

WORLD OUTLOOK

PERSPECTIVE MONDIALE

Un service de presse ouvrier

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January 27, 1967

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ECONOMIC BENEFITS AT ISSUE AMONG CHINESE WORKERS

The January 1 issue of Red Flag, one of the publications of the Red Guards in Peking, carried an attack on a well-known figure in China -- Shi Chuan-hsiang. He was accused of being a "protégé of Liu Shao-chi," the head of the People's Republic of China, who himself but recently stood at the side of Mao Tse-tung to receive the homage of millions marching through Tien An Men Square, yet who is today reviled as the chief of a "handful" seeking to restore capitalism in China.

Only last September Shi Chuan-hsiang was still one of the figures held up for emulation in the Chinese press. As "the all-China model night-soil collector," his efforts to advance the "cultural revolution" were cited everywhere. The story about how he took Red Guards on his round of duties and showed them by example how to "uproot capitalism and revisionism" was featured on the front pages. His approval of these Red Guards was widely quoted: "You are really good revolutionary fighters, educated in the spirit of the thought of Mao Tse-tung."

The January 15-16 issue of Le Monde confirmed the fall of this luminary from favor. According to the Paris daily, Shi Chuang-hsiang was taken through the streets of Peking in a truck, a dunce's cap on his head as a sign of infamy. A placard hanging from his neck read: "Worked insufficiently. Supported Liu Shao-chi. Shook Liu Shao-chi's hand when the latter made him an elite night-soil collector and a deputy in the National Assembly."

The fate of Shi Chuan-hsiang epitomizes that of others. A January 16 Reuters dispatch from Peking said: "Today, three persons, rigged out in dunces' caps and bearing notices were driven through the city in a truck loaded with Red Guards. They had

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slogans scrawled even on their faces and it was impossible to distinguish who they were."

The same dispatch reported big crowds in Peking gazing "at poster photographs showing the humiliation of purged Communist leaders and intellectuals at the hands of the Red Guards." The pictures taken at recent meetings "showed 20 men, most of them over 60, kneeling or standing with heads bent." The posters, the work of Red Guard propagandists from the Peking Law Institute, were titled, "We show these counterrevolutionaries to the masses."

The Toronto Globe and Mail, in an account from Peking reproduced in the January 21 New York Times said that a special newspaper called Fighting News printed photographs of purged leaders at a meeting at which they were humiliated. "In a photo of Peng Chen, the one-time Mayor of Peking and member of the party Politburo stared blankly ahead of him as two Red Guards held his arms pinned behind his back. A three-foot placard showed his name crossed out."

The same account said that wall posters in Peking reported the suicide of Lo Jui-ching, who was dismissed as chief of the General Staff of the Chinese People's Liberation Army. He, too, was shown in one of the photographs. "Mr. Lo, now dead, who recently broke his leg when he jumped from a window, was shown in a cast. He was permitted to have a chair but one of the troopers he had once commanded was shown twisting his arm behind his back.

"Other prominent leaders photographed included the former propaganda chief, Lu Ting-yi, and a former party Secretariat member, Yang Shang-kun. The wives of Mr. Lo and Mr. Lu went through the same ordeal as their husbands as Red Guards leveled accusations at them."

Did figures like these "worm their way into the party and into positions of power" in order to spearhead a movement to restore capitalism? It seems unlikely. This is one of the elements that make it so difficult to decipher the meaning of the "cultural revolution."

But if the charges leveled by the Mao faction are not true, or are grossly exaggerated, what are the real issues that have split the leading cadre into warring factions? Even more important in analyzing the meaning of the political crisis, what social forces are represented by the various contending groups or the figures that come to symbolize them?

This has not been easy to determine, for even if a tentative identification is made, this may soon be upset as the case of Shi Chuan-hsiang rather dramatically illustrates. Other shifts are even more puzzling. The very figures in charge of purging old officials in the name of the "cultural revolution" are themselves purged in the name of the same cause within weeks.

The new stage in the "cultural revolution" that opened in December has begun to involve the workers on an increasing scale and this has provided more intimations of some of the real issues at stake in the struggle.

Thus a January 14 Hsinhua dispatch speaks about the "intrigues and tricks of the enemy" and his "many disguises." We are able to deduce that two tendencies oppose the Mao faction. One is called "a handful of those within the party who are in authority and are taking the capitalist road." This apparently refers to the tendency headed by Liu Shao-chi. The other tendency is called "an extremely few die-hards who are stubbornly pursuing the bourgeois reactionary line." This tendency is apparently attempting to straddle between Mao and Liu Shao-chi. Among the top figures of the regime, this tendency may center around Chou En-lai.

Nothing is clear in this, since all three tendencies are devotees of the cult of Mao, disciples of "Mao's thought," and ardent advocates of the "cultural revolution." To find hints of the differences it is necessary to study the descriptions of the "intrigues and tricks" used by Mao's foes and their "many disguises."

