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MIDDLE EAST WAR –MASS POLITICS BECOMES DECISIVE FACTOR

Document: The Revolution in Poland

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Mass mobilizations become decisive in Middle East war

As this issue of *IV* goes to press also, Beirut is still under siege. The Zionist army is alternating brief ceasefires with savage bombardments causing hundreds and thousands of deaths.

On the strictly military level, the Begin-Sharon army is capable of mounting an assault on the Lebanese capital and dealing an unprecedented blow to the Palestinian resistance.

Such an action would result in a still higher number of victims and still more enormous destruction. It would also involve—which the Israeli government is much more concerned about—heavy casualities in the aggressor army well.

But if the assault on Beirut has not yet taken place, this is above all because of the political problems the Zionist leadership is running into, and which would be no less acute even if it won a bloody military success.

There is no doubt that very strong pressures are being brought to bear by the European capitalist governments, the various Arab states, and American imperialism itself to keep the Israeli government from trying to carry its military gains too far and to persuade it to seek a political solution, a compromise that the other side could accept, even if it had to pay a high price.

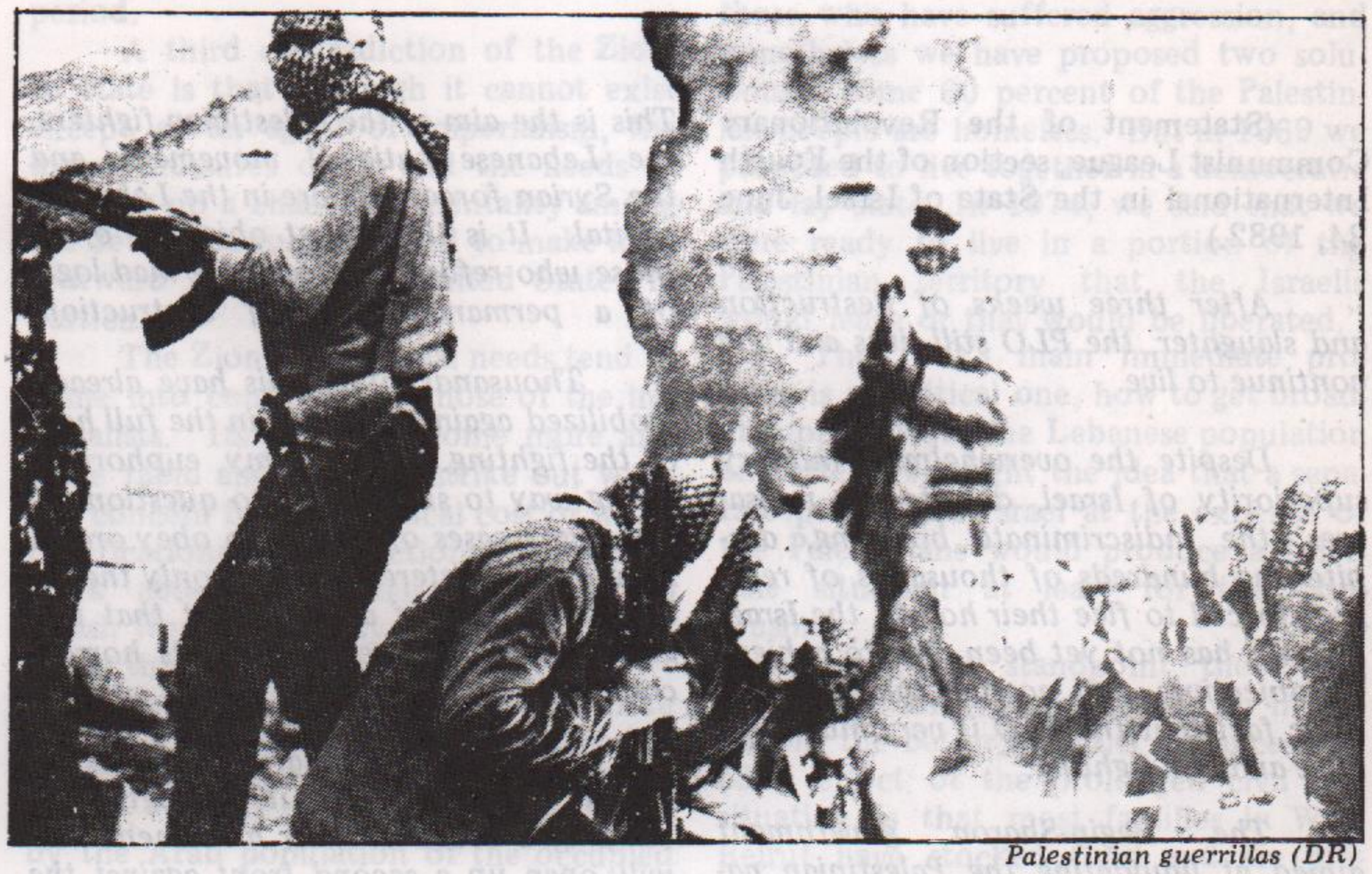
There is no need to say that neither the European capitalist governments nor the Arab states, in particular the so-called moderates, nor the imperialists in Washington have the slightest concern for safeguarding the most elementary rights of the Palestinians or for saving the lives of the heroic fighters in besieged Beirut. But they cannot fail to take account of the facts of the overall situation.

What would happen even if the PLO were crushed? This would not solve the problem of more than three million Palestinians without a country.

Where could the Palestinians in Lebanon go? What Arab state would accept them without the fear of having to face profound socio-economic repercussions in its own country, if not immediately, then in a relatively short period?

If the Palestinians remain in Lebanon, will not the problem that Begin has tried to solve with a new aggressive war reemerge sooner or later?

On the political level, if the present Palestinian leadership comes out of this confrontation humiliated and totally defeated, that is, if it in fact capitulates, what could prevent in the future the emergence of a new more radical and more consistent leadership? What could prevent the rise of a new leadership determined to combat all the reactionary and conservative forces in the region that at the decisive moment have abandoned the Palestinians to their fate, a leadership that would appeal to the broad masses to wage a struggle that could lead to victory?



Palestinian guerrillas (DR)

In Lebanon, Begin has been able to use the Quisling Haddad effectively as a pawn for some years. He can count on the complicity of Gemayel and the other conservative forces. But would not a reactionary state based on these forces—which are far from homogeneous—and on repression against the progressive forces, inevitably still be unstable and continue to be a powder keg in the region?

Furthermore, the mass demonstrations that have developed since the first shock of the attack faded indicate that a new phase may have opened in the history of the Israeli state, that the Zionist regime may not be able to continue in the future to count on the sort of national consensus it has enjoyed in the past, that less and less Israelis are prepared to believe that it is possible to achieve a "final solution" trampling on the interests and basic aspirations of the Palestinian people.

If this is the present context of the conflict—if, despite the extent of the military operations, the confrontation is an eminently political one—that means that the responsibility of the workers movement and the anti-imperialist movement throughout the world becomes much greater and much more immediate. But so far the response to the Israeli agression has been gravely insufficient. While many hundreds of thousands of people demonstrated in a large number of countries in October 1981 and June 1982 against rearmament and the nuclear danger, the mobilizations against the Israeli war have drawn only a few thousand people in only a few countries.

However, this war represents a very concrete challenge. It is correct to mobilize against preparations for war and future dangers. But it is still more important and necessary to oppose with the maximum effort the vile war of extermination that is in progress, the real danger of war on a wide international scale that exists today in the Mideast more than in any other region.

The Lebanese militants of the Fourth International have mobilized in West Beirut with the Palestinians and the other progressive forces. In Israel, our organization has played a role from the first in all the demonstrations against the aggressive war. In various countries, especially in the countries of capitalist Europe, our comrades have been in the first ranks of the solidarity demonstrations.

More and broader demonstrations must be organized. This is a fundamental responsibility.

For a Worldwide Mass Movement Against an Attempt to Crush an Entire People!

For a Worldwide Mass Movement Against the Threat of Wider Imperialist War in the Mideast! ■

Mass opposition mounts to Begin's war of repression

(Statement of the Revolutionary Communist League, section of the Fourth International in the State of Israel, June 24, 1982.)

After three weeks of destruction and slaughter, the PLO still lives and will continue to live.

Despite the overwhelming military superiority of Israel, despite the massacres, the indiscriminate bombing, despite the hundreds of thousands of refugees forced to flee their homes, the Israeli army has not yet been able to achieve its objectives, and no one can deny the basic fact that the PLO is very much still alive and still fighting.

The Begin-Sharon government aimed at liquidating the Palestinian national movement at whatever price. Already a week has gone by since the chief of state boasted that this objective had been achieved. But yesterday, the Minister of Foreign Affairs was obliged to admit that it was impossible to destroy the Palestinian national movement completely.

Thus, while we might say that Israel won the first round on points and not by a knock out, the second is just beginning. Left alone facing the Israeli divisions and bomber squadrons, without any help from the Arab armies, the Palestinian fighters have managed to keep the bulk of their military forces intact for more than three weeks. Fifteen years ago exactly, the Israeli army required only six days to smash the Arab armies and conquer large parts of Jordan, Egypt, and Syria....

The second round is the fight for a political solution and the battle for Beirut....The Israeli army must be stopped at the gates of Beirut and now. This is the aim of the Palestinian fighters, the Lebanese national movement, and the Syrian forces that are in the Lebanese capital. It is the urgent objective of all those who refuse to accept the mad logic of a permanent war of destruction.

Thousands of Israelis have already mobilized against this war in the full heat of the fighting. In the army, euphoria is giving way to skepticism, to questioning, and many cases of refusal to obey orders have been registered. This is only the tip of the iceberg of a movement that will grow as long as the war and its horrors continue.

The Revolutionary Communist League is throwing all its strength into building a broad antiwar movement that will open up a second front against the government's plans for a Massada (final solution) against the Arab people.

Resolute opposition to the war is not just a question of solidarity with the Palestinian Arab people. It is above all a question of self-defense for all Jews who want to live in this country. By building a broad movement against the war, we are constructing a united front of Jews and Arabs. A common fight by Jews and Arabs is the only chance we have for living together in peace and security.

-Down With the War in Lebanon, No Adventure in Beirut!

-Immediate Withdrawal of All Israeli Forces from Lebanon!

-Total and Unconditional Solidarity With the Heroic Struggle of the Palestinian Arab People!

-For the Right of Self-Determination of the Palestinian Arab People!

-Long Live the Common Struggle of the Jews and Palestinians Against War, Occupation, and National Oppression!

(Declaration of the Revolutionary Communist Group, Lebanese section of the Fourth International, June 29, 1982.)

Comrades and fellow fighters, Beirut is a fortress that would be difficult to occupy for the most powerful army in the world. Beirut is a bastion that the Zionist enemy cannot seriously think of occupying.

The enemy can destroy buildings, but they cannot come into our city and destroy our resistance. That is a job that the Zionist army cannot accomplish, because it would require paying an enormous price, one that it is not prepared to pay. The price would have to be paid in soldiers' lives and in the consequences that would inevitably flow from any prolonged battle against patriotic Beirut.

That is the real situation, and in all realism the only way to thwart the aims of the enemy campaign is to advance the following program:

-rejection of all conditions;

-rejection of any solution other than the total and unconditional withdrawal of the enemy from Lebanese territory;

-refusal to negotiate with the enemy and in particular rejection of any negotiations behind our back;

-refusal to let the official Lebanese army enter Beirut, this traitor army that has fraternized with the Zionist army and Beshir Gemayel's Falangist gangs;

-the formation of a Government of National Resistance that must be a different one from the traitor government of Sarkis, a government made up of representatives of the parties prepared to continue the fight against the Zionist enemy in actions and not in words;

-organizing the resistance in our city and unifying our military forces in the framework of a National Guard of Resistance.

Gerry FOLEY

The latest Zionist imperialist war in the Mideast is already fundamentally different than the preceding ones. Politics and mass action have now become the immediate decisive factors.

The crucial battles are those for world public opinion, the minds of the Israeli population, and the unity of the Arab people in Lebanon and Beirut in particular against the imperialists and their agents and collaborators.

In these battles, the oppressed Palestinian and Arab peoples of the Levant are better than holding their own, and time is on their side. That represents a major weakening of the imperialists and their agents in the region. But it does not mean that the danger to the Arab people is any the less.

"Israel is in a hurry, there are no precise deadlines but Sharon is ready to show West Beirut, if necessary, that what it has experienced so far is nothing compared to what awaits it." That is what U.S. negotiator Phillip Habib told associates, according to *Le Monde* correspondent Dominique Pouchin.

Obviously, the Israeli tactic is to put as much pressure on West Beirut as possible, which includes threats, as well as shelling and bombing. But Habib's statement corresponds to the reali-

ties of the Israeli position.

The Israeli army is mainly a reserve army. It cannot be kept mobilized for long, without this creating intolerable economic and social costs. The war has already gone on too long from the Israeli point of it. It has cost the equivalent of 10% to 15% of the country's annual GNP. The Israeli army is more and more becoming bogged down in repression on a vast scale. This has already had visible effects on the morale of the soldiers, even hardened veterans.

The July 11 issue of the Paris daily *Liberation* noted in a report on the problems of Israeli state TV in the war:

"Micha Limor experienced only one censorship problem. It was when he filmed a meeting of Israeli soldiers at the gates of Beirut. They were thirty men of the famous Entebbe Unit, which landed at the airport in Somalia to free an Israeli plane taken hostage. 'That day,' Limor recounts, 'the soldiers who had come to Beirut held a meeting where they violently criticized the government and the war in Lebanon. One of them said: "I agreed that it was necessary to come 45 kilometers and drive out the terrorists....Today, I'm asking questions....I find myself functioning as a policeman in Lebanon." ' "

Israeli TV's reporting of the massive demonstration against the war in Tel Aviv on July 3 also drew fire from the government. It was an enormous demonstration of up to 100,000 persons, an unprecedented event in time of war. In fact, until recent months, it would have been unprecedented in time of peace as well.

The attacks on Israeli TV bring out one of the fundamental contradictions in Israel's role as the main imperialist fortress in the Mideast. It was widespread sympathy for the Jewish refugees that enabled world imperialism to establish the settler state. But this sympathy was and remains tied up with pretences of democracy and humanitarianism. Therefore, no matter how brutal, racist, and rabidly reactionary the Zionist regime, it has remained obliged to maintain an appearance of democracy, at least for the Jewish population.

Now, embroiled in a war that is more and more clearly against a people rather than an army or a state, the Israeli authorities find the functioning of a relatively free press increasingly damaging.

Furthermore, the massive bombing of civilian populations with atrocious weapons such as phosphorous and fragmentation bombs of the new type is blowing away the democratic cover of the Zionist regime.

The impact of this on world public opinion is indicated by a growing tendency of Jewish notables in France and the U.S. to take some distance from the Begin government's policies and seek formulas that seem to grant some recognition to the rights of the Palestinians.

The second contradiction of the Zionist fortress is its narrow demographic and economic base, relative to the role it is called on to play in the region. The morale, educational level, identification with the state, and inculcated feeling of lack of alternatives made the Jewish population of Israel a nearly ideal imperialist garrison. But the reverse side of this is that such a small community is not prepared to take heavy human losses or face declining living standards for a long period.

A third contradiction of the Zionist state is that although it cannot exist except as an agent of imperialism, the direct pressures on it and the needs of building up a chauvinist mentality among the Jewish population tend to make it an awkward tool for the United States in particular.

The Zionists' political needs tend to come into conflict with those of the imperialists. Its leaders become more and more rabid and ready to strike out without concern for the political cost or wider ramifications of their actions. Habib's remark about the Israeli impatience to smash West Beirut may reflect U.S. worry about this.

Thus, the U.S. itself becomes more and more embarrassed by the extension of the repressive war against the Arab people. In the face of the mass protests by the Arab population of the occupied territories, the Israelis felt obliged to remove even the mayor of Gaza, Rashid Shawa, one of the most capitulationist of all the Arab officials in the territory ruled by Israel.

In response, the State Department issued a statement saying: "This very moderate man quite legitimately expressed the concerns of the Palestinians under his administration....Leaders of this quality will be necessary when the Palestinian problem is settled in the context of the Camp David Accords." (*Le Monde*, July 11.)

In fact, in this war the basic realities of the situation have emerged very starkly, leaving less and less room for illusions about compromise settlements.

In an interview in the *Wall Street Journal*, Begin declared that he would never negotiate with the PLO, no matter whether or not it recognized the state of Israel. In an interview broadcast over Austrian TV July 9, Israeli defense minister Ariel Sharon said that "there will never be a Palestinian state, either in Gaza or on the West Bank."

The Western press gave big play to a supposed readiness by Arafat to recognize Israel in return for political recognition for the PLO. However, in his interview with the liberal Zionist Uri Avnery, the PLO leader gave a different picture than these reports have indicated. "I am ready to safeguard the 600,000 Lebanese who live in West Beirut, as well as 200,000 Palestinians, to find a political solution. We are negotiating with the Lebanese authorities to find a solution...."

Avnery asked: "If it is possible to get out of this crisis, what would be the solution?"

Arafat replied: "Palestine."

Avnery was obviously taken aback. "I mean the solution for tomorrow, not the more distant future."

The PLO leader's response was "Palestine is our right." Another liberal Zionist reporter asked what he meant by Palestine. Arafat said: "The whole country. For you and us." This questioner asked: "Together?" Arafat said:

"Together, why not? ....We are those who have suffered aggression, and nonetheless we have proposed two solutions. Some 60 percent of the Palestinian people are homeless. But in 1969 we proposed to live together in a democratic and lay state...In 1974, we said that we were ready to live in a portion of the Palestinian territory that the Israelis would leave or that would be liberated."

