want as workers. Let us all use the newspaper."

To subscribe, please write to: COSATU, P O Box 1019, Johannesburg 2000, SA. (The first edition does not give details of subscription rates, so please write for information).

Some employer organizations have openly welcomed the state of emergency and say that it has restored economic stability to the country. Our response is that it would be naive for employers to believe that the state of emergency has crushed or pacified the workers movement. It has in fact strengthened our commitment to end

the system of economic exploitation and apartheid.

We welcome the attitude of certain employers, but statements of disassociation do not really resolve the attack on trade unions. The employers have conceded us facilities, while many employers are using the state of emergency to attack us and regain



ground that they have lost. We are saying that this will not go unchallenged, and we will not forget those employers who are using the present phase of repression to attack us.

Q. What has been the international response?

A. COSATU and its affiliates have consistently been calling for the strengthening of international solidarity. We have said in the past that actions taken by workers in other countries could mean the difference between life and death for thousands of workers in this country and it is now — more than ever before — that we need concrete forms of solidarity action.

One aspect is that for us it is the most outrageous hypocrisy, the stands taken by the Reagan, Thatcher and Kohl administrations. For Black workers in South Africa, their actions only demonstrate the naked racism and self-preservation of their economic and political interests in this country and we call on the people of those countries to show by their actions that they disassociate themselves from the shame that their leaders want to plunge their nations into.

We welcome the support given to the COSATU representatives from the National Union of Mineworkers (NUM), Cyril Ramaphosa and James Motlatsi, who are in Britain at this time, and support fully their demands that effective pressure be brought on the apartheid system so that fundamental change could take place in South Africa. We warn that any action taken against these leaders on their return will only aggravate an already tense situation.

Q. What is your response to the claim that unionists have been detained for their political involvement rather than for trade union work?

A. In response to Le Grange's [Minister of Law and Order] statement that no trade unionist has been detained for trade union activities, we believe that the attack on the labour movement is a political attack, and our response, of necessity, has to be a political response.

In the South African situation it is impossible to separate the struggle for workers' rights on the factory floor from the broader struggle for political freedom. Worker leaders on the factory floor have a democratic right to represent and lead workers in the townships where they live.

The fact that the vast majority of people in South Africa are denied access to the structures of political decision-making would mean that political grievances would be channelled through the only avenues available to them — the trade unions.

Therefore leaders and workers who take up problems that face our communities — housing, rents and forced removals — see this as a legitimate extension of their activity on the factory floor.

If the state attempts to attribute the problems of South Africa to "agitators", then that would make every union member an agitator.

Q. How does the current state of emergency compare with last year's emergency?

A. The concrete difference is the level of organization of the labour movement and of the community-based organizations. The labour movement has developed over a decade of bitter and militant struggles, and its organization had, of necessity, to develop in such a way that would ensure that it survived in a repressive system. The basic principles have been those of worker control and worker democracy, and that has rooted the labour movement very deeply on the shopfloor and ensured that a substantial layer of leadership emerged.

The guiding slogan of our organization is that the union must be on the factory floor and not in the offices. That would mean that the labour movement in South Africa will survive any onslaught made on it. The political climate is also very different

in that there is a very high level of political awareness and confidence.

Q. One trade union is unscathed by the emergency. Is it significant that UWUSA [Inkatha backed union] has been left untouched?

A. UWUSA was formed with the full sanction of the apartheid system and the fact that it has been taking advantage of disruption by the state indicates their opportunism. We are convinced that their formation was a reactionary act taken by the state in collusion with some employers.

Q. What has the state of emergency meant for you personally?

A. The state of emergency has meant a dramatic change in the way one operates and lives. We are forced to take precautions just to ensure survival: not staying in one place, changing the way you look, meeting in different places. There is also a lot of stress that accompanies this — constantly aware of being hunted and arriving at meetings which have taken time to prepare — such as today's MAWU [metal workers union] Congress — and then having to beat a hasty exit. What is very heartening is the depth of support whilst facing attack and being hunted — and the material and moral support people are prepared to give. □

Polish Inprekor

ISSUE number 22 of Polish *Inprekor* is just out and contains articles on:

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The implications of Waldheim's election

FOR THE first time in 20 years, the partisans of the bourgeois right in Austria got an opportunity to celebrate an electoral triumph. It was the victory on June 8, 1986, of their candidate for president, Kurt Waldheim, former secretary-general of the United Nations. Even in the first round of the elections, Waldheim got 49.7% of the votes cast. He lacked only 0.3% to get an absolute majority and be elected there and then.

The Socialist Party candidate, Kurt Steyrer, was left far behind with 43.6%. The Green Alternative candidate, Freda Meissner-Blau, got only 5.5%. The far-right candidate, Otto Scrinzi, got 1.2%.

In the decisive electoral contest on June 8, Waldheim won out over his Socialist Party rival Steyrer by 53.9% to 46.1%.

Nevertheless, Waldheim — the candidate of the country's biggest party, the Austrian People's Party (the OVP) — had been the target of many accusations about his political past. Charges by the World Jewish Congress, the US government, and investigations by a series of Western governments had pointed up Waldheim's compromises with Nazism. Every day, journalists in the world's biggest publications and radio and TV stations reported new documents that highlighted the charges against the OVP candidate.

Despite all this, the OVP not only did not withdraw Waldheim from the electoral race, but he got 53.9% of the votes of those Austrians who cast ballots. This is an event that has to seem paradoxical and incomprehensible to a lot of foreign observers.

What happened cannot be understood without looking at Austrian politics in recent years, in particular at the record of the Austrian Socialist Party (SPO), which was in the government for 16 years, and most fundamentally at the evolution of Austria since the collapse of Hitler's Nazi regime.

ROBERT MISIK

We have been used for a long time to things happening differently in Austria than in the rest of Europe. This was also true in relation to the blow represented by the conservative "turn." (1) The bourgeoisie's austerity offensive in a large part of West Europe has often been linked directly to the replacement of a social democratic government by a purely bourgeois cabinet.

In Austria, it was a coalition government led by the social democrats, together with the right-wing free-enterprisers of the Austrian Liberal Party (FPO) that began cutting jobs in state enterprises, introduced an accelerated arms build-up and made

cutbacks in pensions and benefits.

Although the SPO-FPO cabinet did not have an entirely free hand, the OVP was unable previously to make the slightest headway in capitalizing on the worsening economic situation and was accumulating political scandals at every turn. It confined itself to a purely populist critique of individual aspects of the social democrats' program. Before now, its repertoire did not include a well-thought-out bourgeois program like Ronald Reagan, Margaret Thatcher, or Helmut Kohl. It was the SPO itself that took the initiative in applying bourgeois solutions to the crisis.

Thus, the liberal-social democrat

government accumulated a number of liabilities. They included:

- A "program of structural reforms" in nationalized industry, which cost thousands of workers their jobs.

- Cutbacks in social benefits.

- Stepped-up armament and militarization. Until a few years ago, the army was more than unloved by the bulk of the population. It was precisely the SP government that raised the social prestige of the armed forces. Now more and more unemployed youth are turning up in the army as career soldiers.

- Last but not least, the social democrat-liberal government passed a further milestone in the militarization of Austria by its purchase of new fighter aircraft.

On the public stage, those who implemented this right-wing course in the SPO were first of all very awkward and secondly extremely technocratic. Unlike the policy of Bruno Kreisky in the 1960s, who attracted a large part of the population of the backward Austria of those days behind him with the slogan of "Make Austria ready for Europe," the SPO's policy of administering the crisis rapidly cost it its ability to win a majority.

This breakdown in the political dominance of the SPO coincided in particular with the emergence of a severe crisis in the giant nationalized steel combine VOEST. This led to the economic policy of the social democrats being widely discredited in the eyes of the population. Moreover, the SPO's defensive attitude to the right's propaganda for reprivatization and plant closures deeply undermined the confidence of the core of social democratic voters in this sector.

Against this background, the OVP saw the time as ripe for steering a more radical bourgeois course. And in this context, the conflict over Kurt Waldheim's past came just at the right time.

In the debate about Waldheim's activity in the Nazi regime and in the Nazi army in the Balkans, long-dormant ideologies surfaced. The tenor of Waldheim's election speeches was that it was the soldiers of the Wehrmacht who did their "duty," not the thousands of resistance fighters who risked their lives and often lost them.

The revelations made by the *New York Times*, the World Jewish Congress, and the Austrian weekly *Profil*

1. The "turn" is the motto of the Kohl government in West Germany. It means a return to strict capitalist management, and is the term used in the German-speaking world for the capitalist offensive à la Reagan and Thatcher. — 'IV'.

were dismissed by Waldheim as nothing more than "a campaign by certain Jewish circles in New York." As for the attacks against him in the international press, Waldheim said in an interview with *Le Monde* that "it is known to be dominated by the World Jewish Congress."

The general secretary of the OVP, Michael Graff, went further. He talked about "shameless characters from the World Jewish Congress" who wanted to "do in" Kurt Waldheim, in their "insolent," "stupid," "primitive," "shameless," "vulgar," and "slandering" way, with their "Mafia methods."

In wide circles of the population, the OVP opened up an escape valve. The shamefaced anti-Semitism that lost its respectability after the Holocaust, became a shameless anti-Semitism. "Only when the Jews are gone will there be peace again." "It is a scandal how insolent the Jews have become." Such phrases became current again in the street discussions prompted by the election campaign.

Threatening letters

This went hand in hand with hundreds of threatening letters to the Israelitische Kultusgemeinde (the organization of the Austrian Jewish community), spitting at orthodox Jews, and broken windows in Jewish shops.

For electoralist reasons, the SPO leadership responded in a wholly inadequate way to this OVP witchhunt campaign. Instead of taking on the OVP's anti-Semitic campaign and rightist tone head on, the social democrats focused on presenting a positive picture of its candidate. The SPO firmly refused to take a position on the discussion on Waldheim's past.

The discussion was given impetus by the discovery of Waldheim's membership in the Storm Troopers' Order of the Colors (*Reiterstandarte*), the Nazi Student Union, and the Nazi Order of Chivalry (*Reiterkorps*).

The World Jewish Congress investigated Waldheim's past in connection with the Nazi Wehrmacht's operations in the Balkans. The former UN secretary-general served with an army group that was assigned specially to repressing the partisans in the Sarajevo and Dubrovnik area.

At the time, Waldheim was liaison officer between the German and Italian units. It was clearly proven that he was then one of those in the Wehrmacht best informed about the activities of the troops in this region. So far no one has been able to prove that he himself personally partici-

pated in war crimes. Moreover, Waldheim was assigned to the West Bosnia military group command. In June-August 1942 this unit waged a repressive campaign of unprecedented brutality against the Yugoslav resistance struggle, in which more than 68,000 people were murdered or put into concentration camps.

A half year later, Waldheim was transferred back to the Sarajevo-Dubrovnik-Plevilja area, where new sweeps against the partisans were beginning.

Thus, in 1942-43, Lieutenant and later First Lieutenant Waldheim was all over the area where the Nazi regime was waging its dirty war against the Yugoslav freedom fighters. After that, Waldheim was transferred as first officer to the command staff of the Eleventh Italian Army to Athens, where the "struggle against communism," as it was then called, had just begun, and mass deportations of Jews — especially in Salonika (where Waldheim was soon transferred) — were being prepared.