In the January 14 article, we are told, "In every conceivable way, they slander and undermine this alliance [of the "revolutionary workers, revolutionary students and revolutionary masses], deceive part of the masses by hoisting 'red flags,' and bribe them with material benefits in an attempt to divide and break up the alliance, so as to attain their own ends."

This probably means that Mao's opponents, while speaking in favor of the "cultural revolution," actually go against it by offering material incentives to the workers. In other words, as advanced by Mao, the "cultural revolution" is opposed to a raise

in the standard of living of the workers. His opponents, or some of them, favor it.

Apparently Mao's opponents were not totally unsuccessful, since the article speaks about the need for "painstaking ideological work with those comrades who have been temporarily hoodwinked..."

The line of offering material inducements to the workers; i.e., an immediate boost in their standard of living, is called "economism" by the Maoists and they say it is a "bourgeois reactionary line," one that has been adopted by "counter-revolutionary revisionism."

A different dispatch from the same source on the same day gives an example of the indignation of the "young Red Guards" at the Foochow high school because the two enemy tendencies "had incited workers and peasants to wage 'economic struggle.'"

In the same area, the same enemy forces "had incited large numbers of the workers Red Guards to go to Peking to 'voice their resentment' and had supplied them with money for their fares. This was an act of defiance of Chairman Mao's policy of 'taking firm hold of revolution to stimulate production.'" Since millions of Red Guards have been given free transportation to and from Peking, with meals and lodging also supplied, it is difficult to see why -- on the level of principles, and particularly equalitarianism -- it is an act of defiance to pay the way for workers to go to Peking to voice their grievances.

Control of financial matters is mentioned in the same article as an issue in dispute in various factories in Harbin. In other areas it was likewise in dispute. In one instance the payment of "bonuses" to workers is specified as the counterrevolutionary act. In Fukien and Foochow the foe "gave a large amount of money to the workers' and peasants' Red Guard army on the Fukien front with the purpose of undermining the great proletarian cultural revolution."

Besides "economism" and "state finances"; i.e., wage boosts, bonuses, "welfare services" or other forms of material benefits for the workers, "sabotage" is frequently cited in the latest press dispatches released by Hsinhua. This refers to strikes or other forms of action undertaken by the workers. As an example, a January 15 Hsinhua report on trouble in the famous Taching oil field, where the workers have been held up as models for all of China, can be cited:

"Revolutionary rebels [approved followers of Mao] in the Taching oil field said that at the beginning these persons used 'grasp production' as a pretext to suppress the masses who wanted to rise up to make revolution; later when the revolutionary masses had seen through their schemes, these same people pretended that they 'supported' the revolution and used material incentives to lure large numbers of workers to leave their production posts; in doing so they attempted to use economism as a bait to shift the general orientation of the struggle, maintain their positions by using state money, sabotage production and hit hard against the revolution. The workers have revealed the tricks of these people opportunely and defeated their schemes."

One of the most interesting items is the indication that at the beginning of the "cultural revolution" in the Taching oil field, there was an effort to change its general orientation. One wonders if the workers at first took the slogans of the "cultural revolution" for good coin and began to rectify long-standing grievances.

Is an expansion of democracy involved? An article in Red Flag, the journal of the Central Committee, reported in a January 15 Hsinhua dispatch from Peking, would indicate that caution is advisable before accepting the claims at face value. "Shanghai's experience," says the article, "proves that the extensive democracy under the dictatorship of the proletariat is absolutely not ultra-democracy..."

Another January 15 Hsinhua dispatch, this time from Shanghai itself, can be taken perhaps as evidence on how Mao's promise about instituting democracy like that followed by the Paris Commune is to be made good: The "rebel group" of true Maoists "talked things over" with the workers in a factory. "In accordance with the election system of the Paris Commune, they set up revolutionary production committees for work teams, workshops and administrative offices, in order to successfully carry out both the revolution and production, and to fulfill state production plans."

The limitations of this democracy can be gathered from the goal specified in the final phrase. The dispatch continues with obscure intimations on how the struggle continued. The "rebel group" pointed out how "these activities were affecting production." At this "the masses of workers became incensed," rejected the "bourgeois reactionary line" and "pledged to carry out production well..."

HUGO BLANCO GAINS RESPITE

[Héctor Béjar, himself a political prisoner in Peru, wrote a letter December 30 to friends in Paris. Among other things he described the present status of the Hugo Blanco case. These paragraphs were published in the January issue of La Quatrième Internationale, the newspaper of the Parti Communiste Internationaliste, French section of the Fourth International. The translation of Béjar's report below is by World Outlook.]

* * *

Hugo Blanco's situation is as follows: Two days ago, the defense had not yet presented its brief; it will do so this week since the tribunal called it to order. Once the brief is presented, the opinion of the advisory judge is required and he must study the dossier. Meanwhile, on January 15, the tribunal goes on vacation until April. In addition, many military figures, including some members of the tribunal, are taking out their retirement. It seems that the present members of the tribunal have been startled by the international protest and don't want "to have this death on their conscience." They prefer to leave the responsibility to those who will replace them because they burned their fingers in this business. For this reason I believe they will prefer to drag it out, so that their names won't be mixed up with such a death sentence.