The PLO's main immediate problem is a political one, how to get broader support from the Lebanese population and effectively fight the idea that a separate peace with Israel at the expense of the Palestinians would produce a tolerable situation at least for the non-Muslims.

From that standpoint, the longer the Israeli army is bogged down in Lebanon, the better the PLO's chances are. (One effect of the prolonged civil war situation is that most families in West Beirut have stocked food and are prepared for a long siege.)

So, it makes sense for the Palestinian leadership to prolong the negotiations and make every attempt to point up the fact that the Israelis are not interested in compromises and that no real compromises are possible.

The PLO leadership has another problem, in particular in view of the betrayals of the Arab governments and left forces and the growing reaction against their empty demagogy. It has to maintain the conviction among the Palestinian fighters themselves that they will not be sold out in any deal. Both questions come down to one single political problem, a principled democratic approach to organizing the masses by educating them, convincing them, and leading them.

Here the PLO's primarily military conception of the fight against Zionism has been the biggest stumbling block. It has paid the greatest price in the war for its failure in the past to concentrate on winning the support of the largest possible majority of Lebanese. The new situation should drive home the lesson of the need for a new, more political strategy.

In the new situation also the advancement of programs for mobilizing the Jewish and Palestinian masses against the imperialist plans for permanent war and repression in the Mideast takes on a new importance. The Israeli and Lebanese sections of the Fourth International are doing this and playing an increasingly important role. That has been particularly true of the section in Israel, where the opportunities for legal political work are greatest. ■

A new blow against the Palestinian resistance

Claude DEVILLIERS

With the invasion of Lebanon by the Israeli army on Sunday, June 6, 1982, the Palestinian national movement found itself once more confronted with a military offensive. The avowed objective was nothing less than to remove them completely from the political map of the Middle East.

The fact that Israel has not, up till now, succeeded in physically liquidating the Palestinian militants, penetrating into their general neighbourhood of West Beirut, does not indicate a lack of determination on the part of the Zionist leaders, or of imperialism in supporting them, but is a consequence of the relentless military resistance of the Palestinians.

Nevertheless, the formula for disarming the Palestinian resistance, and the exile of several thousands of its fighters into an Arab country in the region, proposed by the government of Menachem Begin, has no other aim than obtaining a total capitulation of the PLO, given the military relationship of forces created by Zionist aggression.

The fierce resistance of the Palestinians in West Beirut follows a struggle of several weeks against the progress of the Israeli army across south Lebanon. It illustrates, for the fourth time in a dozen years, the necessity for the Palestinian national movement to defend, arms in hand, its right to exist and the struggle for the national liberation of its people.

During all these years, the reactionary Arab bourgeoisies like the Zionist state, have taken turns—each time with the blessing of imperialism—to try to put an end, militarily and politically, to the Palestine national movement.

The story of the struggle of the Palestinian people is intertwined therefore with the episodes of the resistance to these many reactionary attempts to liquidate them. Today, the Palestinian people are dispersed throughout the region, because of the creation of the Zionist state in 1948 and the Zionist policy of monopolising and colonising lands. Its political leadership finds itself once against confronted, in almost total political isolation, with a tragic test of strength, the outcome of which will be decisive for its future.

The struggle against the Zionist state represents an important element of the nationalist radicalisation of the Arab masses throughout the Middle East. This has forced the Arab states to lead a certain fight against Israel and to support the Palestinian people deprived of their national rights and in search of a homeland.

The Egypt of Gamal Abdel Nasser had thus taken an active part in the founding of the Palestine Liberation Organisation. It was, in effect, at the first Arab summit in Cairo in January 1964, convened to 'organise the Palestinian people to allow them to play their role in the struggle for the liberation of their country, and to decide for themselves on their future'. Founded some months later, in May 1964, the PLO today organises several Palestinian organisations, the most important of which are: El-Fatah of Yasser Arafat, the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine of George Habash, the Democractic Front for the Liberation of Palestine of Nayef Hawatmeh, the Arab Liberation Front (pro-Iraqian), and El-Saika (pro-Syrian).

The PLO rapidly asserted itself as the representative of the national aspirations of the Palestinian masses, despite their dispersion as disinherited migrants throughout the Middle East. Witness to this is the support that the PLO receives in the territories occupied by Israel since 1967 (1).

This objective situation of a marginalised people, excluded from any productive process and thus subjected to extreme pauperisation, and assembled in refugee camps in states neighbouring Israel, has had an effect on the political development of the Palestine nationalist movement. The resistance has in fact been forced to develop and steel itself in the shelter of hostile Arab regimes, forced to accept their presence after the military defeat of the Arab armies in June 1967.

In comparison with the other nationalist movements of the Arab work—Nassarite and Ba'athist—which historically preceded it, the Palestinian nationalist movement has introduced new methods of action and struggle against Zionism. The Egyptian, Syrian, and Iraqi states only conceived of their support for the Palestinian national demand, and their struggle against the Zionist state, in the framework of a war led by a conventional army and not in the course of a popular regional mobilisation against Zionism. However, the Palestinian movement based itself on the political and military mobilisation of the Palestinian masses in the refugee camps themselves. This did not lead the Palestinian leadership to break all links with bourgeois nationalism—notably on the question of relations with Arab bourgeois states who support them. Despite this, and a militarist approach to the fight against Zionism, this mobilisation at the same time constituted a living contradiction to the policy of the bourgeois states, by the example which it represents in the eyes of the Arab masses of the region as well as in the anti-imperialist dynamic which it sparks off in the countires where the Palestinian refugee camps are situated.

This is one of the fundamental elements which explains the repeated participation of the armies of the Arab states in the repression of the nationalist Palestinian movement. Each time that the armed mobilisation of the Palestinian people is about to endanger the stability of an Arab bourgeois regime in the region, where the Zionist state cannot allow a direct military intervention for fear of stirring up the anti-imperialist feeling of the Arab masses, it is the Arab armies—in full complicity with Israel and imperialism—who do the dirty work.

The Israeli aggression of June 1967 took place in the framework of an imperialist counter-offensive against the rise of the colonial revolution in the Arab world. It aimed to stamp out the growing anti-imperialist dynamic which was becoming obvious in the Near East. This represented, on one hand, the re-awakening of the struggle of the Palestinian people, the appearance of armed nuclei within it, and the upsurge of armed actions by these groups against the Zionist state, and on the other hand, the radicalisation of the Syrian regime established by the coup d'etat in 1966.

The military victory of the Zionist army constituted a success for this imperialist counter-offensive, which was nevertheless tempered by the encouragement to the anti-imperialist mobilisations of the Arab masses and, most importantly, the rapid extension of the armed organisations of the Palestinian people which it led to.

The defeat of the Arab armies by Israel in June 1967 brought the young Palestinian movement to the forefront. By its heroic struggle within and outside the

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1. The Palestinians are a people of around 4.5 million. Some 1.2 million are in the territories occupied by Israel since 1967,the West Bank, and the Gaza strip, 500 thousand within the 1948 frontiers of the Israeli state, the rest being divided, often due to political migrations and blows struck against the Palestinian resistance, in most of the Arab countries in the region (220,000 in Syria, 299,000 in Kuwait, and 136,000 in Saudi Arabia).

territories occupied by the Zionist army it rapidly won the support and the respect of the Arab masses from Morocco to Iraq. In order to regain credibility in the popular movement, and lessen the consequences of the crisis provoked by their defeat, the Arab regimes then decided to support financially and militarily the Palestinian national movement in exchange for its non-interference in the internal affairs of the Arab regimes. This signified among other things, the appearance and development of the Palestinian resistance on Lebanese territory.

'BLACK SEPTEMBER' IN JORDAN

A conjunction of interests between imperialism, the state of Israel, and the Lebanese bourgeoisie brought a first but unfruitful attempt to liquidate the Palestinian resistance by the Lebanese army in 1969. This action ended in failure because of the weakness of the Lebanese army itself and the rising of the Muslim masses in Lebanon in support of the Palestinian resistance. Following that, the secret agreement of Cairo at the end of 1969 between the President of the PLO and the Commander in Chief of the Lebanese army, under the auspices of the representatives of the United Arab Republic, established the legitimacy of the armed Palestinian presence in Lebanon, 'posts of the armed Palestinian struggle within the camps', and delimited the zones where the Palestinian guerrillas could act as the 'Fatahland'.

But the existence of the Palestinian resistance, the armed struggle which it led against Zionism, the permanent mobilisation of hundreds of thousands of refugees in different Arab states of the region had, independently of the line of non-interference defended by the leadership of the Palestinian national movement, an increasingly destabilizing dynamic in the Arab states.

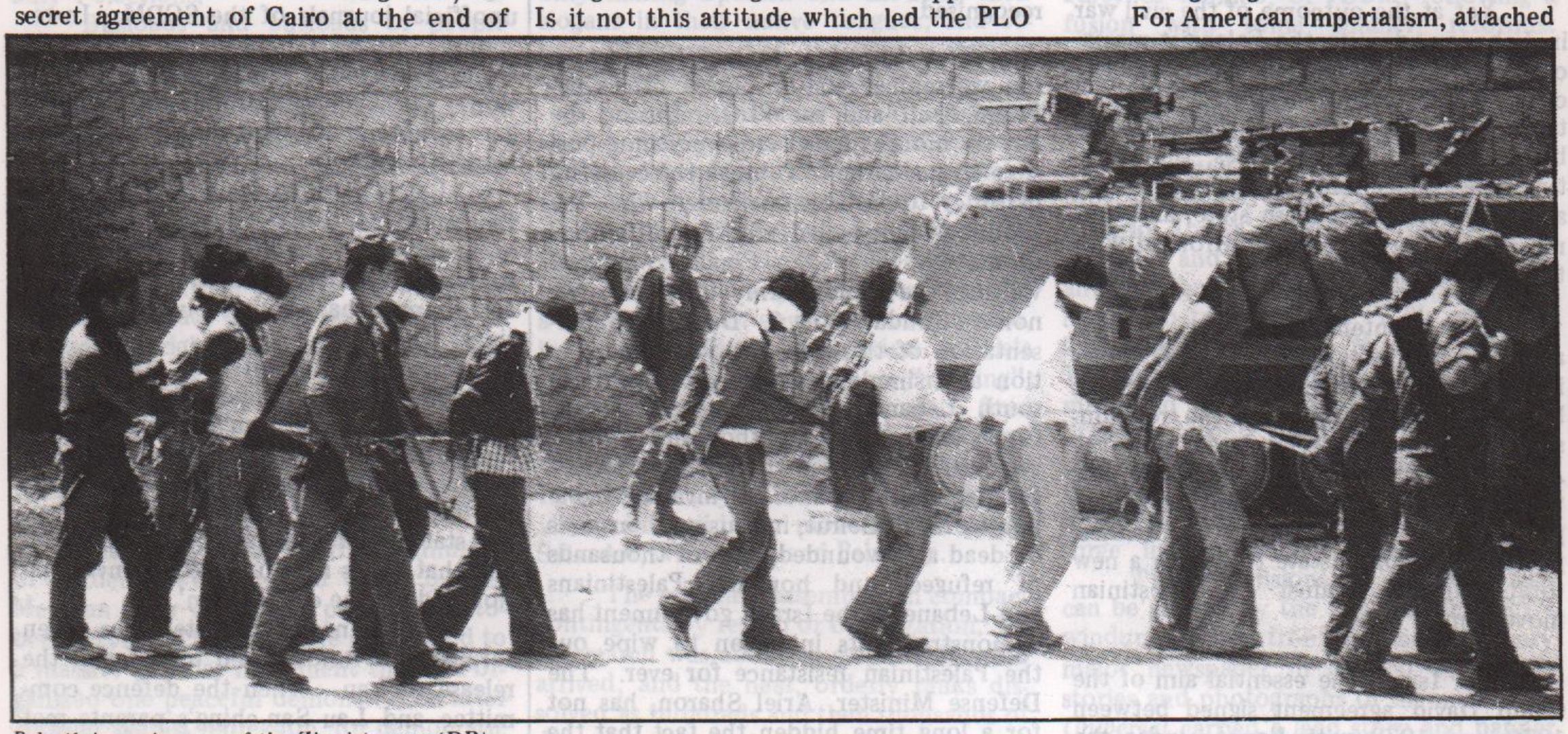
This was particularly so in Jordan where the essential Palestinian resistance was concentrated before 1970. The advanced experiences of popular mobilisation began even to overflow the Palestinian refugee camps, like Irbid in the North, near the Syrian frontier. In this town, these advanced experiences of mass mobilisation involved the Palestinian and Jordanian masses in neighbourhood organisations, which had a dynamic towards true people's councils.

It was to save his regime, deeply shaken by the strength of the Palestinian movement in Jordan, that King Hussein launched a bloody military offensive against the Palestinian camps in September 1970. Helped in this by the Israeli army, and profiting from the criminal passivity of the other Arab regimes, the Hashemite king, at the cost of massacring several tens of thousands of people, dismantled the Palestine Liberation Organisation on Jordanian territory. 'Black September' was the first serious defeat of the Palestinian resistance. The PLO leadership did not draw the lessons of this, notably on its attitude on non-interference and of compromise with the bourgeois Arab regimes which support it. Is it not this attitude which led the PLO leadership, in order to remain on good terms with the Saudi regime, to condemn publicly the attack on the Grand Mosque in Mecca in November 1979?

The crushing of the Palestinian resistance in Jordan in September 1970 completed the imperialist victory started by the war of June 1967. This opened the way for a greater reorganisation of the relationship of forces on a regional scale which took a number of forms: one month after the Jordan massacres the radical petit-bourgeois team in power in Syria was overthrown by a military coup; in 1971 the regime of Anwar Sadat in Egypt started to methodically and progressively dismantle the nationalisations carried out by Nasser; in the course of that year the Nemeiry dictatorship liquidated the Sudanese Communist Party by brutal repression and began open collaboration with imperialism.

Following 'Black September' the PLO had nevertheless succeeded in restructuring its forces in reorganising its political and military apparatus, primarily on the Lebanese territory where, since the 1969 agreement, the right of free movement and action had been granted to the guerrillas. The Palestinian resistance rapidly became the main political force in Lebanon, thus modifying radically the unstable equilibrium between the Muslim and Christian population which is the basis of the crisis of the Lebanese state artificially created by imperialism, and between the progressive forces and the reactionary camp. President Soleiman Franjieh reacted by attempting to impose a strong state in Lebanon and repressing any social struggles. Nevertheless, he had to retreat after the big demonstration of April 1973 where 250 thousand people protested against the murder in Beirut by the Zionists of three Palestinian leaders. From then on, the military confrontations between the Palestinian and the Lebanese forces throughout that year did not give the advantage to the 'legal' government in Lebanon.

For American imperialism, attached to advancing a political settlement to the Arab-Israeli conflict, as well as the Lebanese bourgeoisie wanting to put an end to this counter-power, or for Israel, it meant therefore an attempt to repeat King Hussein's operation in Jordan. This was all the more important as the convergence between the Palestinian mobilisation and the struggles of the Lebanese masses increased. The Saida insurrection at the end of February 1975, when Palestinian militants from a refugee camp situated near the south Lebanese town joined forces with the population against a repressive intervention by the Lebanese military forces, was somehow a detonator for the Lebanese ruling power. With the use of the Falangist Christian militias headed by Pierre and Bechir Gemayel, that it had helped to strengthen, the ruling power organised a vast provocation against the Palestinian resistance and the



Palestinian prisoners of the Zionist army (DR)

Lebanese mass movement.

On April 13, 1975, the Falangist forces set an ambush for a bus carrying Palestinian militants from the Rejection Front. This action served as a pretext for an intervention of the Lebanese army against the Palestinian resistance. But the repressive Lebanese forces were neutralised by the reaction of the Lebanese masses. The Falangist provocation accelerated the convergence in the struggles—including the armed struggle—of the Palestinian forces and the Lebanese progressive movement. The civil war of 1975/6, starting with this provocation, led to an even greater destabilisation of the Lebanese state. It was the intervention of the Syrian armed forces which prevented the victory of the Palestinian and progressive forces over the Christian Falangists. The Arab Dissuasion Force, essentially composed of Syrian troops was settled in Lebanon in 1976 with the blessing of imperialism, which could not see any other way to prevent the victory of the Palestinian progressive forces in Lebanon.

Yet at the outcome of the civil war in Lebanon, despite the Falangist massacres, like that at the Tell-el-Zatar refugee camp, which fell on August 12, 1976, after a siege of 52 days, and the repression by the Syrian armed forces, the Palestinian resistance found itself faced with a disintegrating Lebanese state, and thus more and more directly confronted with the Zionist army.

The maintenance of the political and military potential of the PLO forces in Lebanon, the diplomatic successes brought by the change in the relationship of forces between Israel and the Arab states after the 1973 war, the new wave of mobilisation of the Palestinian people in the occupied territories, pushed the Zionist state to launch a new total offensive against the Palestinian movement.

For Israel, the essential aim of the Camp David agreement signed between 1978 and 1979 with Egypt, under the aegis of the American president, Jimmy Carter, was not in any way to find a just solution to 'the legitimate demands of the Palestinian people'—as is explicitly stated in the agreement—but to create a favourable political situation, isolating the PLO with a view to a military confrontation on the initiative of the Zionist forces.

ISRAEL AND THE 'FINAL SOLUTION'

'Operation Litani' (the name of a river in Lebanon), launched in 1978 before the Camp David agreement had been definitively ratified, should have been a mortal blow to the Palestinian resistance; sweeping clean a 10 kilometre strip of territory in south Lebanon with a military force of thirty thousand Israeli soldiers and the Zionist airforce in a blitzkrieg.