Most of these facts were brought to light by the World Jewish Congress and then investigated and confirmed by the *New York Times*. Moreover, they flew in the face of his previous claims (made especially when he was a candidate for UN secretary-general) that he had been mustered out of the Wehrmacht in 1941 after being wounded.

In Austria there was only a very distorted discussion of these facts. Not a single big daily reported critically on Waldheim. Although the World Jewish Congress never accused Waldheim of being a war criminal, but just produced documents (including UN ones) in which Waldheim was listed, at the request of the Yugoslav government, as a wanted war criminal; although all the big press in West Europe and the USA

attacked Waldheim; although the governments of Israel, Great Britain, and the US and French legislatures carried out investigations, the whole discussion of Waldheim was portrayed by the OVP and the biggest Austrian papers in an anti-Semitic light, as "a vulgar campaign by this private organization, the World Jewish Congress."

The resistance in Austria was conducted in general by two currents:

1. A group consisting mainly of intellectuals around the *Neues Osterreich* group, which published documents about Waldheim's role during the war, under the title "Doing Your Duty," as well as an ad in the weekly *Profil* in which over a thousand prominent Austrians called on Waldheim to withdraw his candidacy. It took the first steps in initiating the resistance in the country.

2. The Revolutionary Marxist Group (GRM), the Austrian section of the Fourth International, while collaborating very closely with the *Neues Osterreich* group, focussed on organizing active protests against Waldheim's rallies. Together with the German antifascist Beate Klarsfeld, who lives in Paris, it managed partially to break through the blockade in the Austrian press and demonstrate that there was another Austria beyond the swamp of anti-Semitism and soggy civic courage.

The resistance could not, of course, do much to change the election result. Waldheim scored a landslide victory with 53.9% of the vote. Several factors were responsible for that, some of which have already been mentioned.

1. Waldheim's victory was not so much a victory for him as it was a defeat for the SPO. The Austrian people have lost their confidence in the SPO, in which a large majority believed for 16 years.

Kurt Waldheim on the election trail in May, 1986 (DR)



The SPO managed to mobilize only 88% of the voters that voted for it in the 1983 parliamentary elections behind Steyrer. A hefty 9% of its voters cast their ballots for Waldheim. Close to 3% did not vote. On the other hand, the OVP pulled 92.8% of its 1983 voters behind Waldheim. A bare 0.8% went over to Steyrer. Still, 6.4% of the OVP voters did not go to the polls to vote for Waldheim but abstained. That indicates that among the supporters of the bourgeois party there is also a small but determined bloc of honest democrats, who did not go along with the OVP's electoral strategy.

Overall, it was mainly the crumbling of the core SPO vote, especially in the industrial areas, that decided the election.

2. There is a stronger anti-Semitic political tradition in Austria than in other West European countries (in this regard Poland could probably be compared to Austria). According to sociological analyses, 12% of the population are susceptible to rabid anti-Semitism and 60% are affected by subliminal anti-Semitism.

The anti-Semitic tones in Waldheim's campaign, according to spot studies, had no influence on the electoral behaviour of the latter group. But the group of 12% rabid anti-Semites, who were previously spread across the party-political spectrum, was fully mobilized by the anti-Semitic appeals in the election campaign and lined up, virtually to a person, behind Waldheim.

The decisive thing, however, was not so much the quantitative distribution of the anti-Semitic vote (it is supposed to have represented a swing vote of about 4%) as the long-term political effect. Forty years after the Holocaust, anti-Semitism has again become respectable. In this respect, this election campaign marked a change for the future political climate.

3. The final crucial point is an historical one, the way that Austria has formulated its role in the Third Reich and in the Second World War. When Hitler marched into Austria in March 1938, hundreds of thousands of Austrians greeted him in the center of Vienna waving swastika flags. There was scarcely any resistance to the Anschluss.

The percentage of Austrians enrolled in the National Socialist organizations was higher than it was in Germany itself. In relation to the population, a much higher percentage of Austrians were Nazi war criminals. In this respect, Austrians were neither "more nor less" Nazis than all the other German people.

However, at the Moscow conferences of the allies in Moscow in 1943, Austria was, so to speak,

exonerated from the crimes of the Nazi regime by being termed Hitler's "first victim."

That was the origin of the "lie on which the life of the Austrian nation was based." After 1945, all political parties eagerly grasped it. It relieved the burden of guilt on those who had played an active part in the Nazi regime or who had collaborated with it without in any way raising a discussion on the past.

Response of the left

In this sense, Waldheim really was a "typical Austrian" and was seen as such by most Austrians. The attacks on Waldheim today, 40 years afterward, were seen by most Austrians as an assault on Austria and those who were "involved" at the time.

The response of the political left to the reactionary rampage in Waldheim's campaign was modest, not to say pathetic.

1. The left in the social democracy was not visible. It injected no note of its own into the election campaign. Thus, like the party tops, it limited itself to "presenting a positive picture of its candidate."

2. On the other hand, the position of the Green-Alternative on the elections demonstrated a total insensitivity to political developments.

Despite the obvious conservative mobilization behind Waldheim, the Greens maintained their schema that "the social democrats are as bad as the OVP." Freda Meissner-Blau, the Green Alternative candidate, who got 5.5% in the first round, could not get agreement on any positive vote in the second round. The Parliamentary Citizen's Initiative (BIP), a list of notables that has undertaken to unite the splintered Green-Alternative movement, called openly for a blank vote. Its representative, Werner Vogt, even described Waldheim as the "lesser evil."

This dreadful political level of the Green-Alternative leaders was exceeded only by the reaction of their voters. About 37% of the Meissner-Blau voters cast their ballots for Waldheim in the second round. Some 36.4% stayed away from the polls. And only 26.6% voted for Steyrer. Only in Vienna was the picture different. There, 50% voted for Steyrer, as opposed to 25% for Waldheim.

3. The behaviour of the communists was also poor. On the basis of the correct analysis that the SPO today is in the forefront in pushing social cutbacks and militarization, and ultimately responsible for the

defeat, the Austrian CP (KPO) shut its eyes to the political dividing line that Waldheim's election meant for Austria. It left its members free either to vote blank or vote for Steyrer.

4. Thus, it was only the GRM and a small group of intellectuals and independents who waged a sharp attack on Waldheim in Austria.

The snakily smooth diplomat Waldheim has become the symbol of the conservative "turn." The weak-kneed OVP, which before now has not propagated any thoroughgoing capitalist austerity program, managed to shift over to a political polarization course in the election campaign. And the SPO was never willing nor able to confront it. The SPO leadership, which for a half year has been pushing a moderate austerity program in government, has maneuvered itself into a situation where it is now retreating step by step in the face of increased pressure from the right.

Of particular significance in this respect is the reaction of the SPO leadership to the defeat. A day after the election, the man who had served up till then as chancellor and party leader, Fred Sinowatz, a representative of the party center with a slight inclination to the right, resigned his post as head of government. He was succeeded by a representative of the party right, Franz Vranitzky, a former banker and finance minister in the outgoing cabinet.

With the exception of the post of finance minister, which went to former nationalization minister Ferdinand Lacina, who can be identified rather with the party left, all the key positions are now filled by representatives of the right wing. In particular this included the "best paid manager in Austria," Rudolf Streicher, who gained notoriety as the director of the Ranshofen-Berndorf and Steyer nationalized enterprises, where he took the responsibility for mass layoffs.

Austria is now in the midst of a political upheaval, marked by the worst state and government crisis since 1966, since the fall of the "Great Coalition." The political weather vane is pointing toward a "turn to the right." And against this course of the OVP, what the SPO is offering is ineffective. It is obviously trying to show that it can carry through a better austerity program than the bourgeoisie itself.

At the same time, the upheaval in the political scene, and in particular in the SPO itself, offered the independent left an opening for mobilizing against the "turn." Looking ahead, the period after the parliamentary elections in April 1987 will be decisive. □

The imperialists' wall

IN RECENT MONTHS, the rights of refugees in the relatively few European countries that provide any sort of welcome and benefits have come under sharp attack — from the Netherlands to Denmark and finally to West Germany. Over the summer, West German authorities sent up a piteous howl that East Germany was trying to bankrupt them by allowing third world refugees, in particular Tamils, free transit to their territory through East Berlin. Harsh new measures have been introduced, such as a five-year waiting period before refugees are allowed to earn a living.

In particular the wave of Sri Lankan refugees have been used as a pretext for raising a cry of alarm. They are very visible, even in Chirac's France, which is hardly a generous host country. Desperate and totally abandoned Tamils drift through the streets of Paris. They are certainly not fattening on the largesse of overly generous Western governments. (1)

In West Germany, in its August 28 issue, the Fourth Internationalist paper *Was Tun* made the following comment on the recent attacks on the rights of refugees.

FELIX VON DER SCHINSKY

Just recently, we have seen the authorities shedding a lot of anti-communist tears over the twenty-sixth anniversary of one wall [that is, the Berlin wall]. For some weeks, they have been energetically building up another. The Berlin border has to be "sealed." The "Berlin gap" has to be plugged.

What has been achieved on the other border of the German Federal Republic years ago must now be extended to West Berlin. The flood of refugees fleeing hunger, war, torture, political, racial and religious oppression and seeking asylum and decent treatment in the "free" Federal Republic of Germany has to be stopped.

Since the new rise of the refugee figures to 40,000 in the first half of 1986, after the number was cut down to 20,000 by strict but somewhat quieter policies in the last three years of the social democratic government (in 1980 it was still 108,000), the Bonn "turn" government has come up with a new theme — the "deluge of refugees." (2)

Unfortunately, the government has had the good luck to come up with

a "turn theme" just before the elections that offers the best chances of success, because on this question it will get the support of a broad coalition. Likewise, the majority of the population seems to be accepting the anti-refugee hysteria uncritically. If we are to believe the polls, 70 per cent are in favor of restricting the right to asylum. And finally, the insecure refugees who are without rights and literally unable to speak for themselves can hardly be expected to put up much resistance.

Around the world, whole populations are in flight. The UN High Commission on Refugees estimates the number of "refugees within the guidelines of the Geneva Convention" at almost 18 million, equal to the total population of East Germany.

This does not include applicants for asylum or so-called unrecognized refugees, nor those not accepted as refugees but not expelled, — "tolerated" or "de facto refugees." Likewise left out of the picture are minorities oppressed in their own countries and the 2 million Palestinians who are hounded from pillar to post. These are all fleeing from poverty, hunger, war

and oppression, and therefore accept the worst living conditions because at least they represent a "better" solution.

The main responsibility for the flight of millions of people lies with imperialist exploitation of the countries of the so-called third world. This is the cause of the gigantic indebtedness of the poor countries, of the social uprooting of millions, of the destruction of traditional modes of production for the benefit of a world market dominated by the trusts.

Moreover, it is also primarily the economic effects of subjugation to imperialism that makes religious, ethnic and national differences into powderkegs that explode into persecution and civil war.

Year after year, the imperialist governments consecrate these conditions at their "world economic summits" through the price dictates and the coercive measures of the International Monetary Fund.

A large part of the refugees therefore remain in the poor countries, crossing only the nearest borders.