Despite the massacres of the population, and the territorial gains of the Israeli army, this policy did not achieve its aim. The PLO succeeded in holding out against Israeli aggression and its military apparatus remained intact. Certainly, it was not over for Menachem Begin and Ariel Sharon. Thus for four years the Israeli army never stopped its military attacks on the Palestinian movement: bombarding refugee camps, assassinating Palestinian leaders, commando operations on Lebanese territory, destroying PLO military bases. Yet the Palestinian leadership succeeded overall in keeping its military position in Lebanon, while the state of Israel found itself confronted with a qualitative strengthening of the resistance of the Palestinian masses in the occupied territories, which it had controlled since 1967.

The effectiveness of the Palestinian bombardment in reply to the bombing of the camps and bases in south Lebanon even forced the Zionist state to sign a ceasefire in July 1981 with the PLO, whose existence it has still never formally recognised.

The Zionist state had to react to the worsening relationship of forces between itself and the PLO. During the last six months Israel did everything possible to make the PLO break the ceasefire in order to be able to launch what the Zionist leaders called 'the final offensive' to destroy the PLO. Finally, weary of waiting, the Zionist army invaded Lebanon on Sunday June 6. Despite the presentation of this new anti-Palestinian action as a simple cleaning-up operation in south Lebanon, the scope of military forces used, nearly 100 thousand soldiers, very quickly showed the real objective of the Begin-Sharon duo. In invading Lebanon as far as Beirut, in causing thousands of dead and wounded, tens of thousands of refugees and homeless—Palestinians and Lebanese—the Israeli government has demonstrated its intention to wipe out the Palestinian resistance for ever. The Defense Minister, Ariel Sharon, has not for a long time hidden the fact that the Israeli authorities were 'decided that the PLO could no longer exist'. In the invasion of Lebanon, Israel benefited from both the consent of American imperialism and the passivity of the Western bourgeoisie and the Arab states. The weak opposition of the USSR, simply concerned to retrieve the situation for its Syrian ally, tragically illustrated the isolation of the Palestinian people.

But as the PLO in reality represents the Palestinian people in arms, the 'final solution' envisaged by Israel can only mean genocide. The first struggles have shown that this fact will not make Begin hold back in his project. But another thing is to know if the Palestinians are ready today to accept an identical tragedy to that which they knew in 1948. ■

Defend Lau San-ching

Lau San-ching has been an activist in the social movement in Hong Kong for ten years. Since 1979 he has played a central role in the solidarity movement with the Chinese Socialist Democracy Movement (SCDM).

In April 1981 the Chinese government initiated an unprecedented wave of repression against leaders of the various unofficial journals of the SCDM. In response the SCDM solidarity group in Hong Kong led a campaign of denunciation. The Chinese government then began to extend its repression towards the Hong Kong group.

Lau San-ching went to Canton on December 24, 1981, to visit the families of members of the SCDM. He expected to return on December 27 but did not, and no news has been received from him since.

Several attempts to trace him through official channels failed. Only when a member of Lau's family went to the Bureau of Public Security in Canton in March 1982 was the fact of his arrest confirmed verbally. The Chinese authorities stated that Lau had 'broken the law' and that he 'is now undergoing investigation and no one can see him'.

A defence committee has been formed and funds raised to demand the release of Lau. When the defence committee and Lau San-ching's parents met the New China News Agency, the local representative of the People's Republic of China, it was implied that Lau had been transferred from Canton to another prison.

Thus, it seems likely that Lau has already been tried and sentenced. The period for which he has been held is already far longer than the three months allowed for investigation in the penal code. Also a Hong Kong student group which visited Peking, and asked for the release of the SCDM members, was informed that they had been arrested under a special penal code adopted by the People's Congress, of which no details have been published.

An international campaign for the release of comrade Lau San-ching is urgent. For further information contact: Lau San-ching Defence Committee, P.O. Box 89278, Kowloon City Post Office, Hong Kong. ■

50,000 march in final rally for Mexican Trotskyist candidate

Jose G. PEREZ
Anibal YANEZ

MEXICO CITY—Chanting, "Rosario Ibarra, candidate of the proletariat," and "Struggle, companeros, struggle, for a workers and peasants government," some 50,000 Mexican toilers, young and old, marched through the heart of this city on June 26 to the closing rally of the campaign of Rosario Ibarra de Piedra, candidate of the Revolutionary Workers Party (PRT) for president of the republic in the July 4 elections.

Busloads and busloads of people gathered at 4 p.m. around the Monument of the Revolution, red flags and banners waving, and marched five kilometers from there to Tlatelolco Plaza.

The significance of this march route was not lost on anyone. The Monument of the Revolution commemcrates the 1910-17 revolution spearheaded by the peasants and urban poor in the armies of Emiliano Zapata and Pancho Villa. The democratic rights and land reform that were the goals of that revolution have been blocked by the decades-long rule of the Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI), which consolidated its hold over the government in the wake of the revolution.

Tlatelolco Plaza is where hundreds of students were gunned down by the Mexican army and secret police on October 2, 1968. That massacre put an end to a massive popular movement that had organized one peaceful demonstration after another against repression, for democratic rights, and for freedom of political prisoners and working-class leaders jailed for striking. Many of the cadres who organized the PRT came out of that 1968 upsurge.

CLASS-STRUGGLE FIGHTERS

The people who came out by the thousands to express their militant support for the PRT's campaign are the front-rank fighters of Mexico's toiling classes. They came from cities, towns, and villages in 30 of Mexico's 33 states; from as far south as Chiapas, on the border with Guatemala, and as far north as Sonora, on the border with the U.S. states of Arizona and New Mexico.

There were thousands of peasants—men, women, and children, with faces hardened by toil and poverty, wearing straw hats and cotton shirts or shawls; proletarians from the big plants controlled by imperialist corporations such as Renault and General Motors, and from the nationalized electrical and telephone companies, fighting against the government's austerity plan and for trade-union democracy; residents of the *colonias* (shantytowns) of Mexico City and other major urban areas, who have been carrying out long fights with the authorities to receive the most basic services such as electricity and running water; Indian artisans and farm laborers—some speaking only halting Spanish and shouting their slogans in their native tongues; and office employees and teachers struggling against cutbacks in education.

Also present were small merchants who are being squeezed out of their stalls and tiny shops in town markets to make way for capitalist supermarkets; street vendors, who sell produce, candies, or trinkets on the street corners because they cannot find any other way to make a living; victims of government repression, including relatives of political activists who have dissappeared or are "missing"; former political prisoners; workers fired from their jobs for their trade-union and political activities; women's liberation fighters and gay rights activists; and activists from solidarity movements with El Salvador, Nicaragua, and Palestine.

The marchers assembled in compact contingents by region or organization. As the march was about to step off, Rosario arrived, and the neat, orderly ranks dissolved as hundreds and then thousands of demonstrators rushed to greet her or just to get a glimpse of her. Demonstration marshals formed a cordon around Rosario to escort her to the front of the march while thousands of people shouted, "Rosario Ibarra, candidate of the proletariat."

A MAJOR EVENT IN MEXICAN POLITICS

Rosario Ibarra's candidacy has been the sensation of the Mexican presidential election campaign. She first came to prominence after her son, Jesus Piedra Ibarra, was kidnapped by Mexican cops and disappeared in the early 1970s. She initiated a committee of relatives of political activists who had been exiled, imprisoned, or "disappeared" by the government. Since then, she has waged a vigorous struggle against government repression, making her the most prominent woman political figure in Mexico. In the course of this struggle, Rosario Ibarra came to revolutionary and socialist conclusions.

More than a year ago, the Revolutionary Workers Party, which had achieved ballot status after a long battle, proposed that Rosario Ibarra run for president as the joint candidate of all the working-class parties, even though she did not belong to any of them. The other main workers party, the Communist Party (now known as the United Socialist Party of Mexico, or PSUM, following a fusion with some smaller, reformist groups) refused, selecting instead longtime CP leader Arnoldo Martinez Verdugo as its candidate.

The PRT's proposal was nevertheless supported by various other organizations to the left of the Communist Party. Rosario Ibarra's personal history, her dynamic and charismatic speaking style, and her forthright revolutionary message helped to transform the PRT's campaign into a major event in Mexican politics. The impact of the campaign was further magnified by the stepped-up ruling-class offensive against the Mexican toilers—the peso was devalued at the beginning of the year and prices skyrocketed—and by the repercussions of the revolutionary upsurge in the Central American region.

The dimensions of the campaign can be gauged by the fact that the PRT's windup rally was front-page news in every major newspaper in Mexico City, with stories and photographs of the march. *El Universal* carried a lead story and banner headline reading "The oppressed and dispossessed want a change: Rosario," along with a picture of the demonstration across the top half of the page.

To hundreds of thousands, perhaps millions, of Mexicans, Ibarra has become the symbol of their aspirations for a country free of exploitation and oppression. This explains the explosive response of the crowd when Rosario made her appearance at the assembly point.

NOT A SINGLE VOTE FOR THE PRI

After the PRT leaders had gotten the contingents back into shape, the march stepped off, making its way down the Paseo de la Reforma, one of the city's main thoroughfares. The people marched four lanes across in a sea of red flags that stretched along the boulevard as far as the

Rosario Ibarra de Piedra (DR)

eye could see. In the front lines, arms linked, were Rosario Ibarra, accompanied by her husband, Jesus Piedra, and central leaders of the PRT and other groups supporting her candidacy.

Next came the Committee of Relatives of Political Prisoners, the Disappeared, and Exiled, holding a banner more than 30 feet long completely covered with photographs of victims of governmental repression. They were followed by a contingent of the more than 300 candidates running for seats in the Senate and Chamber of Deputies on the PRT slate. Next came a marching band from the northern state of Zacatecas, loudly playing the international workers song, *Bandiera Rossa*, and popular Mexican fanfares along the whole route of the demonstration. The enormous banner held aloft over this first section of the march read: "Vote PRT—for a workers and peasants government."

After scores of contingents of workers, peasants, and students organized by the PRT came those of the other, smaller groups that had joined with it to form Workers, Peasants, and People's Unity, an electoral alliance that supported Rosario's campaign: the Union of Revolutionary Struggle (ULR), the People's Revolutionary Movement (MRP), and the Proletarian Communist Organization (OCP).

But the overwhelming majority of participants marched in the PRT contingents, easily noted by thousands of red flags bearing a hammer and sickle and the PRT's initials. The contingents were marked off by huge banners identifying their region, union, or peasant federation and calling for a workers and peasants government or denouncing government repression, unemployment, and inflation, or demanding trade-union democracy or workers democratic rights.

A contingent of hundreds of peasants from the PRT-led Worker-Peasant Coordinating Committee of the State of Veracruz on the Gulf of Mexico sang: "In a golden cage, up on a balcony, Lopez Portillo is screwing the country." (*En una jaulo de oro, sentado en un balcon esta Lopez Portillo, chingando a la nacion.*)

A group of workers from Ecatepec, an industrial suburb of Mexico City, chanted, "Workers should govern, yes sir; death to the PRI, yes sir!"

Whole blocks of marchers shouted, "Not a single vote for the PRI!"

The dominant message of the slogans and banners during the march, and of the speeches at the rally, was that Mexico's working people need their own government, a workers and peasants government, to solve the pressing problems they face.

The single most chanted slogan was "Struggle, struggle, don't stop struggling, for a workers, peasants, and people's government!" (*Lucha, lucha, no deges de luchar; por un gobierno obrero, campesino, y popular.*)

Other slogans were "Forward, forward, companeros, it's right here that we're building the workers movement" and "Workers, peasants, the entire people to power!" (In the political language of Mexico and Central America, "the people" includes not only manual workers and small farmers, but also a large section of the masses that are neither exactly proletarians nor peasants. Unemployed shantytown dwellers, office workers, teachers, students, street vendors, small merchants, artisans, and so on; it does not include bankers, industrialists, absentee landowners, top government functionaries, or highly privileged professionals.)

The rally at Tlatelolco Plaza did not begin until after nightfall because the march from the Monument of the Revolution took so long. Chairing the rally was Margarito Montes, general secretary of the Independent Revolutionary Peasants Coordinating Committee (CCRI) and a member of the PRT's Political Committee.

SOLIDARITY WITH PALESTINIAN PEOPLE

"This election campaign has had a clear internationalist character from the start," Montes said. It has been a campaign around the big issues of Mexican politics, but, Montes noted, "It has also been a campaign against imperialism, in solidarity with all those struggling around the world for their liberation. And we want to dedicate this wind-up rally in a special way to expressing our solidarity with the Palestinian people, a people who today are being attacked and massacred by the Zionist troops of Israel, the army put together by U.S. imperialism in the Middle East."

Montes was interrupted at this point by shouts of, "Death to Yankee Imperialism!" He went on:

"We want to express our most sweeping and deepest solidarity with the Palestine Liberation Organization, and with the Palestinian guerillas who are resisting the massacre in the Middle East. We want to say that the Palestinian people are not alone, that they have the solidarity of the Mexican revolutionaries. And, from this platform, we demand that the Mexican government stop sending the 80,000 barrels of oil a day with which it supports the Zionist dictatorship in Israel."

Montes then introduced the various speakers: Edgar Sanchez of the PRT, and representatives of the other political organizations that supported the campaign. He also read greetings from other political and community organizations, and from Mel Mason, independent candidate for governor of California.

Edgar Sanchez underlined the symbolism behind the decision to hold the rally in Tlatelolco Plaza: "We have returned today to Tlatelolco because we have a historic commitment to a whole generation of fighters. In Tlatelolco are our origins, renewed origins following the defeat of the peasant armies of Villa and Zapata. Tlatelolco is our source of inspiration, our example, and our cry for vengeance."

MASON DENOUNCES U.S. IMPERIALISM

In his greetings, Mel Mason denounced "the U.S. govenment's merciless offensive of hunger and war against the workers and farmers of the United States, Latin America, and the world." Mason, who is also a member of the National Committee of the U.S. Socialist Workers Party, sister organization of the Mexican PRT, went on to denounce the Reagan administration's war policy in Central America and the Caribbean:

"Through its puppet government, the Reagan administration is massacring the Salvadoran people. It is increasing its aid to the Guatemalan dictatorship. Mercenaries controlled by Washington are carrying out a full-scale war against the Sandinista revolution in Nicaragua. U.S. Marines shamelessly carry out dress rehearsals for an invasion of Grenada.

"And not a single day goes by without the U.S. rulers expressing once again their hostility towards Cuba, the first free territory of the Americas."

Mason's statement also denounced U.S. corporate domination of Mexico. "We know that Mexico, like the other

countries of Latin America, is a victim of Yankee imperialism.

"Just a few weeks ago in California and across the United States, we saw *la migra* (the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service) round up thousands of Mexican workers, whose only crime was being workers. We join with you in demanding : Stop the mistreatment of undocumented workers in the United States! Stop the deportation! Full rights for undocumented workers!"

"We also want to express here," Mason concluded, "our solidarity with the struggle of the Mexican people and with Rosario Ibarra's campaign for a workers and peasants government and for the definitive national and social liberation of Mexico."

After Montes read Mason's greetings, the crowd broke into applause, while members of the PRT took up the chant, "You can feel it, you can feel it, the Fourth International is present!" (*Se siente, se siente, La Cuarta esta presente.*)

A REVOLUTIONARY PERSPECTIVE

The final speaker was Rosario Ibarra de Piedra. Despite the late hour and intermittent showers, nobody had left. Throughout the rally, the crowd had broken out in spontaneous chants of, "We want Rosario!" and "Rosario, Rosario, Rosario!" When she was finally introduced, the crowd went wild, shouting slogans for a workers and peasants government and, "Rosario, for sure, hit the PRI hard." The band struck up *Bandiera Rossa*. As Rosario walked to the platform, people who had been sitting down stood up and remained standing throughout her speech. All small talk in the crowd stopped. The entire demonstration of thousands listened in rapt attention, reporters from major capitalist dailies included.

Rosario began by calling for a minute of silence for the hundreds of students massacred by the government in this same Tlatelolco Plaza on October 2, 1968. The entire plaza was silent. When the minute was up, Rosario shouted angrily, her fist in the air, "Remember October 2!" and thousands of voices took up the chant: "October 2 is not forgotten!" (*2 de Octubre no se olvida!*)

Rosario's 20-minute talk was interrupted contunually by applause and chants. It reiterated the key themes and explained the main lessons of the campaign.

"We have learned," she said, "that the people of Mexico are learning that it is not enough to fight for immediate demands, that it is not enough to shout that we want higher wages, that we want a plot of land, that we want food, that we are hungry, that prices are high, that there is a lot of unemployment. That's not enough. The people have understood that only when they link their struggles through solidarity, that only when the workers, the peasants, the shantytown dwellers, men and women, students, all together, decide to advance hand in hand and organize, then the scattered economic struggles become a revolutionary struggle for radical change in this country.

"Companeros, we spoke with thousands of Mexicans, people who, although like me they have no party, know that they are going to build one. Thousands of them! We can tell you that we felt the socialism that lies waiting to spring forward from the Mexican people, a people scorned by the PRI. So much the worse for them! Because this people is going to make the socialist revolution in this country!"

Rosario explained that the workers and peasants she spoke to throughout the campaign did not want a party that would settle for mere reforms or crumbs, but "a party that struggles to overthrow this system, to turn this country upside-down...."

AN IMMORAL SYSTEM

The people of Mexico, she said, "this people that lived through an October 2...that has suffered the sadness of 500 missing, that knows that hundreds of companeros have died in clandestine jails under torture, that saw hundreds of companeros fall in guerrilla struggles; this people that admires the Cuban revolution, this people that welcomes with joy and pride the Nicaraguan revolution, and that hopes for the advance of the revolution in El Salvador and Guatemala; this people is looking fear of repression in the face, and is fighting for that revolutionary struggle to arrive here soon, very soon."

"Throughout this campaign, companeros, we haven't fooled anyone," she emphasized. "We never made any promises. We made commitments. We committed ourselves to struggle. We committed ourselves to take ever more rapid and ever more firm steps to achieve the victory that we are fighting for." And, she added, as a result of the campaign, "there are now peasant coordinating committees, there are now workers coordinating committees, from Palmarillo in Veracruz, to Apoyac de Alvarez in Guerrero; from Tijuana to Venustiano Carranza in Chiapas.

"All this, companeros, all this that we dream of, all this that we aspire to, all this that millions of Mexicans hope for, is not going to be possible with a system like that of the PRI, no matter how much the PRI talks about the 'moral renewal of society.' They talk and talk—they have been talking for years and years. These gentlemen have been saying the same thing for years! They are not even original! And now they tell us that their 'moral renewal of society' will achieve the transformation of this country.

"No, companeros, no! The people of Mexico know this very well. It is not just that the government officials are corrupt. It is not just that. It is bad that they are corrupt. Of course, they're not revolutionaries.

"But the worst thing of all—and that's why they won't fool anybody—is that what is no good, what is rotten, it the system. And it's bad, companeros, because a system that specially designs everything to squeeze the working people is immoral. A system that oppresses, that represses, that exploits, that kills millions of Mexicans, who leave their lives in the fields that they till or in the factories where they work. People who spend their whole life working and when they die they don't even have a plot of land in the cemetery so that they could be buried."

ARISE, YE PRISONERS OF STARVATION

Rosario Ibarra concluded her speech by referring to the recent May Day celebrations in Mexico, which were dominated by PRI union bureaucrats and were little more than PRI campaign rallies.

"We announce, companeros, that if we strengthen our steps, that if we step widely, soon, companeros, very soon, we will have the kind of May Day we want, a jubilant May Day, a May Day in which the workers will march as brothers with the peasants, the workers will march hand in hand with the shantytown dwellers, the women, and the students. And they will raise their fists and they will sing and smile and laugh, joyfully, for on the balcony of the National Palace will be the workers and the peasants and the slum-dwellers—the poor of this country, its real representatives. Venceremos! We shall overcome!"

The crowd burst out in shouts of "Rosario, Rosario, Rosario!" which only subsided when the band struck up, and tens of thousands of fists were raised defiantly in the air and tens of thousands of voices began to sing the *International*, anthem of the working class.

Breakthrough!

The Mexican government has not yet released any official returns of the elections. It is known, however, that the slate supported by the Mexican section of the Fourth International got at least between 2% and 3% of the vote; that it gained legal status, and that it will have representation in parliament.

The Mexican Trotskyists, thus, have achieved a qualitative breakthrough on the national political level, becoming visible to the Mexican masses as a real factor in national politics and as an alternative. This was achieved on the basis of a Trotskyist program that gave a focus to a broad range of fighting movements in Mexico. We will take a closer look at the results in the coming issue.

Dutch military launches attack on peace movement and soldiers rights

Holland has been one of the major centers of the antinuclear and antimilitarist movement in West Europe. In November, half a million persons demonstrated against the stationing of more U.S. nuclear missiles in Europe. Draftees in the Dutch army also have a strong trade-union organization.

Now, the NATO authorities seem to have chosen the Netherlands as a testing ground for an attack on the peace movement and the democratic rights of soldiers.

On June 17-18, Dutch military police arrested three leading activists of the soldiers union and the antinuclear movement. One of them was Peter van Wijk, national action director of the VVDM (Vereniging voor Dienstpligtige Militairen—the Draftees Association). Another, Oscar van Rijswijk, was hauled in in the early morning hours. The third was Steef Boot, a soldier activist working at a NATO installation.

Subsequently, a fourth soldier, Frans Mass, member of the Soldiers Committee Against Nuclear Weapons, was arrested. All were charged with "endangering national security."

The accusation was that the soldiers arrested were involved in the theft of documents dealing with the role of the Cannerberg NATO base in the south of the country, which is supposed to be the NATO command center for Northern Europe in the event of a war with the Soviet Union. Boot was alleged to have actually taken the documents.

However, the function of the Cannerberg base has long been public knowledge. The Belgian military weekly *Vox* published an article on this facility a year and a half ago. And in January 1981, the Dutch weekly *De Tijd* published five pages of documentation about it, including maps.

The fact is that "military secrecy" in Holland has meant the authorities concealing from the Dutch people decisions that could be fateful ones for their future and that of their children.

For example, it was only as a result of a question in parliament in 1978 raised by the representative of a small left party that it became known that the Dutch navy had been given responsibility ten years before for atomic mines.

These are indications that the Dutch authorities deliberately organized a frameup. For example, before this, draftees have not been assigned to the post that Steef Boot was.

At the time of the arrests, *Volksrant*, one of the country's major papers, wrote:

"One gets the impression that this was a well prepared operation directed against Oskar van Rijswijk especially. Action Coordinator Van Wijk had been in office just one week.

"Van Rijswijk, on the other hand, has been deeply involved in the various actions against nuclear weapons. He is a member of the Bond voor Dienstpligtigen (BVD—the Draftees Union), the active left wing of the VVDM. He also is a member of the Soldiers Committee Against Nuclear Weapons, which has called on soldiers several times to come out to demonstrations in uniform." (June 18.)

Van Rijswijk was held three weeks incommunicado in the military prison, before he was released on bail toward the end of the first week in July, along with the rest of those held. Van Wijk was released earlier. In the memory of the guards at the prison, no prisoner was ever held incommunicado before more than a few days. In addition, during his incarceration, van Rijswijk was continually threatened by the military security personnel.

Under the first impact of the arrests, the VVDM leadership retreated, suspending the jailed activists. However, very quickly a broad response developed against the attack on the peace movement and the democratic rights of soldiers.

On July 5, a united defense committee was set up, including the VVDM, all the peace organizations, left parties, a number of youth organizations, and the main national trade-union federation.

On July 8, by a unanimous vote of the leadership, the VVDM, rescinded the suspension of the soldier activists and decided to undertake a campaign in their defense.

The military authorities, however, are still pressing their charges and a major test of strength continues to develop in Holland between the peace movement and the capitalist warmakers, one that has a key importance for the international antiwar movements. An international campaign in defense of these soldiers, therefore, is essential.

Protest telegrams and petitions should be sent to Defense Minister van Mierlo, Plein 4, Den Haag, Netherlands, with copies to the VVDM, Hojelkazerne, Croeselaan 39, Utrecht, the Netherlands.■

Left victory in Mauritius

Sixty to nil was the final score by which the Mauritian Militant Movement and the Mauritian Socialist Party won the elections in Mauritius on Friday June 11. Thus, all the seats in the Mauritian Parliament have gone to members of the MMM/MSP alliance, cutting out the rightwing candidates—former MPs, members of the government, the Prime Minister included. Two members of the Rodriguais People's Organisation were elected in the small island of Rodriguez.

The right was divided in this election between the National Alliance party, regrouping the Labour Party, a split from the Mauritian Social-Democratic party, the Assembly for Progress and Liberty, and the Mauritian Social-Democratic Party of Gaetan Duval. The right comes out of the election even more weakened by this result, which was not as unexpected as might be imagined. The purple posters of the MMM covered the whole island, and in their own way were an indication of the electoral recomposition in progress.

The reactionary government of Sir Seewoosagur Ramgoolam was not saved by the propaganda activity of the CIA agents, sent there to fulfill the kind of mission that they had so successfully carried out in Jamaica in facilitating the election of the very reactionary Jamaican Labour Party of Edward Seaga.

While the leaders of the alliance MMM/MSP and the new government—in the name of 'social consensus'—struggled immediately to calm the overflowing joy and enthusiasm of the working masses at the defeat of the right—the New Militant, the MMM newspaper, headlined on June 13: 'Forgive our enemies, forget our quarrels'—that electoral victory is going to encourage many workers to demand more than the timid reforms in the programme of the new team. Bearing in mind the politicisation and the combativity of young people that represent more than 50 per cent of the population, and the existence of left currents within the mass movement, that electoral result opens a new period of class struggles in this small country in the Indian Ocean.

Revolution and Counter-revolution in Poland

Resolution of the IEC of the Fourth International, May 1982

I. THE RISE OF POLITICAL REVOLUTION

1. Of all the political revolutions in which workers have risen up against the totalitarian power of the bureaucracy in the bureaucratized workers states, the Polish revolution of August 1980-December 1981 is incontestably the most advanced. While we should not expect each new revolutionary rise in the workers states to represent a further step in a linear progression, it is nevertheless a fact that the latest one in Poland shows that they are following an ascending course and tend to pose in practice the question of a revolutionary overthrow of the bureaucratic regime.

In none of the previous cases, except perhaps that of Hungary in 1956, have the workers set themselves the task of assuming direct economic and political power. Never have the workers discussed the tactics so broadly or so extensively worked out the means for achieving this goal as consciously as they have this time. It is true they only have reached this stage of maturity in the most recent months, in the last weeks. Even in the last hours before the proclamation of a state of war, the national leadership of Solidarnosc did not reach the point of adopting a strategy for the seizure of power by the workers. Nevertheless, the workers and the leadership of the mass movement did openly recognize that the question of power was posed and opened a discussion aimed at finding the means to resolve it. This is an original feature of the Polish revolution which constitutes an event of historical importance and reflects a qualitative leap forward in the development of political revolutions as a whole. Thus, the Polish mass movement and its main organization—the independent self-managed Solidarnosc union—went far beyond the most advanced gains of the mass movements led by strike committees in East Germany in 1953, by workers councils in Hungary and Poland in 1956, or of Czechoslovakia in 1968-69.

The Polish antibureaucratic revolution of 1980-81 unfolded in a country characterized by a whole number of features some of which are specific and whose influence on the course of the revolution is undeniable:

a) The high level of industrial development and a correspondingly educated working class with a leading role and social weight based on the existence of several highly concentrated industrial zones (some firms employing several tens of thousands of workers). The massive movement of agricultural workers into industry has not, however, left the working class in a state of perpetual political "adolescence," contrary to the bureaucracy's intention, since they promoted this process in the hope that that would make it possible to neutralize the social power of the workers. On the contrary, the working class has not become diluted in an alien social milieu. Instead, society has assumed an ever more proletarian character, thereby digging the grave of the bureaucratic regime.

b) The traditions and experiences of the Polish working class in its uprisings against the bureaucratic regime. The explosions of workers' protests in June 1956 (Poznan), December 1970 (Gdansk and Szczecin), and June 1976 (Radom and Ursus factory in Warsaw), made it possible for the Polish workers:

-to lose any confidence they might have had in the ability of the bureaucratic regime, or any fraction of the bureaucracy, to achieve the aspirations of the working class. The myth of the "providential man", embodied first by Gomulka and then by Gierek, no longer had any hold.

-to become convinced, on the basis of their own experience, of the limitations of spontaneous movements and of the necessity of self-organization.

-to move on to a new form of struggle: the mass strike with occupations. The experience of the workers self-management mobilizations of 1944-45 and 1956-57 had created a tradition of struggle for workers control over production and for workers management of factories; this legacy made it easier for the political revolution of 1981 to find the road to workers power in the factories as well as in the state.

c) The relative weakness of the power of a bureaucracy that had to confront not only a powerful and experienced working class, but that also had not been able to impose its total hegemony over society as a whole.

In Poland, forced collectivization did not succeed in cowing the peasantry into accepting the yoke of the bureaucracy. The main sector of agriculture remains in the hands of peasant family units, which give independent working farmers a considerable margin of maneuver and facilitate resistance to the state. Moreover, the strength and influence of the Catholic church have buttressed a constant resistance with which the bureaucracy has found itself obliged to seek a compromise, in the framework of an unstable but persistent equilibrium. This position of the Catholic church, which expressed the interests of the peasantry in particular, has favoured the existence of a plurality of conceptions of the world, and thus the development of more or less critical and independent thought in wide sectors of society. Yet, if this breach in the monolithic control of society favored the rebirth of an autonomous mass movement, the fundamental conservative role of the Catholic hierarchy worked to hold back the revolutionary process.

d) The closer and closer association of the bureaucracy with certain capitalist forces. During the 1970s, the Polish economy became much more dependent on the imperialist countries, both on the financial and technological levels, which led sectors of the bureaucracy to establish links with foreign monopoly capital and to let itself be corrupted by it. Also, sections of the bureaucracy forged links in Poland with certain sectors of a middle bourgeoisie that had accumulated substantial commercial capital from speculation.

The bureaucracy also encouraged the development of a capitalist sector in agriculture and built up close ties with it. It gained the right legally to pass on some of its privileges (in 1972, guaranteed resources and pension rights, transmittable to the third generation, were instituted for "people performing leadership tasks in the party and state"). It became more and more under the spell of the values of bourgeois society.

e) An economic crisis of a severity unprecedented in the history of bureaucratized workers states. This represented a crisis of the system of bureaucratic management of the economy that over several years transformed itself from a relative to an absolute brake on the development of productive forces for several years. On the one hand, the social character of production has been increasing uninterruptedly, and huge means of production are the property of the state. But on the other hand, a privileged minority enjoys a monopoly of power over the use of the means of production and the social surplus, and disposes of it in its own interests. After a period of frenetic

growth in the early 1970s, these contradictions became explosive. A radical solution of the problem of economic management, and therefore of the question of power, had become necessary to save the country from a crisis.

f) The existence of oppositional groups whose activity within the working class the bureaucracy was forced to partly tolerate after the revolts of 1976. In addition to the KOR, which became the best known of these groups, we should mention the role of clandestine workers papers such as *The Worker* and *The Baltic Worker*, etc.

First national congress of Solidarnosc (DR)

2. The Polish revolution is characterized and qualitatively distinguished from the beginnings of previous political revolutions in Eastern Europe by the following features:

-This was a mass movement of colossal dimension. Nearly 2 million workers directly participated in the strike wave of July-August 1980. Over 10 million workers—that is, over one-third of the entire Polish population—participated actively in the preparations for the general strike which was cancelled at the last minute in March 1981. Moreover, in the fall 1981, the campus strike movement encompassed the overwhelming majority of student youth. Although less sizeable and more dispersed over time and space, significant mass mobilizations also developed among the peasantry.

-Despite unavoidable fluctuations, the revolutionary wave lasted a long time. The bureaucratic regime only decided to resort to force and stage its counter-revolutionary military crackdown in the eighteenth month of the revolution. On December 13, 1981, the revolution was not defeated and was not in a phase of retreat. On the contrary, the mass movement had entered a new phase of quickening radicalization several weeks before, and the entire country was in the throes of a directly revolutionary political crisis. What happened in the days following the crackdown showed that the revolutionary potential of the mass movement was far from being exhausted. Workers resistance to the military dictatorship took on the dimensions of a near-general strike, despite the dismantling of the Solidarnosc organization and leadership structures in the wake of a powerful repressive operation. In many factories, and especially in the mines, the police and army had to resort to violence in order to break the strike.

-The social composition of the mass movement was predominantly working class. The working class was not only the main driving force of the Polish revolution; it was its directing force. This is an undeniable fact recognized by all the other sectors who participated in the revolution: the students in revolt, the democratic intellectuals, the urban petty-bourgeoisie, and the active sectors of the peasantry. The highly concentrated industrial zones were the centers of the mass movement and the large factories were the fortresses of the revolution. They set the tone insofar as forms of struggle, demands, forms of organiztion, and pace of mobilization of the workers were concerned, and thereby put an unquestionably working-class stamp on the unfolding revolution. All the nonworking-class sectors of the movement were aware that their own chances of gaining success in the struggle depended entirely on the support of the large factories.

-The mass movement was distinctly organized even though it drew great strength from its spontaneous tendencies. The wage workers achieved the highest level of organization: 9.4 million out of 13 million were members of the Solidarnosc union. The best organized were the productive workers in heavy industry. In the other social layers, the level of organization was distinctly less. Only a minority of the peasantry and student youth were unionized, even though the students showed their organizational capacities on certain occasions, such as during strikes involving occupation of the universities.

-The mass movement was independent of the bureaucracy, whether state or party apparatus, and it uncompromisingly defended its independence. Evidence of this is the determination with which Solidarnosc opposed the attempt of the bureaucracy to intervene in the debate over its statutes by means of the courts. The high level of working-class independence was already obvious in the August 1980 strike. Instead of massively leaving their factories and rallying in front of the PUWP provincial committee headquarters, as they had done previously, the workers entrenched themselves in the factories they occupied, thereby forcing the representatives of the bureaucratic regime to come negotiate with them on their own grounds. This independence was subsequently confirmed at the time of the move to organize independent unions—the first and most important demand of the workers. It is true that for several months there were still illusions in the mass movement about the possibility of negotiating with the bureaucracy, of achieving a more or less lasting compromise based on the recognition of a series of democratic gains of the working class and society as a whole. It is obvious that there were still illusions about the good will of certain figures and factions in the bureaucracy. But the workers rejected any subordination to this or that sector of the bureaucratic apparatus, and likewise refused to grant it any kind of legitimacy.

3. In the course of the revolutionary rise, various forms of struggle and organization emerged that brought the workers closer to the conquest of power. The first was the movement of workers self-management that was concretized in the formation of workers councils in the factories; these tended to become centralized, first on a regional level, and then on a national level. Solidarnosc's experiment with supervising distribution and the system of rationing of essential products significantly contributed to developing workers control over the economy, even though it was limited to only one region. The challenge to bureaucratic power was sharpened by the emerging forms of citizens' self-management on a territorial basis which corresponded to the mass

movement's demands for free elections to the Diet, as well as the provincial and municipal councils. In the last few days before December 13, all these movements were becoming intertwined with the preparations for the active strike. This was the angle from which the workers intended to challenge the bureaucracy's power, beginning with its economic power.