In Somalia, there is one refugee for every three inhabitants; in Jordan, one for every five; in Djibouti, one in ten; in Lebanon, one in 14. In Pakistan, there are 2.9 million refugees; in Iran, 1.8 million; in Somalia, 700,000; and in Sudan, 690,000. These figures dwarf the numbers of refugees in any West European country or in the USA.

In the refugee camps in Sudan and Somalia, inconceivable conditions prevail. Every day several thousand children die of hunger. The predominant causes of death are malnutrition and epidemic diseases.

Only a small part of the refugees (about 5 per cent) travel to the imperialist centers. They are only the better-off ones who can buy expensive tickets and pay for help from traffickers in human misery to smuggle them in. The greater part of them come from petty-bourgeois layers — traders and artisans from Sri Lanka who have been displaced by the war against the Tamils, middle-class people fleeing the "Islamization" of the Khomeini regime in Iran, better-off Kurds trying to escape from Turkey's genocide against the Kurdish people.

The figures that have been published by the Ministry of the Interior have been heavily doctored. The 700,000 refugees in West Germany

1. See report on Tamil refugees in Canada, page 26.

2. The "turn" is the motto of the Kohl government in West Germany. It means a return to strict capitalist management, and is the term used in the German-speaking world for a capitalist offensive a la Reagan and Thatcher. — 'IV'.



A protest against the massacre of Tamils in Sri Lanka in the Indian town of Calcutta, 1983 (DR)

Zimmerman [Minister of the Interior] referred to include the long since integrated refugees from East Germany who came in the 1950s and 1960s and at the time were welcomed. Likewise, they include long tolerated "stateless foreigners." Moreover, even these figures have been tripled "because every refugee brings three relatives along." This number of relatives is demonstratively false.

By a realistic count, West Germany has only 300,000 refugees, including the "boat people" from Vietnam, who were accepted without any hearing on their entitlement to refugee status. More than a few of them go to other countries after a short time.

On the basis of UN criteria (the Geneva Convention), there are only 126,600 refugees in West Germany at the moment. But even the higher figure represents only five refugees for every thousand inhabitants, as much or less than in other West European countries.

Zimmerman's figure of 700,000 refugees includes 270,000 so-called de facto refugees. This refers to persons whose application for asylum has been rejected but who have not

been deported. The greatest hysteria is being whipped up against them, and at the same time the government speakers pat themselves on the back because West Germany is supposedly gracious enough to tolerate these people here.

This is no big act of generosity. West Germany is a signer of the Geneva Convention of 1951, which is binding law here. In accordance with it, no one can be sent back whose life is in danger in his or her homeland. This leaves aside the fact that torture and pogroms against the Tamils in Sri Lanka are not recognized here as grounds for asylum.

Intolerable conditions

For a long time, refugees have been rebaptised "asylum seekers" in the official language. Today they have become applicants pure and simple. Along with a cynical "clarification" of the refugee problems and a semantic closeness to slanderous descriptions (such as faker), this is

above all to veil the intolerable conditions from which these people are fleeing, which are the real problems. Instead of looking at these causes, the fact that they are seeking exile here and therefore want something from "us" is declared to be the main problem.

Such difficulties can then quickly be magnified into "a deluge of refugees" and similar catastrophes. No less defamatory is the minting of the word "economic refugee." Are there any more pressing grounds for flight than economic ones? Has not economic plundering gone hand in hand with political oppression everywhere, from the racist oppression of the Jews in Nazi Germany to the Tamils in Sri Lanka?

For West Germany, its definition of "refugees" is grounds enough to dump refugees in camps. Such people have restrictions on their ability to leave the camps, they are not supposed to leave the district, and they cannot work or study.

The conditions in the camps have inevitably led to violence, and such incidents also serve to breed hatred and misunderstanding in the German population. The final kick in the teeth are the terrorist attacks by radical rightists against the hostels and camps for refugees, such as happened on several occasions in recent weeks.

Moreover, the refugees are supposed to be aware at all times that they are not wanted here. The right of asylum does indeed exist but it must not be claimed.

West Germany would certainly not go bankrupt if it accepted more refugees and treated them decently, gave them work and education, even if the 2 billion mark figure that Zimmermann conjured up were a real one.

The drastic austerity measures at the expense of the refugees are a simple, visible, and quick "turn" measure.

Since the Christian Democrats and the Liberals are planning sharp attacks on the wages, social benefits and working conditions of millions of Germans in their coming years in government they have to make an example out of the poorest of the poor.

The changes now in the works, whether they are new laws, abolition of the right of transit, restrictions on the right of asylum for certain groups of persons, or whatever, are closely related to the attacks of the government and the bosses on the living standards of the working people and the unemployed.

The trade unions and social protest movements should recognize this and join in the struggle to defend the full right of asylum. □

Thai CP begins to overcome its crisis

THE COMMUNIST PARTY of Thailand (CPT) went through a serious political and organizational crisis at the beginning of the 1980s. The Cambodian events and the explosion of Sino-Indochinese conflicts were the detonator. Briefly, the whole orientation followed by the CPT came under challenge: ideological references; international politics; the theory and practice of the united front; the strategy for taking power; the analysis of Thai society; and the internal functioning of the party and mass work. In a few years, the CPT lost many members (perhaps the majority), its main guerrilla bases (those in the south being less hard hit than those in the north and north-east) and a large part of its influence.

The crisis was all the more serious because it hit a party that had experienced a very rapid growth in the 1970s and which had, for the first time, achieved a national presence at the head of the People's Liberation Army of Thailand, an armed-struggle movement which was growing rapidly.

Founded in 1942 after the disintegration of the Communist Party of Siam in the 1930s, the CPT was driven out of the towns by the repression. At the beginning of the 1960s, the CPT reaffirmed its support for "Mao Tse-Tung's thought" and rural armed struggle, which began in practice in 1965. It was after the overthrow of the military dictatorship in 1973 by an extraordinary mobilization of the urban masses that the CPT became a national force. The bloody coup d'état in 1976 led to an expansion of the armed struggle movement and the establishment of the Coordinating Committee of Patriotic and Democratic Forces (CCPDF), a united front between the CPT, other political formations and militants of the urban and rural mass movement. From 1980 to 1982 the crisis in the CPT exploded and spread and the CCPDF broke up.

In 1984 *International Viewpoint* published an analysis of the crisis. (1) Since then, according to a leader of the international relations section of the CPT's central committee, the most acute period of crisis has been overcome. In mid-1986 the CPT published an official translation of the documents adopted at its IVth Congress, held in April-May 1982. This congress, meeting in the midst of utter crisis, was marked by contested votes on all the basic questions. It was not able immediately to rectify the situation because the congress ended in confusion, accentuating the disappointment and despondency of many militants and sympathisers. The resignations continued. A

polemic was opened on the interpretation given to the results of the congress by the national leadership and on the nature of the changes that had been announced.

However, the CPT today remains the main revolutionary organization in Thailand. The extreme-left political groups, set up in the early 1980s, have had to face major political difficulties, repression and material and organizational problems at a time when they only had very tiny resources. It seems that they have not succeeded in consolidating new organizations of importance, either by recruitment or by their social implantation. Overall, the backlash of the crisis of the early 1980s has not yet been overcome. The militant generation of the 1970s remains largely disheartened and disoriented.

The documents of the CPT's IVth Congress, published here, testify to the evolution in the orientation of the party. Notable changes were made: in international policy an affirmation of independence, where previously the party had been heavily integrated into the pro-China bloc; in the analysis of Thai society, an abandonment of the traditional characterization of the country as "semi-feudal" and a recognition of its capitalist development; and in terms of a strategic framework, ditching the formula of "the jungle leads the villages, the countryside encircles the cities".

Although there remained an insistence on the rural armed struggle, greater weight was given to mass work, to political struggle and to work in the cities. The documents, which are succinct, still stick to general formulas.

Another development to be noted is the setting up of a new clandestine organization in April this year, the Thai Solidarity Group (TSG). Supported in particular by the CPT, the TSG has set the following objectives; "to act as an information and exchange center between popular movements in Thailand and abroad; to support the struggle of and cooperate with the popular movements in other countries; and to channel international support for the Thai popular struggle". (2)

The interview which follows, made in June 1986, is with a leader of the international section of the CPT's central committee who explains the significance of the publication of the documents of the IVth Congress and the present situation of the CPT. □

PAUL PETITJEAN

1. "The crisis of the Communist Party and the left" by Paul Petitjean, *International Viewpoint* No. 49, March 26, 1984.

2. From the Thai Solidarity Group's leaflet, dated 1986, p.6. To contact the TSG write to them at Box 28, DK-2750 Ballurup, Denmark.

Interview with a member of the CPT central committee

Question. What is the importance of the documents of the IVth Congress of the CPT, both for the organisation and for the Thai revolutionary movement?

Answer. These documents express the conclusions reached by our congress. In publishing them, we are not first of all looking to show that our party has changed, adopting a more progressive line. Above all what we want in making them known is to submit them to discussion and to the test of experience. We are publishing them so that people can study the conclusions we have arrived at and judge for themselves about the evolution of our party.

For example, we hope that everyone — whether Thai or not — will be able to discuss them in the light of their own experience and in a way that will shed some light on the correctness or the errors of the documents. It is possible that a reading of the documents will lead to misunderstandings or disagreements, which will then spark off a discussion.

Q. Why were these documents, adopted in 1982, not published officially in English until now?

A. After the 1982 congress, we immediately circulated them for study. They were sent to party cadres and distributed in the jungle camps to be explained and to educate the militants. But we weren't able to prepare a good English translation. Indeed, we have been through a difficult period. We lost a lot of our network abroad who could help us with translation work.

More generally, with the leaving of too many activists and the arrests, our work has been disorganised. We have had big financial problems. A number of our members have had to deal with urgent tasks first of all: finding work in the towns and adapting to changes in the situation in the countryside, where the army has been particularly active militarily as well as politically with the amnesty programme and democratic promises.

At that time many activists were opposed to keeping too many forces in the jungle camps. They therefore decided to leave the jungle and return

to the towns, or sometimes to their villages. But the social implantation of our members was too weak, and this made it very difficult for these militants who were returning to a legal existence. In a hurry to find work or to restart their studies that were interrupted after the coup d'état in 1976, assailed by multiple practical difficulties, many members then temporarily broke with the CPT. They left with the idea that they would contact the party again once their problems of social and political reintegration had been resolved.

In the period following the IVth Congress, we therefore had a thousand problems to resolve, such as the weakening of our economic resources, defence of our organization, reorganizing our apparatus, our mass work and so on. There was quite a lot of confusion and a number of militants were paralyzed, incapable of acting.

Having pinned great hopes on the IVth Congress, but not always being able to see the results coming, many sympathisers were discouraged.

However, two or three years after the congress, the positive results are being seen. A substantial recovery is apparent. It is very important. You could say, taking account of the crisis we have been through, that the conclusions of the IVth Congress have been put to their first practical test during some very difficult years. It has been a positive test. In fact, I think that if these conclusions had been wrong, we would not have been able to survive this test.

Q. Can you be more precise about the progress registered during this time?

A. Three years after the IVth Congress, we reorganized the basis of our urban and rural work. Organizations that had become useless were dissolved. New ones, better adapted to the situation, were developed. In general, you could say that the engine has begun to function again after having been seized up. A number of those who left the party have contacted us again.