II. WHY WAS THE COUNTERREVOLUTION VICTORIOUS?

4. The bureaucracy's response to the rise of the mass movement and the political radicalization of the workers was the December 13 crackdown. The political counterrevolution launched on that day was intended to shore up the crumbling power of the bureaucracy and preserve its privileges as a parasitic caste. The fact that it had to resort to the army and establish a military junta—an unprecedented move in the so-called "socialist countries"—reflected both the extent of the paralysis of the central administrative apparatus and the depth of the PUWP's crisis. The party had been shaken by violent internal struggles between rival factions, drained by the departure of 2 million members, especially workers, and become clearly incapable of exercising its "leading role". Only the repressive apparatuses—the police and the army—were still in a position to reestablish bureaucratic order. This is the reason for the resort to tanks and guns. Arrests and internments by the thousands, the ban on travel inside the country, the disconnection of the communications network, the curfew, the massive firings, and the various other measures of intimidation, all were essential to decapitate the union and impose silence on a social movement embracing ten million people. The scale of the Polish proletariat's defeat was indicated by the loss of democratic and trade-union rights which the working class had wrested from the bureaucracy in the course of its fierce eighteen-month struggle. Overnight, the proletariat was deprived of the right to strike. The brutal lengthening of the workweek as well as the militarization of the key productive enterprises, the suspension of the Solidarnosc union—followed by that of the students and peasants organizations—and the abolition of all freedom of expression, clearly showed the ruling clique's determination to press its assault on the mass movement to the bitter end.

The abolition of the workers' right to organize freely in the union of their own choosing—undoubtedly the most significant political advance over previous revolutionary rises in Hungary, Czechoslovakia, and Poland itself—interrupted the development of a situation of dual power. Thus, it abruptly halted the revolutionary process in which the working class was demonstrating its capacity to run its own affairs.

In this regard, the seriousness of the blow dealt the Polish working class on December 13, at a time when the revolutionary nature of the situation that emerged in the last few months had become clear, should not be underestimated. This was indeed the beginning of a political counterrevolution—a counterrevolution designed to crush the movement while there was still time.

5. The August 31, 1980, Gdansk Agreements that recognized the workers' right to build their own mass independent organizations represented a magnificent victory of the Polish workers. But they also represented a compromise, because while the power of the bureaucracy was weakened, it was not overthrown. The bureaucrats were able to force a formal recognition of their monopoly of power in a clause of the Agreements that stated that the union to be set up would recognize "the leading role of the party in the state."

Nevertheless, this type of formal recognition could not guarantee the bureaucracy's continued grip on power at a time when it was proving incapable of meeting the social needs of the working class, and could not even keep production going at its previous level. The workers very rapidly moved to demand the removal of incompetent bureaucrats, which raised the spectre that more of these officials become "unemployed", that is might lose their status and privileges. Moreover, the fact that the protest movements spread to all layers of society while conflicts in the factories, both on economic and social issues, were increasing and workers councils were spreading throughout the country and beginning to unite in coordinating bodies, first on the regional, and then on the national levels, tended to bring the scattered struggles together and turn them into a central confrontation with the state. A struggle to the death had begun between the tottering regime of the bureaucracy and the emerging power of the workers. A confrontation was inevitable.

6. Far from ushering in a period of stability and peaceful coexistence, the Gdansk Agreements led to an increase in partial and local conflicts. The moderate wing of the trade union, backed up by the majority of the experts and strongly supported by the Catholic hierarchy, sought to direct the movement into safe channels and prevent a confrontation. In the first few months, this sector clearly had a strong influence on Solidarnosc. But in a society based on the nationalization of the means of production, all economic issues immediately take on a political dimension. All immediate demands raise problems involving the reorganization of production, revising the plan, economic reform, etc.... The question posed was: Who runs the economy and in whose interests? Who rules? The working class or the bureaucracy?

Faced with its obvious inability to confine the union to the field of material demands, the moderate currents put forward the strategy of "self-limitation" of the revolution. According to this strategy's supporters, it was possible to wrest a series of concessions from the Polish bureaucracy by adopting a set-by-step approach that would never exceed certain boundaries and especially not challenge the "geopolitical context" in which the country found itself so as to prevent a military intervention by the USSR. According to them, the main danger of a confrontation came from the Soviet bureaucracy and not from the Polish bureaucracy, which was split and weakened. A guarantee of Soviet interests, tolerating the appearance of bureaucratic power emptied of all meaningful content in Poland, would allow the country to avoid the confrontation. This assessment underestimated the Polish bureaucracy as an opponent and underestimated its fierce determination to defend its own interests. This was most obvious during the negotiations for a "National Accord" that the supporters of "self-limitation" presented as desirable for its own sake. Since the bureaucracy no longer had anything to concede in exchange for a compromise, it demanded nothing less than the total subordination of Solidarnosc within a body that it would completely control. Its determination to safeguard its privileges by any means necessary was also obvious in the December 13 crackdown, which produced surprise and disarray among those who expected the military intervention to come from the Soviets.

Along with the hope of escaping a confrontation, another illusion prevailed in Solidarnosc. It was rooted in the very history of the eighteen-month struggle in which the union had always found a way, despite hesitation, to wrest new concessions from the bureaucracy. Many activists also believed the movement could continue indefinitely feeding on its own victories, that the support it enjoyed from the overwhelming majority of the population and its strength—ten million workers poised for a general strike to defend their union—would be sufficient to force the government to retreat.

7. The illusions kept the movement from preparing for the confrontation. It is true that the revolutionary currents that favored the development of control over production and distribution, initiated the idea of the active strike and understood the importance of coordinating the workers councils' activity, clearly perceived the need to create a more favorable relationship of forces that would allow for new advances. But they didn't have time to set up a national structure and had few spokespeople in the Solidarnosc national leadership chosen by the first congress of delegates. This is the reason why, in the decisive weeks of fall 1981, Solidarnosc lacked a coherent approach on the goal to be pursued and the means to achieve it. For lack of a correct evaluation of the enemy it confronted, the union leadership could not in time formulate an alternative strategy to that of "self-limitation." The decisions voted at the National Commission were often contradictory and could not be imple-

mented. Faced with the question of power and an increasingly radical rank and file, the leadership hesitated and beat about the bush. The last meeting of the National Commission on the eve of the putsch gave a good picture of the contradictions that beset the organization. Alongside the programmatic advances that reflected a revolutionary viewpoint and were formulated by the Lodz, Cracow, and Warsaw leaders, came the hesitations of Lech Walesa and the Jan Rulewski proposal to hold free elections, which did not take into account the need to take the initiative in the confrontation with the bureaucracy. This is why the government was able to paralyze the mass movement without itself suffering paralysis from a general strike. In revolution as well as in counterrevolution, whichever side takes the initiative gains a considerable advantage because it can use its own centralization against the scattered resistance of its opponent.

8. The December 13 setback was not a foregone conclusion. On the one hand, the bureaucracy had only unreliable troops at its disposal. The broad masses of the soldiers were not ready, of themselves, to let themselves be used in a civil war, while they were not ready either to go over to the side of the workers just like that. Fraternization between the troops and the workers must be p

struggle at hand is not a mere skirmish, that the workers are determined to go all the way and replace the power of the bureaucracy with their own. A national strike in which production was resumed under workers control could have created such conditions.

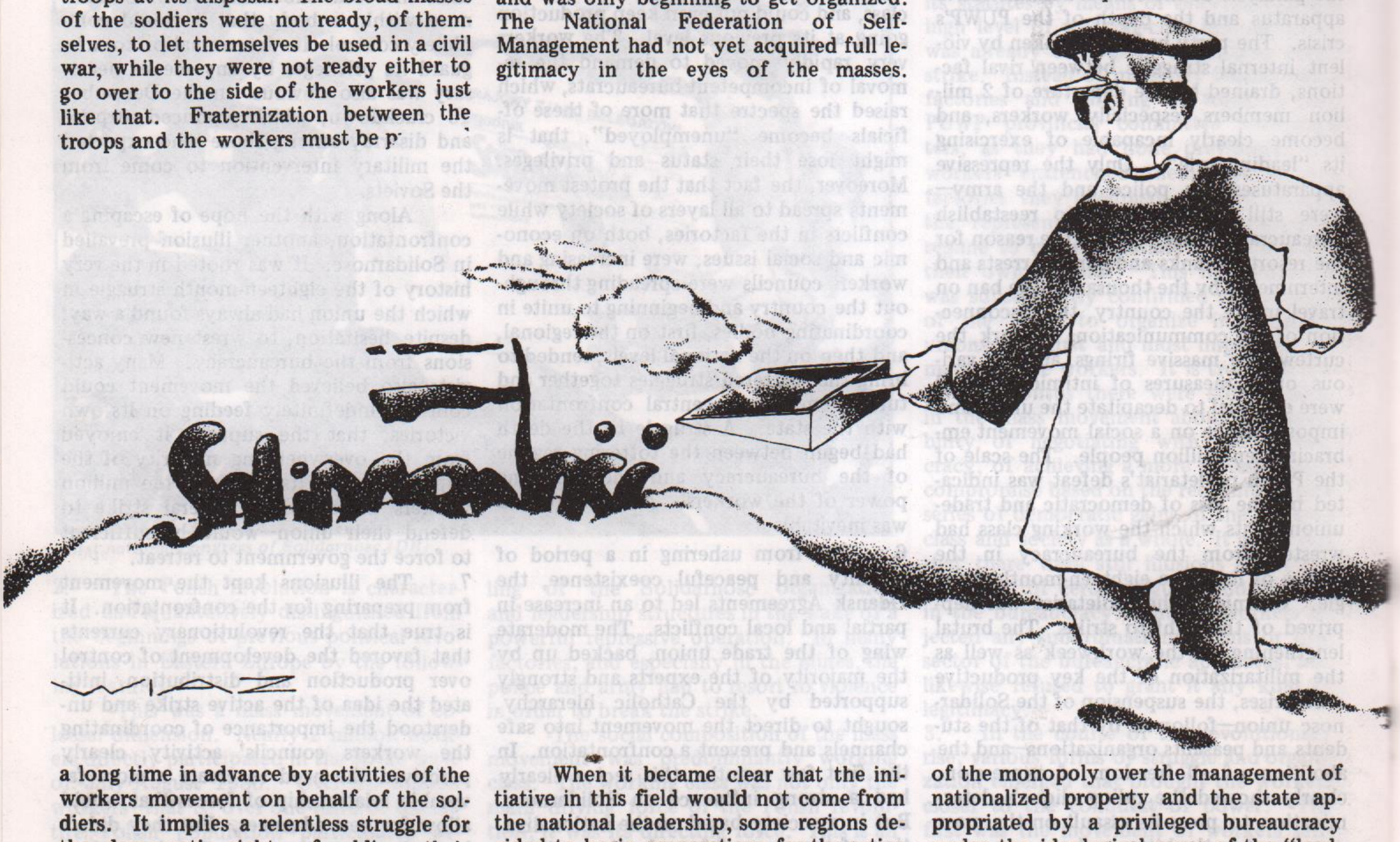
While some regional leaderships of Solidarnosc and the self-management movement had begun to undertake the elaboration of emergency plans in the last period, they were unable to complete their work before December 13, 1981.

Obviously, their work was obstructed by the reticence, and sometimes the fierce opposition, of the moderate currents in the leadership of Solidarnosc who correctly thought that the tactic of the active strike posed the question of power. Solidarnosc was the only structure on a national—and often the only one on a regional—level that could have initiated and led an active strike in the fall of 1981. Workers councils did not yet exist in all factories, or were only being set up at the time. Regional coordination of the councils did not exist in the whole country and was only beginning to get organized. The National Federation of Self-Management had not yet acquired full legitimacy in the eyes of the masses.

workers were ready for—in several regions at least—and that would have allowed the union to regain the initiative.

III. THE GENERAL POLITICAL LESSONS ABOUT THE POLITICAL REVOLUTION THAT EMERGE FROM THE POLISH EXPERIENCE

9. The rise of the political revolution in Poland after the summer of 1980, and the December 13,1981, counterrevolutionary crackdown, have shed new light on the postcapitalist nature of the society dominated by bureaucratic dictatorship that exists today in the USSR and the other bureaucratized workers states. The entire revolutionary dynamic, the nature of the political, economic, social, and ideological conflicts that shook Polish society, were qualitatively different from those that distinguish the revolutionary rise of of workers in a capitalist country. The focus of the strugglewas not the overthrow of bourgeois rule and the abolition of the capitalist mode of production. Rather it was the question of the abolition



a long time in advance by activities of the workers movement on behalf of the soldiers. It implies a relentless struggle for the democratic rights of soldiers, their right to organize independently of the military hierarchy, the defense of victims of repression inside the military institutions, and the development of links between union structures and the barracks. These are all tasks that, aside for a few rare exceptions, were not assumed by the leadership of Solidarnosc because of its illusions in the Polish army, which it saw as a natural ally against the Soviet enemy. Moreover, we should stress that before they will go over to the side of the workers, soldiers must be convinced that the

When it became clear that the initiative in this field would not come from the national leadership, some regions decided to begin preparations for the active strike without further delay (Lodz, Silesia, Warsaw, Stalowa Wola), but they were unable to carry them through to completion for lack of time. The debate only surfaced on a national scale and with force within the leadership of Solidarnosc a few hours before the crackdown.

Because they did not understand what was brewing, in particular when the School of Firemen Cadets in Warsaw was forcibly evacuated ten days before December 13, the leadership of Solidarnosc did not call for the general strike that the

of the monopoly over the management of nationalized property and the state appropriated by a privileged bureaucracy under the ideological cover of the "leading role of the party." The central question posed by social and political struggles in Poland in 1980-81 was not "capitalism or socialism," but "bureaucratic power or workers power."

Neither the nature of the economic crisis nor the nature of the solutions proposed in various quarters had anything to do with any sort of capitalism, even be it some hypothetical "state capitalism." There was no crisis of overproduction of commodities. There was a crisis of underproduction of use-values. There were no

massive layoffs caused by the unprofitability or bankruptcy of firms. There was a shortage of raw materials, spare parts, and consumer goods accompanied by a relative surplus of means of payment.

All this is the result of an economic policy designed to satisfy the interests of a deeply divided parasitic caste whose internecine struggles for control of the social wealth were reflected in its anarchic decisions, catastrophic lack of foresight, leading to such a thorough breakdown of the plan that only a caricature of centralized planning was left standing. The workers tended more and more not only to demand the elimination of social injustices arising from the bourgeois norms of distribution, but also to impose social controls in order to prevent the bureaucracy from utilizing these norms to strengthen its privileges and divide the working class. They had understood, most of them instinctively but many also consciously, that the problems of distribution were directly connected with the problems of power and particularly with problems of organizing, orienting, and controlling production.

Despite all pressures, whether they emanated from the regime or from the technocratic wing of the movement for self-management, the workers counterposed elementary class behavior to the siren songs offering competition between firms and between individuals as the means of resolving the crisis. To the exaltation of so-called market economy values, they counterposed the cooperation of producers. To the project of competition between individual enterprises, they began to counterpose the cooperation of enterprise workers councils through a plan democratically elaborated and adopted.

They looked for salvation in solidarity, in the takeover by the workers themselves of the management and coordination of the enterprises, in the collective deciding of priorities concerning the use of resources, in challenges to excessive economic investments which often meant duplication of efforts, in the upgrading of social investments in the struggle against inequality and injustice in the field of distribution.

All these key values of a radical reorganization of planning, including its aims, methods, and organizational framework, are clearly proletarian and socialist in nature. They confirm the fact that, had the anti-bureaucratic political revolution triumphed, the social and economic foundations of the workers state would have been consolidated, not weakened, let alone destroyed.

10. Similarly, the rise of the political revolution in Poland, as well as the beginning of the counterrevolution of December 13, 1981, have confirmed that the bureaucracy is not a class like the bourgeoisie, the feudal nobility, or the slaveowners. The bureaucracy is not the agent of a specific mode of production. It doesn't have distinctive roots of its own in the process of production. Today like yesterday, its rule does not contribute to a further development of productive forces. It does not exercise any economically necessary function, not even in the process of accumulation. For all these reasons, it is led to deny its own existence and to hide its functions behind those of the proletariat and its vanguard, to continue to lay claim to Marxism, perverting it and using this deformed version for its own ends.

But when the bureaucracy finds itself in a permanent situation of open conflict with 10 million workers, the absurdity of its claims becomes glaring. It becomes clear that the management functions that the bureaucracy usurped could be fulfilled instead by the working class; that far from insuring the reproduction of the existing social and economic system, even with its own contradictions, it acts to undermine the foundations of the system and to prevent the full potential of the system from being realized on accordance with the system's own internal logic. In none of the previous antibureaucratic revolutions had the essentially parasitic nature of the bureaucracy become so evident to the masses as during the rise of the political revolution in Poland.

This is reflected not only in the fierce disputes over the management of enterprises counterposing the bureaucracy and the workers who aspired to workers self-management. It was reflected even more clearly in the workers participation in the preparations for the active strike. "The enterprises will go on running during the strike. Production and exchanges will continue; only the government will have nothing to say," warned Stefan Bratkowski in a letter to the Central Committee of the PUWP in October 1981. He was voicing the more and more widespread attitude of the workers. The understanding of the superfluous nature of the bureaucracy as a ruling layer, and the workers ability to do without it in the management of the economy and the state, were its main features.

However, the fact that the bureaucracy is not a class does not imply that it has no resources of its own or that it automatically becomes powerless whenever the proletariat begins to turn against it. The power of the bureaucracy lies in its control over the use of both the means of production and the social surplus through its exclusive monopoly of power within the state apparatus.