Concerning publications, we now have a monthly review, *Thong Tai*



(“The Flag of Liberty”), aimed at everyone. It is printed centrally, with a print run of at least 500 copies, with more reproduced by local groups. About every two months we publish *Pragai Fai* (“The Spark”). Lastly, we have begun to publish the bulletin *Thai Democratic Solidarity*, in English, so as to ensure a regular flow of information abroad and to help with solidarity. We reckon on publishing *Thai Democratic Solidarity* three or four times a year. The first issue appeared at the beginning of this year, and the second will be out shortly.

Q. What is the present situation of the mass movement?

A. Oppression and exploitation are still there, still requiring a continuous struggle. In spite of the difficulties that we have met, it has to be emphasized that the experience of the 1970s has not been forgotten.

After the overthrow of the military dictatorship in 1973, there was an exceptional freedom of speech, a proliferation of free newspapers. The elections themselves, whether local or national, became occasions for educating the people. Election times became times for mass education. Similarly, the experience of the struggle that followed the bloody coup d'état in 1976 has not disappeared. The people's general level of consciousness is clearly much higher than was the case ten years ago.

This level of popular consciousness can rise progressively, day after day. It is up to us to show we are capable of responding to the needs of the situation. New possibilities for action exist. But we face an important problem in that the mass movement remains fragmented. It is divided around multiple specific objectives. In the

absence of big central objectives, there is no spontaneous dynamic of unification of the mass movement, of unity in action. We hope that the day will soon come when there will be a new possibility to launch such a unitary dynamic around common objectives of struggle.

Q. What are your international politics now? And what do you expect from international solidarity and from the contact you can establish with other movements?

A. On our international politics, I would refer you to the relevant points of our political resolution from the IVth Congress. Concerning international solidarity, we are now

opening our party to an exchange of views with others. We hope to be able to develop relations of mutual solidarity. We want to have exchanges of opinion and, I stress, of experiences. Every party, every progressive group and every mass movement has its own experience. They deserve to be studied. We must study the lessons of history.

— Internationalism is inscribed in the statutes of our party. We have fundamentally internationalist politics towards other communist parties and other Marxist and Leninist movements. And we also want to make close links with all the solidarity groups. □

overall growth of capitalism. At the same time feudalism still persists.

II. Basic contradictions, the stages and patterns of the revolution, the targets, forces, duties and path of the revolution.

A. Basic contradictions:

1. The contradiction between imperialism and the Thai nation.

2. The contradiction between the comprador bureaucrat capitalism and feudalism on the one hand, and the Thai people on the other.

B. Stages and patterns of the revolution:

The present stage of the revolution is a national democratic revolution. The pattern of the revolution is a new-model democratic revolution.

C. The targets of the revolution:

Imperialism, comprador bureaucrat capitalism together with feudalism form a reactionary alliance. Thus the internal targets are the comprador bureaucrat capitalism and feudalism. The external target is imperialism, particularly American imperialism. At present the internal targets are considered to be prominent and our energies are focused on attacking the reactionary government which is considered the representative of all three reactionary forces.

The target to be attacked, whether internal or external, could change in priority according to the situation, or for strategic and tactical purposes.

D. The leading class and the forces of the revolution:

The proletariat is the leading class. The proletariat, the peasants and small-scale capitalism are the basic forces of the revolution. The class of national capitalists, and all those with patriotic and democratic ideals, are also considered a revolutionary force.

E. The duties of the revolution:

To strengthen the basic revolutionary forces; to increase the effectiveness of the people's armed forces; to encourage patriotic and democratic moves to overthrow the rule of comprador bureaucrat capitalism and feudalism; to oppose the oppressive influence of imperialism; to found a new Thailand with an independent, democratic and prosperous future.

F. The path of the revolution:

To stand by the armed struggle based in the countryside, as well as the economic, political and other forms of struggle; to unite countryside and city so as finally to seize state power. □

*Communist Party of Thailand
IVth Congress, 1982*

On the structure of Thai society and the strategy of the revolution

I. On the structure of Thai society: An initial conclusion.

Originating from the unequal treaties made with England in 1855 and with other Western countries, the incursion of imperialism transformed Thai feudalism into a virtual semi-colonial semi-feudal state.

After World War II, when the colonial system collapsed, imperialism employed a new form of colonialism as the most important method of intruding into various countries. In the last 20 years the Thai ruling class has opened the doors for investment by international monopoly capitalism, allowing the capitalist economy, especially foreign monopoly capitalism

and the comprador bureaucrat capitalism, to increase rapidly. At the same time the feudal mode of production has declined.

At present the structure of Thai society is still semi-colonial. Instead of a natural economy based on domestic production and consumption, it has been transformed into a commodity-based economy. The monopoly capitalism of imperialism and the capitalism of the comprador bureaucrat class have grown greatly, and combined with feudalist elements, they now control the economy of the country. National capitalism, while itself under pressure, has also managed to grow, thanks to the

Tanks in Bangkok at the time of the 1981 coup (DR)



Present policy of the Communist Party of Thailand

A BRIEF HISTORY

THE COMMUNIST Party of Thailand (CPT) is a revolutionary working-class party adhering to a Marxist-Leninist ideology. Since it was founded in 1942, the CPT has been fighting for the interests of the Thai people and for the international revolution. Its activities have mainly been illegal.

At present, the CPT has members and activists conducting mass work all over the country, both in the cities and in the countryside. The People's Liberation Army of Thailand (PLAT), established in 1969, is fighting with the reactionary forces of the state, protecting the interests of the people in some 40 of Thailand's 73 provinces.

The immediate goal of the CPT is to establish a democratic government of the people and gradually proceed to socialism and eventually communism as the final goal.

PRESENT POLICY

All patriotic and democratic people/forces should strive for unity in their struggle for a truly independent, democratic and just Thailand. The CPT welcomes cooperation with political parties and groups, and people of various walks of life on the basis of independence, equality and mutual respect, to fight the enemy and solve the problems of the people and the country.

POLITICAL POLICY

1. To cooperate with people of all classes, every national group, with political parties/groups and organizations, as well as patriotic and democratic individuals who desire justice, in order to overthrow the reactionary government, eradicate American imperialist influence which dominates Thailand; and to found a democratic government of the people, consisting of representatives of various patriotic and democratic forces, thus creating a New Thailand, truly independent, democratic and prosperous.

2. To abrogate laws, proclamations, announcements, enforcements, etc. which limit freedom and infringe on the rights of the people; to free patriots, democrats or innocent people who have been imprisoned; to guarantee — for the benefit of the

people — the right to speak, write and publish, to assemble, demonstrate and strike, to found political parties, trade unions, professional associations and other mass organizations.

3. To draw up a democratic constitution, in cooperation with representatives of patriotic and democratic forces; to hold early elections to set up a government in a democratic manner.

The members of the assembly of people's representatives must be elected. Those having reached the age of 18 will have the right to elect and be elected.

4. To reform the administration, eradicating corruption, oppression and harassment of the people, to create an efficient administrative apparatus, truly serving the people.

5. Civil servants and state officials, policemen, military personnel of the reactionary government who support, or at least do not oppose, the patriotic, democratic and just struggle of the people, will be honoured by the democratic government and allowed to carry on their duties as appropriate.

ECONOMIC POLICY

6. To do away with the monopoly of comprador bureaucrat capitalism and imperialism; to reform and develop state industry; to oversee industry, trade, agriculture, communications, transport, etc. of the national capitalists; to help the small producers and retailers, who contribute to the people and the national economy.

To protect and employ natural resources in a suitable manner.

7. To put an end to the feudal style of exploitation, and eradicate local mafias; to give land ownership to the farmers; to solve the problem of land-swindling and unjust land-grabbing; to solve the market problems and establish a definite plan of agricultural production; to guarantee prices which are just both to the farmers and consumers; to establish a system of credit; to increase irrigation, promote agricultural cooperatives and develop agricultural production; to raise the living standard of the farmers.

8. To adjust the low wages of the workers and employees, as well as the salaries of low-grade civil

servants to a level appropriate to the cost of living. Work of the same kind, having the same output, should receive the same wage without distinction of sex, age and race; forced slave-like labour must be forbidden; there must be protection of child and female labour; to protect the rights of Thai workers abroad; to promote the development of labour skills and raise the educational level of the workers.

9. Science and technology must be developed to promote the national economy and to raise the living standards of the people.

FOREIGN POLICY

10. To implement an independent foreign policy, and abrogate unjust treaties and agreements which imperialism has made with Thailand; to establish and promote friendly relations with various countries on a basis of mutual benefit, equality, respecting the sovereignty and inviolability of territory; to protect the just rights and interests of foreigners in Thailand.

11. To oppose imperialism, especially American imperialism; to oppose colonialism, both old and new; to oppose oppression, threats, control and interference by foreign countries, including racism and colour prejudice; to support the just struggle of oppressed peoples and nations throughout the world; to join hands with all justice-loving individuals, groups organizations and political parties in other countries.

SOCIAL AND CULTURAL POLICY

12. Individuals will have freedom to study and practice religion, as long as this does not affect national security, public order or morality. All religions will have equal status before the law and will be protected against disparagement and contempt.

13. To guarantee elementary education for all youth, especially in the countryside; to promote vocational training appropriate to local conditions and development of the national economy; to support students, intellectuals, scientists and those gifted in various ways, so that they can fully

Premier Prem Tinsulanond (DR)



use their abilities in the building of the nation.

14. Women shall have the same economic, political and social rights as men, including equal rights to education and employment. Oppression and prejudice against women will be opposed.

15. In accordance with the development of production, a social security system will be introduced in stages, so as to guarantee the welfare of mother and child as well as the aged; solve the problem of accommodation for slum dwellers and the urban poor, establish programmes to solve the problem of unemployment, guarantee the working safety of labourers; raise the living standards and welfare of workers.

16. To improve public health and hospital care throughout the country, especially in the countryside, in the factories and among the urban poor; to protect them from and to eliminate pollution.

17. To aid aged and disabled soldiers and revolutionaries; to aid the families of those who have sacrificed their lives for the revolution, the families of revolutionary soldiers, as well as the families of those doing revolutionary work.

18. To promote the well-being of the people and an appropriate social order; to solve the problem of crime; to eradicate the oppression and persecution of the people; to put an end to the deception of and trade with women and children, prostitution and drug-trafficking.

19. To cultivate a harmonious national culture; to promote art and culture, as well as a patriotic, democratic and scientific education; to preserve and restore the historic sites, art objects and antiquities of the nation; to accept the suitable aspects of foreign cultures, while eradicating the degenerate aspects of imperialist and feudal culture.

NATIONAL MINORITY POLICY

20. The various nationalities in Thailand will be given equal rights, and will be encouraged to respect and support each other. Each nationality has the right to use its own language, script and religion, and to preserve its valuable customs and traditions; to oppose oppression or prejudice among nationalities. National minorities who are located together have the right to govern themselves, while remaining in the large family of Thailand. To educate personnel in various fields in order to develop the economy, culture, education and public health in the national minority areas. □

Communist Party of Thailand
IVth Congress, 1982

Which way forward for the Philippine revolution?

THE FOLLOWING article is reprinted from the August 1986 edition of *Socialist Action*, a monthly newspaper produced by supporters of the Fourth International in the United States.

It presents some different points of view from *International Viewpoint's* coverage of the political process in the Philippines and the debate on the left. (1)

SEAN FLYNN

"People's power" in the Philippines mobilized millions of workers, displaced farmers and elements of the middle-class against the dictatorship of Ferdinand Marcos. But the fruit of the "February revolution" is a capitalist government. The anti-Marcos "elite opposition" and the army headed by Juan Ponce Enrile, Marcos' former defence minister, are the key elements in the new regime.

The Philippine events demonstrate the ability of the local ruling classes to rebound from a seemingly hopeless political situation. But more important, they show that the ruling classes can do so only on the coattails of the mass movement.

Several left-wing organizations, including "democratic socialist" and "independent Marxist" groups, gave their support to Cory Aquino's pro-capitalist slate in the February presidential elections. These groups limited their electoral program to removing Marcos and saw their action as helping to "push Aquino to the left."

The bulk of the left, including the nationalist coalition BAYAN and the mass organizations under the influence of the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP), opted for a boycott of the elections. The CPP pointed out that the electoral process was fraudulent and that Aquino was a capitalist candidate.

Unfortunately, the forces advocating boycott failed to gauge correctly the rising mobilization of the masses, who saw the electoral process as an opportunity to voice their long-simmering hatred of the Marcos regime. Fighting for the right to freely participate in political action became the momentary focal point of the mass struggle.

Failing to pose a viable working-class alternative to both Marcos and

Aquino, the boycott yielded leadership of the democratic struggle to Aquino and the elite opposition without a fight.

In the wake of the elections, left-wing political organizations have taken a critical look at the boycott. The CPP now calls the boycott a "major political blunder." The national council of Kadena, a large youth group within the BAYAN coalition, terms the boycott a "tragic error."

Unfortunately, the leaders of these groups appear to be drawing the wrong conclusions, reasoning that "critical participation," that is voting for Aquino, was the only alternative. Today, this view extends to politically supporting Aquino against the more right-wing figures in the government.

Thus, Leandro Alejandro, secretary-general of BAYAN, stated, "There's a great potential for the Aquino government to evolve into a more representative government. She's no nationalist, but she's a sincere liberal and will stand up for what she's said already." (*San Francisco Examiner*, March 3, 1986).

The CPP, for its part, calls for "constructive criticism" of the Aquino regime. "In our propaganda we agreed on no attacks on her [Aquino]," a CPP official told the *Examiner* on July 18. "We like her . . . And it

1. See the following articles by Paul Petitjean: "After the election: re-assessment in the revolutionary left", *International Viewpoint* No. 100, June 2, 1986; "Communist Party makes a self-criticism", *IV* No. 102, June 30, 1986; "The trajectory of Aquino's campaign", *IV* No. 103, July 14, 1986.

See also the following issues of *IV* this year which have published material on the Philippines: issue numbers 92, 93, 94, 95, 97 and 98.

becomes a public relations problem for her if the left supports her and she doesn't negotiate with us."

The CPP puts forward the view that there are "liberals and progressives" within the Aquino government that "recognize the legitimacy of fighting an unjust social system." In the May 1986 issue of the CPP journal, *Ang Bayan*, the party leadership advocates a friendly stance toward the liberal wing of the government, stressing that it "can be drawn to support the people's demands or can be neutralized."

The CPP states that one of its major goals is to be accepted as part of a "transitional coalition government" on an equal footing with the pro-capitalist parties and groupings. So far, however, Aquino has emphasized that she will never appoint communists to her government.

The CPP's current conciliatory attitude toward Aquino highlights the holdovers of the Maoist variety of Stalinism on the CPP. The CPP originated in a 1968 Maoist break with the pro-Moscow Philippine CP, the PKP. Initially oriented to rural guerrilla warfare, it distanced itself from China in the mid-1970s and has expanded its work to a variety of arenas including semi-legal activity in the urban centers.

The Maoist "people's war" strategy distorted the Marxist view of the role of armed struggle in the revolutionary process. Rather than seeing it

Filipino soldier joins anti-Marcos protests (DR)



as an organic development arising out of the need to defend the mobilizations of the workers and peasants around concrete demands, Maoist military practice was employed as a long-term strategy based on peasant armies divorced from the urban centers.

"Bloc of four classes"

This strategy was combined with political alliances with the "national bourgeois" component of the capitalist class, which was considered a potential partner in what the Maoists called the "bloc of four classes."

Reflecting the influence of these views, the CPP could call for nationalizing foreign and monopoly-owned concerns while simultaneously stating: "Part of the workers' anti-imperialist struggle is an alliance with national capitalists. In concrete terms, the workers seek protection for local capital over those of foreign monopoly. The workers support a bigger voice for the national bourgeoisie in the economy and in the formulation of economic policies." (*Ang Bayan*, May 1986).

The ruling classes of the world are not at all unfamiliar with the phenomenon of mass mobilizations which threaten their rule. Wherever possible they seek to channel the anger and frustration of the masses into reformist electoral schemes designed to give the appearance of offering solutions to the problems of capitalist rule. History has recorded the tragic consequences resulting from the failure of the workers' organizations to maintain their political independence from these pro-capitalist formations and leaders.

The best example from recent history is the political support given by most of the Iranian workers' organizations to the "anti-imperialist" government of Khomeini. In the name of fighting against the "fascist" forces of the Shah of Iran and US imperialism, the Iranian left aided Khomeini in reconsolidating the rule of Iranian capital. In time, the workers' movement was beheaded, disoriented, and finally demobilized.

In the Philippines, the uneasy truce between the different components of the capitalist class within the new government results from the common need to re-establish their control over a mobilized people.

This job is made easier so long as the workers and peasants retain illusions in Aquino's ability to fundamentally change the country's social and economic structures. To the extent that the CPP and the mass

organizations it influences support Aquino, these illusions are deepened and the potential for the independent mobilization of the masses is weakened and ultimately crushed.

It is the power of the mass movement itself which compels Aquino to announce the reforms affecting the labor movement and political prisoners. The same is true for her advocacy of negotiations with the CPP's New People's Army.

Removing Marcos was not the only goal of the Philippine revolution.

The liberation of the Philippine people from foreign political and economic domination was and remains a central aspect of the struggle.

The Marcos dictatorship represented a choice made by the Philippine capitalists to accept the economic development strategy foisted on the country by the World Bank. This included the massive penetration of imperialist capital and the imposition of austerity measures and military rule to guarantee profit.

Today, Aquino's finance minister, Jaime Ongpin, is reluctant to substantially break with this strategy. Breaking with the economic stranglehold of imperialism would require the mobilization of the Philippine masses, placing the Philippine government in direct opposition to the US government.

This struggle, in turn, would set into motion a radical dynamic whose logic would go further than opposition to foreign rule. It is this anti-capitalist dynamic that the native ruling classes fear first and foremost.

Land reform is another key aspect of the struggle. It concerns not only a peasantry crushed by debt, depressed prices, and the encroachment of the multinationals, but also vast numbers of dispossessed farmers who constitute a miserably poor strata in the cities. Agriculture Minister Ramon Mitra, himself a landlord, has been incapable of going beyond the inadequate reform introduced by Marcos.

All of these tasks — political democracy, national liberation, and land reform — have historically been the purview of a "national democratic revolution." In the advanced industrial countries, all were achieved, to one degree or another, in the course of establishing the economic rule of capital.

However, with the advent of the modern imperialist era at the close of the 19th century and the corresponding imposition of capitalist market relations throughout the underdeveloped world, the previous possibilities for balanced growth and social progress were cut off. A dependent capitalism emerged in the former colonial world as imperialism

required the subordination of the local bourgeois-landlord classes to a global economic network dominated by the industrialized West.

Due to this warped development, and because the working classes of the semi-colonial countries ultimately pose a greater threat than does foreign capital, even the most "nationalist" factions of the ruling class have been incapable of accomplishing the democratic tasks previously associated with the rise of capitalism.

This job has instead passed onto the workers and poor peasants of the underdeveloped countries, requiring the seizure of state power for a radical transformation of society in the interests of the majority of the population.

The resolution of these unfinished democratic tasks in predominantly peasant societies such as the Philippines — where 60 per cent of the population live in rural districts — requires the creation of a strong worker-peasant alliance.

The loss of capitalism's original progressive dynamic was emphasized by the Communist International of Lenin and Trotsky in its early conferences. "The long-drawn-out struggle with world imperialism . . . will demand the mobilization of all revolutionary elements. This is made all the more necessary by the tendency of the indigenous ruling classes to make compromises with foreign capital directed against the fundamental interests of the mass of the people.

"Just as in the West the slogan of the workers' united front has helped and is helping to expose the social democrats' sell-out of proletarian interests, so the slogan of an anti-imperialist united front will help to expose the vacillations of the various bourgeois-nationalist groups [and] help the working masses to develop their revolutionary will and to increase their class consciousness . . ." (*Theses, Resolutions and Manifestos of the First Four Congresses of the Communist International*, Pathfinder Press, p. 415).

The tactic of the anti-imperialist united front and its relation to solving the democratic tasks of the revolution was distorted in the wake of the bureaucratic degeneration of the communist movement under Stalin in the 1920s. It was transformed from a tactic designed to mobilize the masses in their own class interest, to a strategy to subjugate the masses in favor of a programmatic alliance with the so-called anti-imperialist bourgeoisie.

Under this scheme, the national-democratic revolution was to be led by a "people's front" coalition, which included the capitalist class. Keeping the bourgeoisie in the alliance required the soft-peddling of worker and

peasant demands whose logic challenges the capitalist system.

Rather than a tactic for discrediting the bourgeoisie, the Stalinist version of the anti-imperialist united front became a noose which subordinated the mass movement to the interests of the capitalist class, resulting in no revolution whatsoever.

Given the inability of the workers' movement to pose a political alternative representing the fundamental interests of the Philippine workers and farmers, the vacuum was filled by Cory Aquino.

A call for an electoral boycott is a statement that the cards are so stacked against you that participation only gives credence to a rigged game. The success of any boycott is measured by the degree to which the electorate accepts this premise and abstains from voting.

Fraudulent elections

The February boycott was a failure not because there was no fraud, but because the people believed their intervention could force a change in Marcos' script.

The "February revolution" itself arose out of the concentrated indignation resulting from Marcos' attempt to steal the election, a situation aided by Aquino being the dictator's only opponent. Yet to suggest, as the CPP and others have done, that this justified a vote for Aquino ignores the very nature of elections for public office.

Not simply a public opinion poll, elections pose the issues of which class interests will be represented by the government. In the Philippines, consideration of the merits of a united front against the dictator for the purpose of boycotting fraudulent elections is one thing. It is quite another when this cross-class unity is expressed in favor of the candidate of the capitalist class. Such collaboration with the oppressor class makes the construction of an independent movement of the workers and peasants impossible.

Aquino's inability to represent the interests of the working people was underscored by her agreement to run under the banner of Salvador Laurel's conservative UNIDO party. The price for electoral unity was to play down the US presence and the need for land reform.