Moreover, the bureaucracy is conscious of its collective material interests. It obstinately hangs on to power, displaying even desperate courage in the face of the worst temporary setbacks. It is capable of promoting diversions, of backing off temporarily, of making significant concessions, of giving in, even formally, on principles, as long as it continues to control the centers of power and remains in a position to prepare a repressive counterattack.

This is why the idea that the bureaucracy can reform itself in the direction of democracy is an illusion. Equally deceptive are the proposals that bureaucratic power be subjected to social control or be forced to accept the participation of democratically elected workers representatives in the fundamental decision-making of the regime. These ideas—which the Solidarnosc mass movement gradually moved away from as a result of its own experiences in successive confrontations with the bureaucracy—underlay the strategies of self-limitation and national agreement, seen as a historic compromise, that were advocated by many experts of the leadership of Solidarnosc, and even, almost until the very end,

by the majority tendencies in the leadership of the union. However, such ideas were alien to the bureaucracy, not for ideological reasons, but because it could only preserve its power and privileges if the proletariat remained atomized and passive. And, of course, such a situation ceases to exist as soon as the slightest genuine workers democracy is instituted.

11. In a transitional society where totalitarian power is exercised by the bureaucracy, the repressive machinery of the state and its different apparatuses are parasites on the body of society. The essential political task of the working class in an antibureaucratic political revolution consists of destroying these apparatuses of domination. The interests of the working class, the poor peasantry, and of all the other layers of society oppressed by the bureaucracy coincide with this task. In a transitional society under bureaucratic dictatorship, all these layers are united by the fact that the bureaucratic machine oppresses them, crushes them, exploits them. To *smash* this machine, *demolish* it, is inevitably in the interest of the majority of the "people."

The bureaucracy, unlike the bourgeoisie, does not have deep roots in the socio-economic system. But this is precisely why it clings to the apparatuses that provide it both with its livelihood and monopoly over the exercise of power. During a political revolution, the bureaucracy is forced to resort to even more brutal than usual repression against the workers, and this leads it to reinforce the state machine.

What Trotsky defined as the tasks of the political revolution—"the violent overthrow of the political rule of a degenerated bureaucracy"—follows from the fact that: "There is no peaceful outcome for this crisis. No devil ever yet voluntarily cut off his own claws. The Soviet bureaucracy will not give up its positions without a fight. The development obviously leads to the road of revolution.

"With energetic pressure from the popular mass, and the disintegration inevitable in such circumstances of the government apparatus, the resistance of those in power may be much weaker than now appears. But as to this, only hypotheses are possible. In any case, the bureaucracy can be removed only by a revolutionary force. And, as always, there will be fewer victims the more bold and decisive is the attack." *(The Revolution Betrayed*, Pathfinder Press, p. 287.)

On the other hand, the political revolution by itself by no means puts an to all the problems which arise in the transition from capitalism to socialism and the need for a workers state that derives from them. It must reconstruct the apparatus of a new type of state, much more integrated into the proletariat and under its control, notably in the military, juridicial, administrative, economic, etc., fields. The Polish revolution has given useful information in both these regards.

For one, the first victory of the Polish workers over the bureaucracy was reflected in the destruction of one of the apparatuses of bureaucratic power. The strike committees' winning of the workers right to organize independent unions in August 1980, later, after the emergence of Solidarnosc, turned into a fight in which the state trade-union apparatus was largely dismantled and demolished (not completely through, since the bureaucracy remained in power). Even though the power of the bureaucracy was not challenged as such, the self-organization of the workers involved the destruction of one of the apparatuses that under bureaucratic rule make up the state machine.

As the movement for economic reform based on worker self-management developed, other state apparatuses—those that give the bureaucracy its economic power—were subjected to pressures tending to destroy them. An often fierce struggle broke out to prevent the nomination of enterprise directors on the basis of the PUWP "nomenklatura," and to get the compulsory enterprise associations and industrial ministries disbanded. The workers proposed various solutions to replace the bureaucratic apparatuses that they sought to destroy, including public competitons to be organized by the workers councils of the enterprises for the post of factory manager, restricting of the role of enterprise management to carrying out decisions subordinate to organs of workers self-management, and the formation of voluntary enterprise associations based on the workers councils.

On the other hand, the fundamental weakness of the Polish revolution was that it did not concentrate all its forces on destroying the repressive apparatus of bureaucratic rule. It is true that Solidarnosc did demand that a part of the police apparatus—especially its buildings—be returned to society and used to meet the needs of the majority. It supported the formation of the independent union of members of the civil police forces. And in the last days before December 13, its revolutionary sectors called for the formation of workers guards. But no strugle was organized, inside or outside the army, to eliminate the bureaucratic apparatus in the armed forces. This was precisely the bureaucracy's last resource and the one it relied on to carry through its political counterrevolution.

12. The Polish revolution is the first antibureaucratic revolution in which the mass movement was able to find a solution to the problem of self-organization of the workers. In all previous political revolutions, like that in East Germany in 1953, Hungary in 1956, and Czechoslovakia in 1968, the working class created organs of power and dual power—workers councils, or strike committees tending to convert themselves into workers councils—but not permanent forms of self-organization. This is where the superiority of the Polish experience lies.

The interenterprise strike committees of August 1980 did not turn into workers councils but into organizing committees of the union. The overwhelming majority of wage earners, organized at the grass roots in enterprise union sections, joined this union. Solidarnosc did not organize on the lines of occupations or industries, but on a territorial basis (the regions). The horizontal structures completely outweighed the vertical structures—although they did exist, the sections based on industrial lines had a very small role. This method of organization insures the unity of all workers, regardless of their trades or the industry in which they are employed. The specificity of Solidarnosc as a trade union organization lay in the fact that it was not based on trades or industries. All the enterprise sections were united in a regional organization, and the regional organizations in a national organization.

Another particularity of Solidarnosc is the fact that its union democracy had many of the features of the democracy of workers councils.

Because of this, Solidarnosc was an organization representing the majority of workers whose leading organs also tended to assume the role of organs of a counterpower.

It is not by chance that the Polish workers are organized in the framework of a trade union that ensures the protection of their rights, their dignity, and their interests—material as much as spiritual—against the state; that they, moreover, call the state "boss." This reflects the situation of workers in a transitional society during the whole historic period in which the state and the bureaucracy, and the dangers bureaucratic deformation engender continue to exist. In the USSR and the Eastern European countries, the bureaucracy manages almost all the surplus product, thereby feeding its own privileges. It is naturally against this form of parasitic exploitation that the workers revolt, and organize themselves. Their work is reduced to being only the source of a wage necessary to procure the means of subsistance, often a poor one. From this point of view, trade unions have tasks similar to those that they have to assume when labor power is a commodity hired by capitalists—to struggle against the state-boss in an attempt to improve the conditions of work and the remuneration of labor power.

"The transfer of the factories to the state changed the situation of the worker only juridically. In reality, he is compelled to live in want and work a definite number of hours for a definite wage." (*Revolution Betrayed*, Pathfinder Press, p. 241.) From this fact, "Wage-labor does not lose its degrading character of slavery under the Soviet regime," said Trotsky. In a general manner, although there is no longer in these countries exploitation in the sense of class exploitation, there is still:

a) use of "forms of exploitation" (Trotsky) for the extortion of surplus product and to determine its extent and use without workers having the right of control or of veto. "The differences in income," said Trotsky about the transitional society under bureaucratic dictatorship, "are determined, in other words,

not only by differences of individual productiveness, but also by a masked appropriation of the products of the labor of others."(*Revolution Betrayed*, Pathfinder Press, p. 240.) These forms of exploitation will only disappear with a generaized system of self-management which allows the working class to decide itself the extent and the destination of its sacrifices.

b) parasitic exploitation in the sense in which Marx used the term, that is to say appropriation by the parasitic bureaucracy of part of the social product as the foundation of their privileges.

In addition, it is the bureaucracy which decides on the standard of living of the workers in the light of its specific caste interests, and it often brutally denies the material conditions needed to assure reproduction of the labor force.

This is the reason, along with the fact that labor power partially retains a commodity character, that the workers need a trade union.

At the same time, labor power no longer has strictly the status of a commodity. This essential difference is expressed notably in slower rate of work, and in setting wage rates in accordance with different criteria than those imposed by a labor market.

The defense of workers in the framework of new relations of production should preserve and reinforce the fact that they have the right to demand to be no longer mere wage earners. This logic should be reflected at the trade-union level.

-by struggles against all attempts to reintroduce the right of factory managers to lay off workers for economic reasons: closure of an enterprise must not be because of the automatic function of the market, but the relevant decision of a competent territorial unit (district, regional, national) and its organs of self-management. This closure implies the simultaneous re-employment of all workers in another job at least at the same level of qualification.

-by demands tied up with the workers right to decide on the use of the total social surplus product. A variety of options could obviously develop with respect to this. Thus, the "wage" demands should not be separated from the others. This precisely reflects the fact that the functions taken over by the bureaucracy could be assumed by the workers. The workers must have the right to make the decisions after a debate on the following:

-the part of the surplus product allocated to productive and unproductive investment funds and the sectors to get priority.

-the share allocated for the collective consumption and extending free goods and services.

-the part distributable in the form of wages in accordance with criteria established nationally.

Here again, a public debate must make it possible to produce consistent criteria (adjusting them in accordance with experience and degree of development reached). At the same time, such public debate must serve as a means of combating the following:

-effects of the market on the incomes that aggravate inequalities with little regard to the effective work put in.

-income differentials based on the so-called "quality" of work, which are a hidden form of appropriating part of the surplus product to feed social privileges.

Beyond that, the essential effect of the antibureaucratic political revolution does not bear on the sphere of distribution, but on that of production. To break up the power monopoly of the bureaucracy in the economy does not mean only denying it the right to decide on the use of the social surplus product, but also the right to determine the scope and limits of the social surplus product. This is why the need for combative and self-managing trade unions throughout this historic period involves the need for such

trade unions to have the right to share in determining the organization of work (tempos, ways of measuring work, etc.).

This does not mean that the trade union should be responsible for the management of the economy, which is a task that belongs to the organs of workers self-management.

13. One of the essential lessons of the Polish revolution was the questioning by the working class of the concept of social property as it had been presented by the bureaucracy in power. The Polish workers rejected the identification of state property with social property. The slogan "Give us back our factories!" which was raised during the first meeting of delegates of the self-management movement on July 8 in Gdansk, expresses this reaction very concretely, just as did the emergence of the concept of "social property" counterposed to the concept of state enterprise, or the distinction that came to be made between legal ownership and *social* control of the means of production.

From this standpoint, revolutionary Marxists fully support the aspirations of the Polish workers expressed in their struggle for self-management, and agree with all those who say, "We demand a real socialization of the means of production; that is socialism."

The transformation into state property of the means of production expropriated from the bourgeoisie is evidently a formal juridical act that has major importance for the socialization of the means of production. But in the same way that in the workers state power can be exercised either by the workers or the bureaucracy, the power to control the means of production may be in the hands of the working class or in those of the bureaucratic apparatus of the state. That is what decides the real socio-economic content of the property forms.

The bureaucratic caste profits from the state-owned means of production as if it actually owned them, but it does not take on any of the responsibilities of ownership. This double nature is the basis for the very widespread feeling in the transitional societies under bureaucratic domination that state property does not in fact belong to anyone.

Revolutionary Marxists defend state property in the workers states against internal tendencies and external threats that seek to restore the system of private ownership of the major means of production. But, at the same time, they advocate the transformation of state property into social property. Undoubtedly, the *complete* socialization of the means of production will only be possible when social classes, commodity production, and the state have completely disappeared. But the experience of the Polish revolution, especially that of the self-management movement which developed under the leadership of Solidarnosc, helps to clarify the point at which the socialization of the *major* means of production *begins*. In his criticisms of the totalitarian regime of the bureaucracy, Trotsky clearly indicates that the socialization of the means of production can begin and advances only as the state begins to wither away, that is, begins to be absorbed by a self-managed society. He states that social property begins not at the point where private property stops, but where state property stops. This is precisely the view which gained currency in the Solidarnosc mass movement.

Certainly, the diversity of projects defended in Poland under the single name of self-management, as in the Yugoslav experience, indicates the dangers of a reductionist self-management orientation, according to which each work collective would manage its own means of work, with the market unifying the whole. In order for the process of socialization of the means of production to progress, a fight has to be waged from the start to keep it from being diverted by the state or by the market. We should not think that such an understanding is obvious.

-In fact, the historic experience of Stalinism leads to rejecting all centralization and all mandatory planning. But practice proves that indicative plans, or social funds designed to reinforce great principles of solidarity are by no means

sufficient to counter the growth of social and regional inequalities when it is the logic of decentralization and the market that essentially determine incomes and, above all, investments.

-The market seems to offer a guarantee both for a certain economic rationality and for liberties that are trampled underfoot in the framework of hypercentralized bureaucratic planning. These ideas represent not only illusions but projects to which we counterpose the possibility of another kind of rationality: that of workers democracy based on the power of workers councils. So long as this alternative has not been put into practice somewhere, pro-market conceptions will retain considerable force.

—the resistance by the workers to the workings of the market laws has been and will remain very great. But the idea that they can better control what they know better (their factory, their workplace) conflicts to a certain extent with integrated and coordinated self-management, and leads some to fall back on reliance on the market, experts, and other "competent" managers. Then, when there is real decentralization, not even thousands of strikes can rebuild the unity of the working class.

However, the close connection between the process of socialization of the means of production and the process of the withering away of the state unveiled by revolutionary Marxism, began to be perceived by wide sections of the Polish workers who struggled at once to socialize the state sector of the economy and to socialize the state itself. The struggle for workers self-management of the enterprises rapidly took on a broader dimension. The mass movement wanted to replace the bureaucratic state institutions with different institutions that would insure the existence and the expansion of a genuine democracy of workers and citizens. The construction of a "self-managed republic," as advocated in Solidarnosc's program, would have tended to set up apparatuses suitable for a state in the process of socialization, that is to say that would be withering away as they merged with the masses, submitted to their direct control, and associating them to the direct exercise of power. The bureaucratic caricature of planning would have been replaced by a democratic elaboration of the plan through the broad participation of the organs representing the workers and the citizens and the possibility of submitting and discussing alternative proposals.

14. The Polish revolution once again confirms that in all workers revolutions, whether anticapitalist social revolutions or antibureaucratic political revolutions, the working class seeks to concretize its power in its own institutions of council democracy that combine the advantages of mass direct democracy with the advantages of representatiave democracy. The organs of struggle for power (or dual power organs) thrown up by the mass movements when they are led by the working class naturally tend to adopt the form of workers councils in the enterprises and the form of councils of workers delegates on the territorial level—two institutions whose historical precedents are the 1917 Russian revolution's factory committees and the soviets.

As previously stated, the leading organs of Solidarnosc in the enterprises, at the regional level, and at the national level, were in fact nascent organs of a democratic counterpower of the workers. The union democracy whose norms governed the functioning of these organs had the features of a council-type democracy. The workers councils, organs of workers control over production and of struggle for workers self-management of the enterprises, based on general assemblies of the workers (or of the delegates in the larger enterprises), corresponded exactly to this new type of institution. The regional coordinating bodies of workers councils pointed the way to workers power on a territorial basis, and the emergence of the organizing committee of the National Federation of Self-Management bodies (which was preparing to hold the first congress of delegates of councils) demonstrated the tendency toward centralization on a national scale. The independent peasant movement organized in the Solidarnosc private farmers union also called for the setting up of new forms of power in the rural zones, based on township general assemblies. The new organs of democrratic management that appeared in the universities struggling for their autonomy also were close to the form of councils.

It is the working class that is the historic bearer of the tendency toward council democracy. The Polish revolution demonstrated that when the working class exercises its hegemony in the mass movement, the model of democracy and democratic institutions that it puts forward is also followed very closely—with some unavoidable variations—by the other oppressed social sectors involved in the revolution. This was the case in many other revolutions—think of the poor-peasant councils in the Russian revolution, of soldiers councils in the Russian, German, and Spanish revolutions.

This doesn't mean that the advance or even the triumph of the antibureaucratic revolution leads to the immediate disappearance of the institutions of parliamentary democracy and the complete rule of council democracy.

The traumatizing experiences of Stalinism and the bureaucratic dictatorship have unquestionably refurbished the image of parliaments in Eastern Europe, as tarnished as it had become. The idea of electing a parliament by universal suffrage, with several slates, the citizens having a genuine right to present candidates and choose among them, was very popular during the revolutionary rise in Poland. It is improper for revolutionary Marxists to oppose what emerges as a legitimate democratic demand of the broad masses. But they cannot therefore abandon their criticisms of parliamentary democracy; they must clearly indicate its limitations. The essential thing is to define the competence of parliamentary-type institutions in a workers state so that they do not undermine the power of the workers councils, whose democratic legitimacy is based on one decisive point—*Those who produce the material wealth must have the primary right to decide how it will be used.* This idea is a basic one in the history of the international working-class movement ans was already put forward in Poland in 1956 by Oskar Lange, and later picked up by Solidarnosc as a means of resolving the problem at hand. It was the origin of the idea of a second chamber of the Diet, the Social and Economic or Self-Management Chamber which, according to the most advanced projects of Solidarnosc, was to be elected exclusively by the direct producers and to concentrate in its hands all the economic power of the state. Such an institution could be considered as a transitional form toward council democracy in a situation where the institutions of parliamentary democracy continued to exist. At the same time, it is no substitute for—and is not in contradiction

Demonstration organised by Solidarnosc (DR)

to—a national congress of delegates of workers councils, or a permanent body originating in such a congress. In a transitional society in which various forms of ownership of the means of production survive, the system of workers self-management represents the power not of all the direct producers, but only the producers in the nationalized sector of the economy. The working class, even though hegemonic, must guarantee the democratic expression in the organs of economic power of all the direct producers, including the peasants and the other layers of small owners of the means or production.

In both capitalist society and the transitional society between capitalism and socialism, the working class is the most consistent bearer of the tendency toward political democracy. This is so because it is the representative of a new mode of production that, in its highest phase, will institute unrestricted democracy, that is, a democratic workers state in the process of withering away.

In attacking bureaucratic power, the working class does not aspire to replace the existing bureaucratic dictatorship by workers democracy, but to assure also democracy for all citizens. Workers democracy rests on the cooperation of producers, and is founded essentially on the workers councils formed in the factories. The experience of the Polish revolution confirms that citizens democracy, as it emerges in the framework of a revolution led by the working class, is profoundly different from the distinctive forms of bourgeois democracy. Although it is not completely synonymous with workers democracy, it borrows the latter's features. This was obvious in the embryos of territorial self-management that appeared in Poland in the last phase of the revolutionary rise under the impetus of workers self-management. The newly emerging territorial self-management was a citizens. democracy based not on the market but on cooperation and on mutual help of consumers, neighbors, or the solidarity of families.

15. Even during a revolution, the subjective maturing of workers is the outcome of a complex process, indeed a contradictory one in which the stages can be relatively prolonged. In the Polish political revolution, the workers had to go through almost a year and a half of sharp struggles in which they lost their illusions before they decided to take their destiny into their own hands. But this moment was preceded by an objective maturation which was reflected in their activity, and particularly in the forms of struggle. This is one of the great lessons of the Polish revolution.

Since August 1980, that is, since the very beginning of the revolutionary rise, the main form of struggle of the Polish workers, adopted as such by Solidarnosc in its subsequent struggles, was the mass (passive) strike combined with factory occupations. The significance of this form of struggle when it is generalized and becomes the main form of struggle, is much more important than appears at first sight. Here is what Trotsky says about it:

"Independently of the demands of the strikers, the temporary occupation of the factories deals a blow to the idol of capitalist property. All strikes with occupation raise in practice the question of who rules in the factory: the capitalist or the worker? While the strike with occupation raises this question episodically, the factory committee gives it an organized expression."

Something very similar takes place under the rule of the bureaucracy. A strike involving occupations poses in practice the question of who should control the factories and their product—the working class or the bureaucracy? The form of the strike movements in Poland demonstrated that the workers were capable of putting the factories they occupied, as well as all the means of production concentrated in them, to work for society as a whole and in the interest of all. Trotsky also noted that the emergence of factory committees as a result of strikes involving occupation created a situation of dual power in the factory. The enterprise committees, the regional leaderships, and the national leadership of Solidarnosc de facto have created dual power at all these levels, not only because they developed out of this type of strike, but because they also have taken the lead in carrying out new occupation strikes.

Warsaw region Solidarnosc offices (DR)

The transition from objective maturity to subjective maturity for the seizure of power is marked by an ever broader involvement of the working class in the preparation of a higher form of occupation strikes. We are referring to the active strike that was called for by the most revolutionary currents in Solidarnosc. According to the conception that evolved inside Solidarnosc, the active strike does not confine itself to raising the question of economic power in practice, but it must also move to resolve it through revolutionary mass action. Moving beyond the proclamation of occupation strikes, the workers were to resume production under the leadership of the strike committees, according to alternative plans drawn up by these committees. Such plans were to reflect the genuine social needs and priorities. The strike committees had to extend workers control to encompass distribution.

At the same time, they had to form workers self-defense guards. Through active strikes of regional scope, and then of national scope, coordinated and centralized by the leading organs of Solidarnosc, economic power was to be wrested from the bureaucracy. Once firmly in the hands of the workers, it would be turned over by the strike committees of Solidarnosc to the organs of workers self-management consolidated during the active strike, and centralized on a national scale. The victory of the active strike would mean that the workers had succeeded in accumulating sufficient forces to wrest from the bureaucracy the remainder of its political power. Rooted in the natural tendencies of the workers movement and its own forms of struggle, the tactic of the active strike constitutes one of the most important contributions of Solidarnosc to the general strategy of the political revolution.

16. The subsequent development of the revolution, and especially its culmination in the seizure of power by the proletariat as a whole, inevitably would have sharpened differentiations based on social interests and conflicting political orientations that were already latent in the months before the December 13, 1981, crackdown. The material interests of the majority of the proletariat and those of the independent peasantry, the urban petty-bourgeoisie, and the materially privileged *intelligentsia* (especially its technocratic wing), are not identical, either in the immediate sense or in a historical sense. The debate on economic reform by itself was enough to bring out differences clearly rooted in different social interests. But all these layers had an interest in freeing themselves from the unbearable tutelage of the bureaucracy.

The working class cannot dilute its own historic interests nor the power that it conquers for the sake of some illusory general interest of a society in which the division into classes and the division between manual and intellectual labor survives. Being the builder of socialism, it must insure its supremacy through the democratic exercise of power. But at the same time, it must win over to this revolutionary undertaking the broadest possible layers, beginning with the peasantry and the other groups of independent producers, and maintain an alliance with them; this is the only way to advance toward socialism. The very broad social alliance forged around the working class in the heat of the common struggle against bureaucratic power in the course of the political revolution, is a solid starting point to move in this direction.

The hegemony of the working class within self-managed postcapitalist society will remain assured so long as, beyond these basic institutions of state power, the following factors exist:

-the overall predominance of collective ownership of the means of production, which does not exclude the existence, or even the prevalence, of private property in agriculture and petty trade, but which obviously excludes any dyna-

mic of progressive expansion of private property to other economic sectors;

-the progressive limitation, on a strictly voluntary basis, of what remains of private property and of commodity production;

-the shielding—fundamentally by state monopoly of foreign trade—of the national economy from the pressures of the world capitalist market and growing coordination with other workers states free of bureaucratic oppression;

-the existence of other political and economic mechanisms that can keep a symbiosis from developing between the private commodity sector and international capital leading to a subordination of planning to market laws;

-the systematic limitation and reversal of all phenomena of social inequality;

-the predominance of the principle of solidarity over that of material interest in social investments, the functioning of the state, official education, and—progressively—in everyday economic life;

-the teaching and practice of genuine international workers solidarity without subordination of any nation or nationality to another, and with a systematic struggle against all xenophobic and racist prejudices to overcome the exaltation of an unhealthy nationalism.

For the antibureaucratic political revolution to be victorious in an Eastern European country that is a satellite of the Soviet bureaucracy, the following are required:

-self-defense against pressures and threats of military intervention, or against aggression, whether it emanates from the ruling bureaucracies of other workers states or from imperialist powers;

-the protection of the national economy from the world capitalist market and increasing coordination with the economy of other workers states freed from bureaucratic oppression;

-internationalist aid to all the sectors of the world revolution, and in the first place to the most immediate ally of such a political revolution—the workers movement in workers states where the bureaucratic dictatorship still rules.

IV. THE INTERNATIONAL IMPACT OF THE POLISH EVENTS

17. The proclamation of the state of war dealt a severe blow not only to the Polish proletariat but also the international proletariat as a whole. The fight of the millions of workers of Solidarnosc had been one of the most advanced points of the struggle of the proletariat on a world scale, representing an experience without precedent in the history of the struggle against bureaucratic dictatorship and of the workers aspirations for the real socialization of the means of production and social wealth.

In this fight between a bureaucratic government and the masses, revolutionary Marxists were one hundred percent on the side of the masses. The workers state was not the target of any imperialist assault designed to restore capitalism. No coherent social force in Poland itself wished to, or could, reintroduce private appropriation of the means of production. What was under attack was the bureaucracy and its dictatorship, which had usurped power within the workers state. The proletariat tended to radically question the power of the privileged minority backed up by an entire repressive apparatus. The elimination of the bureaucratic caste could only strengthen the working class on the international level, not weaken it.

The liquidation of bureaucratic power would have demonstrated, in practice, in the eyes of the masses of the whole world, that the economy and society can be led by the workers as a whole. A giant step toward socialism would have been accomplished. It would have deeply influenced the behavior of workers both in the USSR and Eastern Europe, and in the imperialist countries, and given a huge boost to both the antibureaucratic political revolution and the proletarian revolution. This is what explains the emergence of the Holy Alliance against the Polish revolution, from Wall Street to the Kremlin.

The Kremlin could rejoice that its "advice" was diligently applied without it being forced to participate directly and massively in the repression. The price of such involvement would have been very costly, both in political and material terms. General Jaruzelski and his group, when they tried to break the back of Solidarnosc, were not only defending their interests as a Polish bureaucracy; they were also defending those of all the bureaucratic regimes. The bureaucracy's self-defense reflex worked with a vengeance. Caste solidarity was complete: This is what they call "proletarian internationalism."

Those who, for whatever reason, aligned themselves with the position of Jaruzelski, were in fact defending the interests of these bureaucracies against those of the proletariat. On this score, the motives of the Cuban and Nicaraguan leaders were obviously quite different from those of the PCF leaders, not to mention the leaders of the DKP or the American CP. But the objective significance of the position they adopted was the same.

True proletarian internationalism called for active support and active solidarity with the Polish workers against the Polish and Soviet bureaucracies.

18. The fundamental interest of the international bourgeoisie was a halt to the alarming rise of the antibureaucratic political revolution in Poland. This interest was all the stronger since the problem was not only the threat that the experiences of workers self-management might spread toward capitalist countries, but involved the settlement of the 27 billion dollar debt, and the on-going servicing of this debt. This is why the most representative spokespeople of imperialism had taken a stand, before General Jaruzelski's crackdown, in favor of "restoring order" and "the workers returning to work" in Poland, as a condition for rescheduling the debt. On the day after the crackdown, newspapers that speak for big business such as *The Wall Street Journal*, the *Washington Post*, and *Le Figaro*, as well as the official spokespeople from the West German and British governments, again adopted similar stances: "Most bankers believe an authoritarian government is a good thing because it will impose discipline."

The cynicism of the imperialist bourgeoisie shows up glaringly in the way that it decided to link this basic orientation—which is in keeping with the antiunion and antiworking class stance of the imperialist bourgeoisie all over the world—to a demagogic propaganda campaign that pretends to condemn the crackdown and defend Solidarnosc. It is in fact a completely crooked operation undertaken to try to cash in on the natural revulsion aroused by the repression of trade unionists in Poland among broad layers of the international working class and to try to channel it in a procapitalist and anticommunist direction. This confusionist operation is designed to achieve specific ideological and political goals:

-On the pretext that it is necessary to resist "Soviet intervention" and "totalitarianism," Washington took advantage of this international situation to step up its aid to the bloody dictatorships in Central America, and to call for an end to all restrictions on its military aid to the Turkish dictatorship, a bastion of NATO.

-A campaign was launched by various imperialist governments to justify their remilitarization effort and the cutbacks of social expenditures this implies. The Polish generals, the PUWP, and the Kremlin, have given reaction the ideal opportunity to try to beat back the antimilitary mobilizations.

-Finally, trying to turn everything to its advantage, with the priceless help of the union bureaucracies and reformist and Stalinist forces, the imperialist bourgeoisie tried to lock the workers of capitalist countries into the dilemma: either austerity under "democracy," or the risk of a "totalitarian society" that would also impose austerity. The bourgeoisie used this latter argument to step up its general antisocialist and anti-Communist propaganda.

Imperialist forces harmonized their voices in an antiworking-class concert. But in a context characterized by economic crisis and new advances of the colonial revolution, the Polish crisis brought on a new worsening of interimperialist contradictions. The West German bourgeoisie took the lead of the European imperialist powers, resisting any escalation of retaliatory measures that would have imperiled its outlets in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe. American imperialism, being less involved in East-West trade (except for agrobusiness), could afford the luxury of brandishing the threat of an economic embargo. Each partner of the imperialist alliance thereby combined its general defense of the system with the pursuit of its own particular interests.

19. The reactions of the Social Democratic and Communist parties to the defeat suffered by the Polish proletariat can only be understood in the context of the combined crisis of imperialism and Stalinism. Over and above the very different positions they took toward the imposition of the state of war, the reformist apparatuses always displayed either extreme reserve or more or less open hostility toward the fight of the workers. What type of ideological camouflage they used to disguise their opposition, primitive anticlericalism for some, simplistic "campism" for others, was not very important. The fact is the *material*, social basis of their position lay in the threat that the dynamic of the struggle and self-organization of the Polish workers would, at least eventually, have an impact on and weaken the bureaucratic control that all these apparatuses exercise over their own organizations, especially at a time when they are involved in a policy of compromise and even systematic capitulation with respect to the austerity demands of the bourgeoisie. What has frightened these bureaucratic apparatuses in the rise of the Polish proletariat was first of all its fight *for a self-managed union movement, that is for trade union democracy.* In fact, their reserve and hostility toward Solidarnosc reflected an international solidarity of bureaucrats. Moreover, the reformist apparatuses used the Polish workers' defeat to warn against any central confrontation with the class enemy which, according to them, could only lead to a crackdown of the Jaruzelski type in the West too, that is to the establishment of a "strong state." They therefore took advantage of it to justify a collaborationist and capitulationist policy toward the bourgeoisie.

The Social Democratic parties of the German Federal Republic, Great Britain, and Austria fundamentally lined up behind the interests of their own imperialist bourgeoisies. While they rejected any cold war-type policy, they also rejected any mobilization of the workers on a class basis to defend the rights and liberties of the Polish workers that were trampled on by Jaruzelski. Their motives were the same as those of their bourgeoisies—holding onto the profits of the East-West trade. Even the official Social Democratic left (like the Benn tendency in Great Britain and the left of the German SPD) was most often silent and accepted the political framework imposed by the leading apparatuses.

In France, the pressure of the workers, the far left's capacity for initiative, the rivalry between the SP and the CP, and the impetus given by the leaderships of the SP and CFDT who had their own specific goals in mind, led the protest movement to assume more massively the character of a class mobilization in support of the Polish working people.

The rise of the political revolution in Poland, as well as the launching of the bureaucratic counterrevolution, have led to a new stage in the crisis of the communist parties, a crisis already fueled by internal developments of the class struggle in most countries. The centrifugal tendencies at work in all the CPs of capitalist countries redoubled. The contradiction between the identifications of these parties with the USSR and their insertion in the reality of their own country was exacerbated. The interplay of these various factors—in particular circumstances of each country, of each CP's historical trajectory, and each CP's relation to its respective Social Democratic party—was reflected in the adoption of a whole gamut of different positions by the various CPs.

At one end of the spectrum stood the positions of the French CP, the Portuguese CP, the CP of the German Federal Republic (DKP), and that of Denmark. Fundamentally, these parties supported the institution of the state of war which allegedly "made it possible for socialist Poland to escape the mortal danger of counterrevolution." Paradoxically, but in fact as a result of the convergence of their own interests with those of the Kremlin, some of these CPs presented the crackdown as a lesser evil compared to.... a Soviet intervention. According to them, any mobilization in favor of Solidarnosc could only "add salt to the wound" and prevent the Military Council of National Salvation from keeping its promises to proceed toward a "liberalization"....by stages.

At the other end of the gamut were the positions of the Italian CP and the Spanish CP who condemned Jaruzelski's crackdown and demanded the release of the prisoners and the reestablishment of trade union freedoms. They went very far in their conflict with Moscow; the PCI even went so far as to state that "the phase of development of socialism that was inaugurated by the October revolution has exhausted its potential." But the position on Poland advocated by the PCI implied a call for closer collaboration with the Church and petty-bourgeois forces, and not an orientation toward the democratic power of the workers. It was therefore a reflection of the class-collaborationist strategy pursued by this party in Italy itself. This position led to a quest for a more systematic rapprochement with French, German, and Scandinavian social democracy. This is the reason why a significant section of combative worker militants did not approve of the orientation of their leadership on Poland. It was not a question of militants nostalgic for Stalinism, but an instinctive reaction against what appeared as a new concession to the class enemy.

The positions of the British, Belgian, Dutch, and Swedish CPs fell in between these two poles, although they did include an explicit condemnation, at least on paper, of the December 13 crackdown.

The form and character of the rise of the masses in Poland, as well as the contradictions between the CPs and within the CPs, impelled similar differentiations within the trade union movement of several European countries.

Contrary to what occurred during the crushing of the East German workers revolt in 1953, the Hungarian revolution of 1956, and the "Prague spring" of 1968-69, opposition to bureaucratic repression within the international workers movement was not confined, this time, to the imperialist countries alone. For the first time, in a series of semicolonial countries, especially in Latin America (Mexico, Brazil, Peru, Colombia, etc.), not unimportant sectors of the workers movement demonstrated their solidarity with the victims of this repression and sometimes even called street demonstrations. The attempt by the lawyers of the bureaucracy to label all those who oppose the bureaucratic dictatorship, even when they are the majority of the working class of a country, as "objectively proimperialist" forces, is beginning to lose ground within the anti-imperialist movement. Each new rise of the world revolution can only deepen this profound resurgence of true proletarian internationalism.

To the militants of the CPs and national revolutionary movements critical of support for Solidarnosc, the Fourth International should explain that a strengthening of the anti-imperialist and anti-capitalist forces in the West demands the application of a united front policy, including Catholic and socialist workers and their mass organizations. The realization of such a united front is gravely handicapped by the rejection of a campaign of solidarity with Solidarnosc for reasons of purely ideological opposition to the anti-Communism of the reformists. Evidently, the systematic campaign for the united front in solidarity with Solidarnosc, as in solidarity with the Central American revolution, etc., is always combined with defense of the revolutionary Marxist program, including the struggle against false and counterrevolutionary socialist ideas.