BAYAN called a boycott only after Aquino refused to endorse a series of demands. But by this time, it would have been too late to request ballot status. Believing that only armed struggle could topple the dictator,

leaders of the two million-member organization professed that the elections would merely be a "noisy game."

But BAYAN's hesitation to call for an alternative to Aquino also stemmed from its failure to recognize the importance of politically organizing the workers and farmers independently of the pro-capitalist electoral bloc.

If the mass organizations had explored the possibility of running a trade union or farmworkers' leader early on, they could have avoided leaving the field entirely to the capitalist opposition. The potential base for such an independent campaign was certainly present, given the millions who adhere to the trade union, farmers' and poor people's community groups.

A mass action-oriented electoral campaign would have called for closing the US bases, repudiating the foreign debt, genuine land reform, an elected constituent assembly, and other demands of the workers and farmers for democracy and social change.

The masses could have been mobilized in rallies, marches, petition campaigns, and other tactics around the fight for a place on the ballot. The refusal of ballot status under these conditions, when the masses were mobilized, would have then provided the basis for an active boycott.

The CPP's approach to the boycott stemmed from a view that elevates the role of rural armed struggle over that of urban mobilization. Thus, even after the February election, the CPP could write that "armed struggle is the principal form of struggle in overthrowing reactionary and fascist rule." (*Ang Bayan*, March 1986).

The CPP-influenced left believed that the Marcos dictatorship could only fall through armed revolution. Hence, elections could only be a diversion. The real showdown, according to the CPP, would come in three to five years when the New People's Army (NPA) had accumulated sufficient forces to launch the "strategic offensive."

As much as the workers and urban poor might sympathize with the NPA, they retain illusions in the ability of the Aquino regime to grant reforms. Their fight for everyday survival precludes rural guerrilla warfare as a viable course for them at this time at least. The formation and consolidation of their revolutionary movement will begin with independent mobilizations in their own workplaces and communities around their own demands.

While maintaining a defensive posture and refusing to surrender its arms, the CPP has nonetheless agreed to negotiations regarding its inclusion



Anti-government protesters burn the US flag (DR)

in the Aquino-Laurel-Enrile government as a key item to be discussed in cease-fire talks. This again reveals the CPP's mistaken confidence in the liberal wing of the capitalist class.

Only muted criticism has thus far been directed by the CPP toward the "progressive" Aquino wing of the government. The CPP's focus is to denounce those who are blocking the president's moves to "dismantle fascist rule."

Slogan of "democratic elections"

The CPP did not criticize Aquino's call for an appointed, rather than elected, body to draft a new constitution — thus allowing the Marcos forces to demagogically raise the slogan of "democratic elections."

Every reform that the Aquino government undertakes under pressure of the mass movement — such as the freeing of political prisoners, restoring the writ of habeas corpus, and removing some Marcos-appointed officials — should be welcomed.

But this hardly warrants any political confidence in the ability of the liberal wing of the government to solve the ongoing problems of the Philippine people. And where the government already enjoys wide support, building an alternative political pole becomes all the more critical.

Though the dictator is gone, the key structures and institutions of oppressive rule still remain. The continuing struggle for political democracy can be advanced not only by supporting the abolition of martial law institutions and the removal of Marcos appointees from the government, but also by calling for elections to local offices and to a constituent assembly.

Aquino says that elections would be too expensive. This is an excuse to

hide the central government's shaky hold on the provinces, barely touched by the "February revolution" and where the mass organizations retain broad influence.

The call for land reform retains its urgency and can be coupled with demands by agricultural workers — particularly in the depressed sugar industry — for jobs and decent wages, and workers' control to safeguard these gains.

Given the weight of the multinational corporations in the plantation economy and agribusiness, and the domination of the peasant economy by the imperialist-controlled world market, such demands are directly linked to the struggle for national liberation.

The main symbols of the Philippine government's subordination to imperialism are the 26 billion US dollar national debt and the presence of US military bases. Repudiation of the debt and the expulsion of the bases are central demands and can be tied to calls for the nationalization of foreign enterprises under workers' control.

The pressing need for jobs, housing, and medical care throughout the country links farmers and the urban poor with a workers' movement struggling to maintain its living standards and working conditions. And as the most concentrated social force in society, the workers in city and plantation can become the social axis for all of these movements.

But these and other demands must be concretized in a strategic focus, in the call for true people's power, a government of workers and farmers — without bosses, rich landowners, and generals.

The prospects for such a campaign are good. The May issue of *Ang Bayan* reports that twice as many workers went out on strike in the first four months of 1986 as in the same period

in 1985. This indicates not only demands pent up by over a decade of dictatorship, but more important, widespread confidence born of the mass mobilizations that overthrew the Marcos dictatorship.

The Aquino government has failed to seriously purge the government and army. Aquino's handling of the July 6-8 coup attempt by Marcos' vice-presidential running mate, Arturo Tolentino, should forever eliminate any doubts as to the class nature of her government. The pro-Marcos rebels were greeted by Aquino's representative, Defence Minister Enrile, with handshakes and pardons.

After the rebels surrendered, General Jose Maria Zumel, a military leader loyal to Aquino, was quoted by the July 8, 1986, *New York Times* from a radio interview broadcast in the Philippines: "We are appealing to citizens to unite so that we can fight communism together."

For the moment, the capitalists have decided to rely on the moral authority of the Aquino government to mollify the anger of the masses. But as the government's reform image wears thin, the capitalists will turn to increased repression to defeat the mass movement.

Over 1000 people have already died in skirmishes with Aquino's army. The Task Force Detainees defence organization reports that nearly 500 political prisoners remain in provincial jails.

With an independent orientation, the mass movement of workers, farmers, and urban poor can once again seize the initiative. As Agriculture Minister Ramon Mitra admitted, the regime "will enjoy a honeymoon, maybe another six months. But within that time we'll have to deliver or else people will be out on the streets again." (*San Francisco Examiner*, March 3, 1986).

A successful movement to achieve the unsatisfied demands of the "February revolution" requires a firm resolve to maintain its independence from any section of the ruling class.

First and foremost, this process necessitates the building of a revolutionary socialist party which strives to strengthen the struggles of the workers and farmers and helps give them an independent expression at every juncture.

As the masses become conscious of their own power and confident that their own mass organizations constitute the basis for democratic rule, the socialist revolution will be posed in the Philippines. The oppressive rule of the tiny minority will be challenged by an organized people ready to rule in their own name.

Gainers' workers take on Tories

THE GAINERS' strike in Canada's prairie province of Alberta has apparent similarities to the Hormel strike in Minnesota, a comparable area in the United States. It is an exemplary strike that has inspired sympathy and support across the country where the labor movement has long been in retreat.

The following article and interview are from the summer issue of *Socialist Challenge*, the publication of the Alliance for Socialist Action, a Fourth Internationalist group in English-speaking Canada.

GREG McMASTER

On the Gainers' picket line in Edmonton, the police inspect union cards like South African passbooks, and arrest supporters from other unions on sight. But pickets shout "Is this Poland, is this South Africa?" and maintain mass picketing against strikebreaking and other protests against Gainers' owner Peter Pocklington, the labor laws and the police. The police actions and the workers' determined resistance have brought out thousands of supporters against the "new" Tory government and the status quo, defending union rights.

Under Peter Lougheed's government, anti-labor legislation combined with mass unemployment and court decisions in British Columbia and Alberta give employers the tools they need to de-unionize. Unilateral imposition of contract concessions after 24-hour lockouts left construction unions reeling, giving rise to the Dandelion Association of Political Action Committees, led by dissatisfied Building Trades rank-and-filers.

The crisis-ridden meatpacking industry blackmailed employees into accepting rollbacks with job loss to scab labor. United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW) at Gainers in Edmonton accepted concessions in 1984, including a two-tier wage system, after members and Local leaders watched the unemployed line up to apply for jobs as scabs under police protection. That same year, Lakeside Packers did replace strikers, who are still picketing today, after union leaders advised no action. But now, the unions are fed up.

The Dandelions were the first manifestation of this change in

are a lot more poor women because we get the lower paid jobs and do not have access to... needs feminist trade unions to educate it. The men in trade unions are no different from men in the rest of society. They've grown up with the same ideas about women. When I first got involved in the union movement there were times

consciousness, but the spectacular rise of the New Democrats in the May 8 provincial election, the militant strikes that developed since then, and the outpouring of solidarity with the Gainers' strikers represents a new stage.

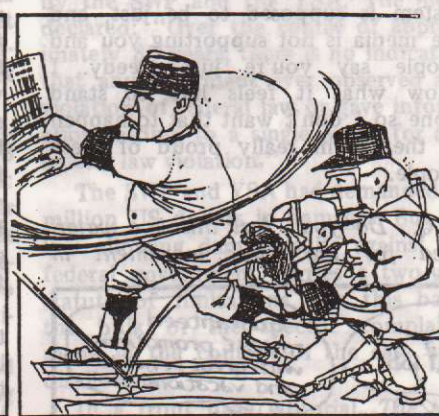
Gainers' workers were promised a share in proceeds resulting from the rationalization of the meatpacking industry if they went along with concessions in 1984. Instead, they got forced overtime, injuries from production speedup, and management refusal to match 1986 industry wage settlements. Old and new employees getting 7 dollars per hour for the same work joined in a 96 per cent strike

vote as a result.

Mass pickets resisting police actions like the internationally-televised dispersal of the 1,000 people peacefully sitting-in at Gainers on June 3 inspired thousands to march in the streets twice in a week, June 7 and June 12. Labor solidarity reached levels unseen for years, with "illegal" picket-line contingents of pipefitters, nurses, teamsters, provincial employees, postal workers and letter carriers; donations of thousands of dollars from the Canadian Autoworkers, CUPE and NUPGE (provincial employees' national organization); and "hot" declarations against Gainers' and Swifts' products by labor federations in British Columbia and Saskatchewan.

The Alberta Federation of Labour has coordinated support action and deepened a trend of co-action with the Building Trades. President Dave Werlin, arrested along with hundreds more, declared June 12 to 8,000 people "There aren't enough police, enough courts, enough jails to hold us all".

Meanwhile, unreliability of supply and community response to the boycott campaign forced outlets ranging from major chains like Safeway to corner stores to stop buying from Gainers. The settlement at Fletchers in Red Deer June 14, which the UFCW called a victory with industry parity and full reinstatement of strikers, dismissal of scabs, and protection of seniority against possible time in jail, placed new pressure on Gainers to negotiate. But still the arrests continue in Edmonton, and so does the mass picketing and cross-union solidarity. □



Strike supporter speaks out

LYNN BUE is an Edmonton feminist, and is the executive vice-president of Local 15, Letter Carriers Union of Canada. On June 18, she joined almost 400 other people arrested at Gainers. Along with another letter carrier, Mary Hughes, she spent a night in jail for refusing to sign a statement promising not to return to the picket line, under an injunction forbidding support picketing. They were then released without signing, and subsequent arrestees have not been required to sign.

Question. Why did you refuse to agree not to go back to the picket line?

Answer. I just want to show the court, the judge and the legal system what I feel about how they could hand out an injunction like they did. It's a statement about how unjust that is to the workers at Gainers. I want to be there with these people because there is so much power against them.

Q. Why is support on the picket line itself so important?

A. The more we stand with them, the safer they are. Sometimes you take a stand on something where you don't get any support and you start doubting. You are against all these police that we've all been brought up to respect, and the court system is supposed to be just, and the media is not supporting you and people say you're just greedy. I know what it feels like to stand alone so I don't want that to happen to them. I'm really proud of these people.

Q. Do you feel this is a watershed for the labor movement in

Alberta and Canada?

A. Yes I do. A few different things have happened lately in Alberta. For example, the recent provincial election rocked the country, the fact that we elected New Democrats in Alberta and especially in Edmonton. Then we have three struggles going on now where people are really fighting back — Gainers in Edmonton, Suncor in Fort McMurray, Zeidler Forest Industries in Slave Lake (and Zeidler has had quite a bad reputation with regards to how it treats its employees — it's amazing to see the people in this small town fighting back). And we have people who are unemployed, like the Dandelions who are supporting all these struggles. Ordinary workers are going to be watching this and it could make a difference in how they respond to the struggles they're going to have. I really see a crisis coming — we're being pushed to the wall. We can't just keep taking slow steps backwards all the time without fighting back. That's going to be dangerous. But if we don't fight back really effectively, it's going to scare people. They will think, well there's no point.

If this strike goes on for a long time some people might say it's a loss — that they won't get what they're fighting for. I don't think it's a loss if labor groups, women's groups and church groups all stand together and really push — then it will be something we can look at as an education, because we haven't done this very often. We may make some mistakes, but if we don't get too scared and just stop fighting it's not going to be a loss. If people start backing off or become apathetic it will be really bad for many years in Alberta.

Q. What was the response of the rank-and-file in your union to your arrest?

A. At my postal station, when I went back the next day — I was a little nervous because I thought that some people might think this is going a little too far, to get arrested, and maybe wondering why I wouldn't sign this paper [stating that she would not return to the picket line] because so many others had. But when I went in the next morning, they cheered and I was really surprised. People who hadn't even supported the idea of our union going on strike in the past, came up and were patting me on the back and saying, "Good for you. We have to stand up against this". It felt very strong. Even one person who had in the past talked to me about how she didn't like unions because of what she had read in the newspaper and talked about the workers at Gainers being violent — she had changed and was caring about how I was doing, teasing me in a gentle way, but not saying that was a dumb thing to do. I knew that she was proud we'd done that.

Q. What about your local executive?

A. We have a very good executive in Edmonton. That was one thing that I trusted — that they would really understand why I had done what I did, including not signing and staying in jail overnight. They would do the same thing.

Q. What is your response to the debate concerning all the so-called violence on the picket line?

A. I feel frustrated by it. I mean, how dare they talk about these ordinary people as being violent. It's their jobs — some of them have put 30 years into this company — and now no one gives a shit about what's happening to them. They've had riot police come, they've had the legal system show no concern about what's going to happen to them. They see scabs crossing which, if they can keep the plant open, means Pocklington has no reason to negotiate with them — so they don't have any power. Everything's going against them and trying to take away their power. I don't know how many other people would respond. It's easy to sit back when you're not involved and say, "Oow, I hate violence" — people throwing rocks or some of the things that have happened, but if it was happening to you and you had all these forces against you, how would you respond? The power of that judge to keep us in jail overnight because we wouldn't do exactly what he says, even though



the next day he pretty well said that he had been wrong, that he didn't have the right to do that, and he said to us "This isn't fun and games", when he can sit up there in that bench and he loses nothing. And here these people could lose their homes and their families, and those who have criminal charges against them could spend time in jail. And I spent time in jail for walking slowly down a sidewalk with a sign on — I would be one of those hoodlums that Peter Pocklington is talking about, since I'm not a member of the UFCW.

Sometimes when I open up the newspaper and someone on the picket line has thrown nails or smashed windows, I become nervous. It's not because I'm angry at those people who did it. I can understand why they are frustrated and why they do it, but I'm worried about how easily the public could switch its mind about this strike, use it as an excuse. But then I just relax and say, "That's not fair". It's built up too much anyhow. It's really sensationalized. But also to talk about not having violence — that's what an ideal world would be like, but we don't live in an ideal world. If one uses that as an excuse not to support these people, I think that's really short-sighted. When people feel that they have some control over their lives — that's when some of this violence will stop. When people have more power and more say.

Q. Do you feel that feminists have a stake in this conflict?

A. I definitely do. You know a third of these strikers are women, and they can get just as angry as the men and are just as likely to throw rocks. They're standing on the other side of the road from Gainers and they are seeing all these police protecting these buses full of scabs. They know that throwing rocks is not going to do much damage, they know the buses are going to get in, but it's just a final frustration. It wouldn't be happening if they didn't have these injunctions and if it was just being settled between themselves and the owner. But it would also be a double standard if the women were to say, "Well I don't like to see that. I'm just not going to support these women or these workers because they're violent". These people do a physical job. It's not as if they sit in offices and can seem to be really nice. There's so much violence in women's lives anyway — a lot of the violence comes from the relationships women are in.

Women have been traditionally the last hired and the first fired. There

are a lot more poor women because we get the lower paid jobs and do not have access to good jobs. This is a time of high unemployment and the trade union movement needs feminist trade unionists to educate it. The men in trade unions are no different from men in the rest of society. They've grown up with the same ideas about women. When I first got involved in the union movement there were times when I thought that there was just too much to struggle against because these men did not understand and/or did not want to understand women's issues and the only important thing was what was happening between management and the men. We're not going to get allies with the government or the legal system. They're not just going to change things for us unless huge groups of women mobilize and unite with workers to force the government to make changes or to win back our basic rights.

Feminists also have to see that you can't let these women in the unions fight alone because they make

up a huge group that they have to work with to try and make them sensitive to women's issues. All of these movements will be corrupt unless they see that any kind of injustice, whether sexism, racism or class is addressed. If we don't we'll be corrupted and we'll fail.

Q. What changes do you feel have to be made to Alberta's labor legislation?

A. First of all, I'm really angry that we've become so tamed by the legal system. That happened years ago.

I'd like to see labor legislation changed so, first of all, scabs can't be hired. But we're going to have to have changes way beyond that.

I wouldn't want to say that I don't want the legislation changed because I would, but I have this real fear that it would take the teeth out of labor to get people really organized again. If government were smart they would give us something, but they're a little too arrogant right now. □

SWP wins lawsuit

ON AUGUST 25, Federal Judge Thomas Griesa granted the Socialist Workers Party of the United States, an organization in solidarity with the Fourth International, 264,000 US dollars in damages for 18 years of harassment by the FBI.

This ruling marked the culmination of a lawsuit initiated by the SWP and the Young Socialist Alliance in 1973, along with individual members of these organizations. The legal action was launched in the aftermath of the Watergate affair, when there was a general outcry against the dangers of covert operations by the FBI and other security agencies. It gained broad support among the left and civil libertarians.

The attorney for the SWP and YSA, Leonard Boudin, one of the leading US constitutional lawyers, commented: "The impact of this decision goes far beyond the SWP and YSA. This ruling is a contribution to constitutional law, extending important new protections to the rights of all politically active individuals and organizations."

The government attorneys have told the press that they are still considering whether to appeal the ruling.

Griesa ruled that hundreds of proven burglaries by the FBI of SWP offices to plant bugs or to steal and photograph letters and other documents were "obvious violations of the Fourth Amendment." The Fourth Amendment forbids "unreasonable searches and seizures" by the government.

The judge also held that the disruption program carried out by the FBI, known as Cointelpro (Counter-Intelli-

gence Program) was illegal, noting:

"The FBI embarked on a series of actions with the express purpose of harming the SWP by causing internal mistrust and strife, by weakening its alliances with other groups, by hampering its scheduled activities and by other means. There was no legal authority or justification for such operations."

The FBI had argued that such methods were justified because it thought there was evidence of illegal activities by the SWP and the YSA. The judge declared: "Over the course of approximately 30 years, there is no indication that any informant ever observed any violation of federal law or gave information leading to a single arrest for any federal law violation."

The SWP and YSA had demanded 40 million US dollars in damages. But the law allowing damage suits against the federal government carries a two-year statute of limitations. On this basis, the bulk of the specific complaints made in the context of the case were disallowed.

In a front page editorial, *The Nation*, one of the country's major liberal magazines, gave the following assessment of the SWP's victory:

"The Socialist Workers Party bore the brunt of government blows to progressive politics over the past two decades, and it has won a valuable moral victory. For the first time the FBI's disruptions, surreptitious entries and use of informers have been found unconstitutional. □

AROUND THE WORLD



Canada

Tamil refugees

ON AUGUST 11 two boats carrying 155 Tamil refugees were rescued from the sea off Newfoundland. The Tamils have since been the target of a vicious, racist campaign led by the media and the Canadian government.

They have had to endure interrogation day after day by immigration officers, the police and journalists, who claimed that the admission of the Tamils into Canada would open the door to a massive wave of refugees. The Canadian government reiterated its intention to introduce changes in the law to further restrict the rights of political refugees to enter Canada.

Once it became clear that the ship that brought the Tamils to Canada had come from West Germany and not from India (as the Tamils had originally stated for fear of being denied entry), the press, the police and capitalist politicians stepped up their racist attacks. "Send them back" screamed the *Toronto Sun*.

This entire campaign, which in effect transformed the victims into the guilty, is nothing but pure hypocrisy. The real liars are not the Tamil refugees, as the media claims, but all those who represent Canada as a "humanitarian" country that welcomes immigrants with open arms. It's the Canadian government that forces refugees like the Tamils, often fleeing for their lives, to find a way around the enormous obstacles blocking their legal entry into this country.

The Tamils, who represent 18 per cent of the Sri Lankan population, suffer extreme oppression there. In 1983, following racist government attacks, bands of thugs organized a bloody massacre of Tamils. Many of their businesses and homes were burned to the ground. The continuing intense repression has forced thousands of Tamils to flee their country.

A great number ended up in West Germany where they must wait for up to six years before finding out if they will be given permanent status or not. During all this time the Tamil refugees are kept in cramped communal residences without the right to work, study or travel while remaining under the constant threat

of deportation back to Sri Lanka. [See article on page 13.]

Little wonder then that the Tamils who fled West Germany were ready to pay about 3,500 US dollars each (including children) to criminal fast-buck artists in order to come to Canada. They were forced to stay in the ship's hold for 10 days in filthy conditions with very little food. Then they were left adrift in the ocean in two small lifeboats until rescued by fishermen two days later.

The Canadian government has done everything it can to make the entry of Tamil refugees as difficult as possible. It has, for example, demanded a visa for anyone coming here from Sri Lanka since 1983 — in other words, ever since large numbers of Tamils have been forced to flee the repression there. Since then the government has refused all applications for visas from those trying to flee Sri Lanka!

The unions, the National Democratic Party and human rights organizations must come to the defence of the Tamil refugees and oppose the racist campaign against them. We must demand that the Canadian government facilitate the entry of all those fleeing bloody repression, instead of erecting obstacles to their entry such as demanding visas. It should also immediately grant the Tamils permanent status as landed immigrants, removing all threat of subsequent deportation or harassment. □

[From *Socialist Voice*, newspaper of the Revolutionary Workers League.]