20. The repercussions of the Polish events on the rest of the bureaucratized workers states are still difficult to assess. Clearly, the rise of the Polish proletariat found no immediate mass response in any of these countries. This is not surprising in view of the uneven development of the economic and social crisis in the different countries and in view of the fact that vanguard sectors of the working class lagged behind the Poles in renewing their experience of waging a sustained struggle of their own.

Nevertheless, in several such countries, like Rumania and the USSR, a crisis in the supply of basic goods is ripening and causing broad discontent among the masses, not unlike what happened in Poland during the 1976-80 period. Moreover, in other countries, such as Hungary and the GDR, political opposition tendencies are emerging among the youth and intellectuals and will gradually search out a way to link up with the workers. The bureaucrats are perfectly aware of these facts and are frightened by them. In all these countries, they are panic-stricken by the thought that the "Polish example," that is an explosion of anger

Solidarnosc leaders in press conference (DR)

by the workers leading to mass strikes and workers self-organization, could be repeated in their own country. This even applies to the People's Republic of China. There the leading faction of the bureaucracy did first extend discreet support to Solidarnosc in the belief the Soviets might intervene and a "national liberation struggle" against this superpower would ensue. But later, under the pressure of discontent and strikes in China itself, it decided to redirect its fire, accepting de facto Jaruzelski's coup.

The bureaucracy's reaction to this threat displays its lack of a clear orientation, a reflection of its disarray and crisis. While it very naturally leans toward harsher repression of "political dissidents," it hesitates to launch an all-out attack against workers actions, stating, not without good cause, that the blood spilled in the ports of the Baltic in 1970 was the origin of all that followed in Poland. Selective repression on the one hand, and an attempt to give the trade union organization new weight by granting it some elbow room in pursuing economic demands on the other—these seem to be the tactical lessons drawn from the Polish events by the bureaucracy of several bureaucratized workers states.

As for the better informed and more experienced section of the working class in these states, it followed the actions of its brothers and sisters in Poland with sympathy, even though it most often has not yet found a way to translate that sympathy into action. But the "Polish model"will undoubtedly have a profound influence on the development of the antibureaucratic political revolution in many bureaucratized workers states.

V. THE TASKS OF REVOLUTIONARY MARXISTS

21. While the rise of the Polish revolution demonstrated once again the proletariat's capacity for initiative, action, and self-organization on a colossal scale once it moves in a collective and united mobilization, it also confirmed this other lesson of the history of the workers movement: the unsurmountable limitations of the spontaneous activity of the masses. Neither when what was needed was to define exactly the goals to be achieved by Solidarnosc—the economic reform project; that is, reorganization of the economy on a different basis than that proposed by the various factions of the bureaucracy and petty-bourgeoisie—nor especially when the need was to elaborate a strategy and a precise tactic for defending Solidarnosc against the stalling maneuvers of the bureaucratic dictatorship which finally led to the December 13, 1981, crackdown (that is, a strategy for the seizure of power), did the spontaneous reactions of the rank and file, more or less expressed in the local and regional structures, suffice to bring out a clear, let alone a correct line. Thus, grave errors were committed that seem decisive after the fact, like the lack of an orientation toward the soldiers based on calling for democratic rights and the right to self-organization in the army.

More generally, in every revolution, the ability to seize the initiative in a centralized fashion is an essential advantage, an advantage which precisely can only be secured by a leadership acting as a vanguard. The lack of such an organized vanguard was cruelly felt in Poland.

Of course, the official bureaucratic propaganda's use ad nauseum of a vocabulary drawn from the revolutionary traditions of the workers—and the reinforcement of this identification of the bureaucratic rulers with Marxism and Leninism by Western bourgeois propaganda—led to a visceral rejection of concepts such as "revolutionary vanguard party" by a very large number of Polish union activists. This called, and still calls, for a great deal of careful educational work by revolutionary Marxists to convince these activists of the need to build such a party. But this need can be demonstrated very concretely and very clearly by an analysis of the very events that shook Poland since the summer of 1980, or even since the workers revolt of 1976.

We are speaking of course of a party which clearly formulates its own role and its own goals in relation to those of the mass organization of the workers. The revolutionary vanguard *party* which revolutionary Marxists seek to build in Poland is not a substitute for the proletariat in the exercise of power. Power must be exercised by the institutions created by the workers at the state level after the overthrow of the bureaucratic dictatorship: workers councils democratically elected and federated on the local, regional, and national level.

Within these councils as well as within the organs of self-organization of the masses such as Solidarnosc, party militants will defend their political positions by political and not administrative means. They will try to win and hold the confidence of the workers solely on the basis of their dedication to the class and its movement, and of their spirit of class solidarity and sacrifice for the common cause, as well as the correctness of their program and political line. They will reject all material benefits, all economic privileges of any kind. But they will be a vanguard force insofar as they embody the collective memory of the Polish and international working class, all the lessons that emerged from the 150-years experience of struggle of the Polish and international proletariat. The existence of such a party corresponds also to the interests of the whole of the working class. Before December 13, 1981, it would have facilitated the accomplishment of many concrete tasks facing the mass movement.

22. To the fear expressed by some that a relatively small initial nucleus of revolutionary Marxist activists could do less effective work than the activists not set apart organizationally in any way whatsoever from the structures of Solidarnosc, we must answer that Polish history has already demonstrated the efficacy of small nuclei acting in a favorable context. The intervention of a few hundred activists, mainly from the KOR, beginning in 1976, played a decisive role in forging the links that connected activists of the various factories, links that greatly contributed to the success of the summer 1980 strikes, and to the emergence of Solidarnosc as a mass organization.

Moreover, by no means is the point to counterpose in mechanical fashion the formation of a revolutionary Marxist vanguard party to the emergence of a natural leadership of the class within the enterprises and organs of self-organization. The activists who first come together on a mainly programmatic and political basis are merely the initial nucleus of a party. They do not proclaim themselves the "leadership of the working class" by a voluntarist exercise lacking in any practical meaning. They attempt to win the confidence of the working class by their intervention, and in so doing, attract the best workers emerging from the very process of self-organization. They become the *actual* leadership (that is they earn this distinction in the eyes of the masses) only insofar as they succeed in fusing with the natural leaders of the class in the workplaces.

To the fear, likewise formulated by some, that the emergence of a party would divide the working class and deepen political cleavages within the organs of self-organization, we answer that such cleavages are inevitable among ten million workers, given the tremendous economic, social, political, cultural, and ideological problems which they must face, and the difficulty of finding correct answers.

In fact, such a differentiation did arise within Solidarnosc in the 17 months of its open existence. Moreover, it continues today in the resistance. The appearance of a vanguard party—one respecting the norms of workers democracy within the mass movement—would only mean that the fight would be waged more effectively to assure the adoption of positions best suited to the class as a whole from among a welter of contending positions. Building the revolutionary vanguard party does not conflict with the struggle for unity in action and the broadest and most democratic united organization of workers. To the contrary: This is one of the central goals the party fights for, under all circumstances, as dictated by its program.

To the fear, likewise formulated by some, that the building of a revolutionary vanguard party would allow a minority to manipulate the masses, we answer that the absence of such a party allows for far worse manipulations. Insofar as differentiations are inevitable within the bodies of self-rule over the answers that have to be provided at every stage of the struggle, the choice is not between an impossible unanimity and majorities "manipulated" by "active minorities." The choice is between, on the one hand, majorities manipulated by minorities which do not come out in the open—act behind closed doors, in the form of cliques without clear platforms or under the pressure of charismatic leaders or experts offering "scientific" credentials or simple demogogues—and on the other hand, majorities which are constituted on the basis of clear votes for coherent platforms, representing different orientations among which the mass of delegates *can choose* with a clear understanding of what is involved, on the basis of honest information circulated widely and democratically.

This is why the second solution is by far the more democratic and the less manipulative, the one which best keeps actual decision-making power in the hands of the working masses as a whole. This holds true on condition that the position of a revolutionary vanguard party not involve any privileges, and that the *right* to constitute parties, associations, currents, and tendencies of all kinds, be guaranteed to *all* workers within the institutions and bodies of self-organization. This is why revolutionary Marxists resolutely fight for the multiparty principle in the construction of socialism and have written this principle into their program.

23. A victorious struggle against the bureaucracy calls—at least as much as the anticapitalist revolution—for a clear understanding of who are your enemies and your allies, both on the national and international fields. The Polish bureaucracy did demonstrate a clear sightedness about this. Despite its contradictions and the mediocrity of its functionaries, it always placed any compromises it was forced to accept in a clear strategic perspective. The accumulated experience of the international workers movement is an essential part of developing this sort of understanding. In order to be useful, this experience must be all inclusive; that is, it must reflect at once the struggles for the overthrow of capitalism and for the overthrow of bureaucratic dictatorships. The Fourth International is the only organization that embodies this dual struggle. With respect to Poland, in accordance with its resources, the Fourth International carried out the following work:

a) in the bureaucratized workers states, attempts to get out the truth about Poland;

b) in the advanced capitalist countries, giving impetus to the solidarity of the working class;

c) in the underdeveloped countries, while remaining at its post in the front ranks of the defense of the Cuban and Central American revolutions against US imperialism, it did not hesitate to take a stand in favor of solidarity with the Polish workers against the leaders of these same revolutions.

In Poland itself, the circulation of the Polish *Inprecor* showed the great potential for the development of revolutionary Marxism as the revolution advanced.

We are aware that compared to what is needed to insure a victory, what the Fourth International did was small. But all those who agree that the tasks that we undertook are essential ones should join us.

Our international organization had something to contribute to the Polish revolution, but it also had a lot to learn. Its role is also to make sure that in future eruptions of the political revolution, the lessons of the extraordinary struggle of the Polish workers will in turn become a source of education. In this respect, the organization of Polish revolutionary Marxists has an importance far beyond Poland itself. The struggle for the overthrow of the bureaucracy will be a long one. For these comrades to succeed in maintaining ongoing activity regardless of the ups and downs of the mass mobilizations, would be a giant step forward for the next phase.

For revolutionary Marxists, the revolution and counterrevolution in Poland, besides reconfirming the validity of the program of the Fourth International on the nature of the bureaucratized workers states and the inevitability of an antibureaucratic political revolution, demonstrate the following:

—the growing centrality of the working class in the three sectors of the world revolution, and the increasing prevalence of classical proletarian forms of struggle and organization within it;

—the unity of the world revolution and the importance of the political revolution within it;

—the need, for historic as well as strategic and immediate reasons, to promote a turn of the organized workers movement and the daily practice of the class struggle back to the road of true proletarian internationalism, which defends unconditionally the rights and liberties of the working class everywhere in the world against whatever social force is attacking or suppressing them, and without subordinating the interests of the proletariat anywhere to the alleged "higher" or "priority" interests of any "bastion" or "camp" wherever it may be. Only on the basis of practicing such international class solidarity can the international proletariat succeed in accomplishing its historic tasks, including, in the case of an imperialist aggression, that of defending the USSR and all workers states;

—the need to build a revolutionary International and revolutionary Marxist parties, which are indispensable not only to give impetus to such international solidarity campaigns and such a return to true proletarian internationalism, but also and especially to insure the victory of the antibureaucratic political revolution itself.

The Fourth International will strive to intervene in the international debate around the Polish events by propagating all these key ideas that provide a political and organizational way forward to activists of the CPs, SPs, revolutionary nationalist organizations, trade unions, and centrist organizations who are worried, shaken, or disoriented by the Polish revolution and counterrevolution. But it holds that such a propaganda intervention can only be carried out in close connection with an action orientation aimed at organizing a broad class solidarity campaign with the Polish workers and unionists who are the victims of bureaucratic repression. In fact, revolutionary Marxists propaganda can be fully effective only if it is carried on in this framework.

24. While the December 13 crackdown can be said to have succeeded insofar as its immediate objectives are concerned, the bureaucracy has by no means achieved its goal. The breadth and the forms of the resistance movement testify that the Polish proletariat is refusing to accept a situation that deprives it of the freedoms won over sixteen months of struggle. The existence and regular publication of thousands of underground bulletins and newspapers show that Solidarnosc continues its activities, in clandestinity, in most enterprises and that some initial successes have been achieved in setting up regional coordinations and even leaderships.

The failure of the many attempts of the powers that be to establish a "dialogue" with intellectuals is patent. The unity that developed between the intellectuals and the working class has not yet been broken, despite the Junta's policy of

Youth in Warsaw streets May 3, 1982 (DR)

creating divisions by granting preferential treatment to many of the imprisoned union leaders and experts.

Nevertheless, the government is doing everything it can to bring some Solidarnosc leaders to accept a rotten compromise with the Junta, in the knowledge that this can only discredit them in the eyes of the masses. Moreover, its proposals for a "national agreement" have struck a receptive chord in the Catholic hierarchy, which has an interest in seeing "order" restored.

Given the situation, the active solidarity of the workers of other countries will be decisive in convincing the Polish proletariat that it does not stand alone in its struggle.

The Fourth International will put all its strength into pushing the solidarity campaign with the Polish proletarian masses inside the international workers movement. All those inside the workers movement who today refuse to advance this mobilization are dividing the working masses—in their own country and internationally.

To mobilize against the banning of Solidarnosc means to simultanously support the Polish workers and to defend the political and trade-union rights of all workers—of Turkey, Brazil, El Salvador, the Spanish state, or Rumania. To call for the lifting of martial law, immediate freedom for all prisoners, the elimination of all restrictions on democratic rights, for the right to meet and organize is to defend these liberties against the attacks of imperialism and the totalitarian bureaucrats. To organize active solidarity with the Polish workers today is to facilitate and prepare the same active support of the international workers movement with the mighty struggle being fought by the Salvadoran people against the Military-Christian Democratic junta and U.S. imperialism! These are the most elementary lessons of proletarian internationalism!

All the links that have been forged over the past months between the independent and self-managed trade-union of the Polish workers and the workers movement of the capitalist countries must be used to break the isolation in which General Jaruzelski wants to confine the Polish masses. To send material food and medical aid remains an immediate task. That should make it possible to renew links, to pass on information, and to let the Polish workers know that their class brothers and sisters are their best supporters and not the imperialist bankers who welcomed the military crackdown with such relief!

This aid, if it is channeled through bodies independent of the Polish state (the church is the only legal independent institution of that type) can facilitate the rebuilding of links between Solidarity militants and sectors of the population. By doing everything possible to send trade-union commissions of inquiry to find out about the repression meted out to Solidarnosc militants, the workers movement can unmask the hypocrisy of both the bureaucrats who speak of "respect for liberty" and the spokespersons of imperialism who shut their eyes to the fate of trade-union militants in Poland...just as they do for Turkey.

Within the workers movement itself, revolutionary Marxists must systematically explain the aims and actions of Solidarnosc. The democratic way in which the trade union functioned, the broad and public way in which its main political positions were discussed, its debates on self-management, and the experiences of workers and social control must become the property of the international workers movement. This is the most effective way to undermine the sort of "bureaucratic solidarity" that we have seen operate so often since 1980, either in the form of calculated indifference from the trade-union leaderships, of open hostility, or in a way that deforms the workers objectives. The latter are presented as fitting into the framework of the class-collaborationist projects defended by these reformist apparatuses (co-management, "historic compromise").

By doing everything to build this working-class solidarity on the basis of class unity and independence, it will be possible to partly defeat the attempts ot imperialism to use Polish events to reinforce its ideological and political positions.

Revolutionary Marxists are opposed to all proposals for an economic boycott by the governments or even the trade unions of the imperialist countries of Poland or the Soviet Union. Such a campaign can only play into the hands of the ambitious anti-Communist political maneuvers of Ronald Reagan, who is trying to camouflage his criminal policy in Central America and elsewhere.

Supporting a campaign of effective "sanctions," means in practice calling on the big banks and imperialist powers to squeeze Poland even more, with all the consequences of this for the Polish masses. A boycott does not affect the privileges of the bureaucracy. How can anyone believe that the rebelliousness of the workers necessarily increases when they experience even greater poverty?

Worse, such a campaign of "sanctions" ends up sowing the worst illusions on the nature and role of the imperialist banks, spreading the idea that it is the task of the workers movement to pressure the banks to "help" the Polish workers. In addition, its effect in Poland would be to push Polish industry into even closer integration with Soviet industry.

Finally, any perspective of this type will facilitate, in the last analysis, the policy of the CP leaderships and make it easier for the Soviet bureaucracy to mount a nationalist campaign and play the card of the "beseiged fortress." It will produce the isolation of the Polish people, which is precisely what General Jaruzelski wants. History has proven that the development of Stalinism has been favored by the isolation of the Soviet Union.

The Fourth International closely links its solidarity campaign with Solidarnosc with its efforts to stimulate mobilizations against the remilitarization drive, against NATO's policy of aggression, and against the criminal initiatives of U.S. imperialism, the real warmonger, in Central America and the Caribbean.

Within this perspective, the unity of interest of the working class on a world scale is crystal clear. Any reticence in giving support to the Polish workers can only hold back and divide the mobilization against nuclear rearmament in Europe, for a "Nuclear-Free Europe from Portugal to Poland" and against imperialist aggression in Central America. In the same way, any abstention or opposition—as we see among the Social Democratic parties—with regard to the mobilization against NATO or in support of the revolutionary struggle of the people of Nicaragua, Guatemala, or El Salvador can only weaken the unity and breadth of support for the resistance of the Polish masses. ■

Solidarity with Solidarnosc!
Down with the bureaucracy's military dictatorship!
Freedom for all political prisoners, release all trade unionists, intellectuals, and students!
Reestablish all political, trade-union, and civil rights!
Long live the international solidarity of the workers of all countries with all liberation struggles, in defense of all the exploited and oppressed, which form a single, united struggle for the socialist world of tomorrow!

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