Italy

LCR Congress

THE LIGA comunista rivoluzionaria (LCR — Revolutionary Communist League, Italian section of the Fourth International) held its third national congress from June 28 to July 1, 1986, in Salsomaggiore (Emilia-Romagna). Around two hundred people participated in the congress, including delegates, members of outgoing leadership bodies and visitors. For the first two days of the congress, sessions were open to delegates from other organizations, then the congress was held in closed session.

Corriere della Sera, the biggest Italian daily newspaper, sent a journalist to the congress and published a relatively exhaustive account of it in their June 30 issue. *Radio Milano popolare*, which is run by the left and the extreme-left, including some trade-union organizations, relayed a lot of information on the congress, and broadcast an interview with Livio Maitan, a leading LCR member.

The first point on the agenda was devoted to a discussion on a draft resolution that the outgoing central committee had adopted in autumn 1985, which was published in the LCR's newspaper, *Bandiera Rossa*. The text dealt with both programmatic and political questions. It reaffirmed the essential programmatic line of the LCR and the Fourth International, while outlining the development of the political situa-



tion in Italy in the last few years. The report on this resolution was made by comrade Franco Turigliatto, a member of the outgoing political bureau.

In the framework of this discussion the question of the relations between the LCR and Democrazia proletaria (DP) was tackled. DP is the biggest of the Italian far-left organizations. They had proposed unity with the LCR, estimating that the political divergences were not so big that they justified the existence of two separate organizations. The leadership of the LCR affirmed, on the other hand, that conditions were not ripe for a unification and that instead there should be a closer collaboration than in the past, particularly in the fields of trade-union and electoral work. The orientation of the leadership was approved by the congress, which adopted the political text almost unanimously.

The second report, on building the LCR in the next two years, was presented by another member of the outgoing political bureau, comrade Elettra Deiana. A large number of delegates spoke on this point, taking up the problems of intervention into the trade unions, of building the organization, of the functioning of its leading bodies and the character of the LCR's press. The contributions also addressed the problems of building the OGR — a revolutionary youth organization linked to the LCR — which had sent delegates to the congress.

Finally, the text proposed by the outgoing leadership was approved by a large majority. On the press, a decision was taken to continue the discussion in the whole organization and to draw out conclusions from the debate towards the end of the year. The congress elected a 35-member Central Committee plus three alternate members and a Control Commission of three members.

DP sent a delegation to the congress comprising a member of their leadership, comrade Saccoman, and comrade Patta, a trade-union leader who is involved in building the trade-union tendency "Democrazia consiliare". Both comrades spoke in the discussion to defend their point of view regarding relations between DP and the LCR and to stress the importance of common work in the unions. The leadership of the Italian Communist Party also sent a two-person delegation who spoke in the discussion, including a member of the regional secretariat of Emilia-Romagna and a member of parliament.

During the congress, speeches were also given by representatives of an organization claiming continuity with Lotta continua, the largest extreme-left organization in the 1970s; from

an anarchist group; from the Liga socialista rivoluzionaria, an organization which defines itself as Trotskyist; and from Medicina democratica (Democratic Medicine). □

Obituary

Harold Isaacs (1910-1986)

HAROLD ISAACS, a founding member of the Socialist Workers Party and author of a classic Trotskyist study of the aborted Chinese Revolution of 1925-27, died at age seventy-five in Boston on July 9, 1986 from complications resulting from heart surgery. In 1976 he retired from his position of Professor of Political Science at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

Isaacs was born in New York City on September 13, 1910, and graduated from Columbia University in 1930. Seeking a career in journalism, he accepted a job as a reporter for the *China Press* in Shanghai and Peking. There he befriended a South African journalist, later known under the names of Li Fu-jen and Frank Graves, who was sympathetic to Trotskyism but had been collaborating with the Chinese Communists through his association with the author Agnes Smedley. A fluent writer with a sharp mind, Isaacs soon established further secret connections with Trotskyists during an investigation of a rebellion in the Kuomintang.

After being introduced to Smedley, he was able to obtain funds from the Communist Party to establish an English-language paper called *China Forum*, which he edited for two years. He then issued a public statement, "I break with the Chinese Stalinists" (published in *New Internationalist* 5, no. 4 [September-October 1934]: 76-78), and returned to the United States. He immediately joined the Workers Party of the United States (WPUS), which had been formed at the end of 1934 from a fusion of the Communist League of America and AJ Muste's American Workers Party.

When the proposal was first made by James P Cannon and Max Shachtman for the WPUS to consider the possibility of carrying out the "French Turn" in the United States, which might involve dissolving and entering the Socialist Party, Isaacs was vehemently opposed. But his personal correspondence with Trotsky from early February to early

March 1934 demonstrates a complete turn-about, and he remained a supporter of the Cannon-Shachtman leadership for the rest of the decade.

Under the pseudonym HF Roberts, Isaacs played an important role in the Trotskyist movement of the late 1930s. When the Trotskyist newspaper *Socialist Appeal* was launched in late 1937, Isaacs was for several years its real editor — organizing the staff, assigning articles, and editing most of the contributions — despite Max Shachtman's name on the masthead.

In 1938 he published his classic *The Tragedy of the Chinese Revolution*, with an introduction by Trotsky. As early as 1935 Isaacs had begun his collaboration on the book with Trotsky, travelling to Norway for a series of discussions in the summer of that year. Both Trotsky's introduction and Isaacs' diary notes from the interviews are available in *Leon Trotsky on China* (New York: Monad, 1976, pp. 578-91 and 541-46).

Although Isaacs supported Cannon and Trotsky during the 1939-40 split with Shachtman, he was discouraged by the assassination of Trotsky and left the SWP soon afterwards. In 1943 he began a new career as a *Newsweek* editor and correspondent. In 1951 *The Tragedy of the Chinese Revolution* was reissued with Trotsky's introduction deleted and the revolutionary Marxist conclusions expunged. That same year Isaacs inaugurated his academic career, teaching at Harvard University, the New School for Social Research, and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

The most famous among Isaacs' subsequent books is *Idols of the Tribe: Group Identity and Political Change* (1975). In 1980, Isaacs and his wife Viola returned to China and re-established relations with people they had known in the 1930s. An account of this visit was published as *Re-Encounters in China* (1985). □

Alan Wald

A bad case of tunnel vision

FRANCE AND BRITAIN have recently signed a treaty to go ahead with the building of a fixed-link railway tunnel under the English Channel. Known in Britain as the "chunnel" (an amalgam of channel and tunnel), the project has caused an uproar across the country — from the trade unions to rural communities in the south-east.

Lewis Emery, a member of the Transport and General Workers Union (TGWU), takes a look at the issues behind the furore.

LEWIS EMERY

The channel tunnel hype has raised quite a bit of dust over the past year or so in Britain. For the Thatcher government it serves quite nicely as a potential showcase for modern capitalist vision. Rather better, in fact, than selling off the previously British-owned companies Land Rover or Westland Helicopters into United States ownership! The beaming faces of Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher and President Francois Mitterrand on television signalled the start of what was to be the latest round of chunnel mania.

There have been plans to dig a direct-link tunnel from Britain to France (or vice-versa) for over a hundred years, most of which have never got any further than the drawing board. The remnants of several previous attempts, since abandoned, can still be found.

It is no accident that there is an historical association between Britain's participation in the European Economic Community (EEC) and the proposal for a channel tunnel. In the eyes of European social democracy the "unification of Europe" makes both Britain's membership of the EEC and the building of the tunnel equally important in terms of signposts for the future.

The idea of two competing factions within capital — the industrial/pro-European and the financial/pro-Atlantic — is not a new one, and, indeed, it is hard to see such conflicts in the face of Thatcher and Mitterrand's unity around the chunnel project. Certainly, the multinationals, financiers and building moguls stand to rake in the profits if the tunnel is ever built. But for Thatcher and company it is more an "affair of state", and this is how it has been sold through the British media.

There are many reasons for opposing the chunnel project: channel ferry companies have recently been privatized as a first step; environ-

mentalists have been mobilizing around the proposed destruction of the countryside and new fears about the importation of rabies; in both the short and long-term, job losses will be massive. After the initial euphoria, the government have gone rather quiet, and the pro-chunnel lobby are getting a bit isolated. A string of political mishaps threatens to lose the Tories some of their most loyal constituents in the heart of rural England. These run from the issue of where nuclear waste is to be dumped (creating four Greenham Common look-alike campaigns in the test sites for the dumping), to post-Libya worries and the Loyalist revolt in the North of Ireland.

The chunnel issue has raised questions of a deeper significance, however. First, there are competing capitalist interests — the chunnel conglomerate versus the ferry companies, and competing ideological groupings — English-chauvinists versus Euro-modernists. Second, it is an issue that has mobilized the same kind of labour movement opposition that was seen to the pit-closure programme that sparked off the year-long miners' strike. Coincidentally, many of the same working class communities that led the miners' struggle — the villages and ports of the Kent area in the south-east — are now being galvanized by the prospect of the knock-on effects from the collapse of ports like Dover, Ramsgate, and Newhaven as trade is diverted through the tunnel.

Middle-class opposition to the desecration of the "garden of England" by bulldozers and juggernauts, combined with working class fears, is putting pressure on Conservative members of parliament and on the government. Furthermore, realization is dawning in the north of England, Scotland and Wales that the tunnel will automatically mean that new industrial and commercial developments will be attracted to the south-east, reinforcing the north-south

division of wealth and jobs. As a result of all this, a considerable wall of political opposition — from the labour movement to sections of the Tory party — is building up against the tunnel project.

A crucial element of this opposition is Britain's largest trade union, the TGWU, which represents about a million members. At its 1985 conference, the TGWU voted to officially oppose the tunnel development. In an article titled "A costly white elephant", TGWU Assistant General Secretary Eddie Haigh said: "This ill-conceived scheme is not in the interests of the people of our country.

"The first question to be asked is: Why build a tunnel — is it necessary? On examination of the government's White Paper in February, 1986, the evidence is thin. To cover up envisaged job losses, the White Paper talks about 'direct economic benefits in the form of cost savings.' In plain English that would mean a ten per cent reduction in fares [across the channel]

"Job losses will be horrendous. 37,000 people work on the ferries and in the ports. British Ports Association say that 176,000 jobs are at risk from the tunnel. By the year 2000, without the tunnel about 50,000 would have jobs. All these jobs are threatened by a project that will employ approximately 5,000." (From the *TGWU Record*, August 1986).

The labour movement is by no means united in this view. The railway unions, for instance, are supporting the project on the basis of new railway development and increased rail traffic.

In the context of a declining capitalist economy the shortcomings of the whole chunnel enterprise are overwhelming from a working class point of view. We need look no further than the dereliction and decline of many of Britain's northern cities to see the consequences of capitalist economic and political priorities.

The chauvinist platform on which unions like the TGWU are to some extent building their anti-tunnel campaign should not blind us to the real base of labour opposition. For British steelworkers to see in the tunnel project the "threat" of French steel and so on is a measure of the extent to which the workers movement has failed to meet the challenge of European economic and social development. It shows that we haven't found an internationalist approach in the labour movement to the realities we are facing. Insignificant as it may seem, bizarre as it may seem, the channel tunnel issue sheds light on serious problems which we cannot afford to ignore. □