Nevertheless it is necessary to remain very vigilant, because it could be that they have been waiting all this time for the campaign for Hugo to die down, for people to forget the thing a little, and then they will offer us a surprise when Parliament is not in session and the university students are on vacation. Above all, it must not be forgotten that a death sentence is carried out within 24 hours.

The only way to counter this maneuver is to intensify the campaign and to take advantage of the time gained in order to broaden it.

SQUARE FILLED AT LIMA RALLY FOR HUGO BLANCO

[In our issue of December 16, we published a December 1 dispatch from Lima stating that a rally was scheduled the following day in the main square of the city, the Plaza San Martín, in behalf of Hugo Blanco. Unhappily, we have been unable up to now to report the results due to an interruption in communications. The January issue of La Quatrième Internationale, however, reports that some 15,000 persons turned out for the rally, making it the biggest assembly seen in Lima in years. The Paris newspaper also printed a letter from a correspondent in Lima describing the rally as follows.]

* * *

Friday the meeting took place that we had been preparing for during the past month. We were very surprised that they permitted us to use the Plaza San Martín, the most favorable place for such a demonstration. Then we thought that they had authorized it to make us look ridiculous because of the small number of demonstrators in such a huge place...

But the plaza was filled to overflowing with people. The meeting was enthusiastic, warm, the people of Lima were offering us their support and solidarity. It was moving to hear these cries and these "vivas" for our dear Hugo. The order of speakers was first Jacqueline [Lobatón], then Ledesma, the deputy of the Communist party, a representative of the engineering students at the university, a representative of the naval construction workers, a delegate of Hugo's peasant group, then me...

Also very moving was the greeting given by the people to the wives of the guerrilla fighters...

There were shouts to "hang" the butchers of the people, Beltran, Belaúnde Terry, Ruiz de Somocurcio and the "gorillas"...

We had put up an enormous photograph of Hugo in back of the rostrum, and below it a whole row of photographs of guerrillas, dead, persecuted or imprisoned and also imprisoned students...

After the meeting, the demonstrators went toward the municipal park, shouting slogans, then along the Avenue Abancay, toward the parliament, and, finally, they stopped in front of the government palace to shout, "Freedom for Hugo Blanco," until the police dispersed them. In short, it was a triumphal meeting...

MEXICAN POLITICAL PRISONERS SPEAK UP FOR HUGO BLANCO

[The January 1 issue of the Mexican biweekly magazine Política, which appeared on the Mexico City newsstands January 16, carried a letter to the editor from a number of political prisoners demanding the immediate release of Hugo Blanco and other political prisoners in Peru. The letter, translated by World Outlook, is as follows:]

* * *

Mr. Editor:

The revolutionary political prisoners of the Preventive Prison of Mexico City, Wards "M" and "I," denounce the Peruvian government's intention to shoot the peasant leader Hugo Blanco and his comrades in prison as part of a repressive plan of imperialism and the Latin-American bourgeoisie against the revolutionary movements of the exploited peoples of the entire continent. The counterrevolutionary repression in Mexico and our imprisonment, as well as the repressions and political assassinations in Venezuela, Guatemala, Colombia, Brazil, Argentina and other countries constitute part of this plan. All these repressions have failed and will continue to fail in their effort to contain the struggles of the exploited masses against imperialism and capitalism.

We demand the immediate release of Hugo Blanco, Pedro Candela, Héctor Béjar and other guerrillas, workers and peasants imprisoned in Peru and we appeal to the democratic and revolutionary forces to denounce and repudiate the attempt to "legally" murder Hugo Blanco, with whom we express our solidarity.

Ward "M"

Bonifacio Pérez Hernández
Carlos Aguilera Delgadillo
Fausto Dávila Solís
Gilberto Balam Pereyra
Gumersindo Gómez Cuevas
Genaro Jonguitud Lara
Gonzalo Santillán Esquivel
Isaías Rojas Delgado
José Navarro López
Miguel Cruz Ruiz
Oliverio Juan Pérez Galicia
Rolf Meiners Huebner
Raúl Ugalde Alvarez
Tito Armando Domínguez Lara

Ward "I"

Adolfo Gilly
Gildardo Islas Carranza
Leocadio Zapata M.
Oscar Fernández Bruno
Ramón Vargas

LETTER FROM JACQUELINE LOBATON ON HUGO BLANCO CASE

[The international campaign to save Hugo Blanco from a death sentence has succeeded for the moment in gaining a respite for the heroic Peruvian peasant leader. It nevertheless remains uncertain how long this respite will prove to be. It may be that a decision will be postponed until at least April. At the same time, the Peruvian guerrilla leader Héctor Béjar, who is in prison himself and who went on a hunger strike together with other political prisoners in behalf of Hugo Blanco, has warned that the utmost vigilance must be maintained and that the tribunal may be playing a cat-and-mouse game. He advises redoubling the campaign seeking freedom for Hugo Blanco.

[Jacqueline Lobatón, who has been active in the Hugo Blanco defense work, has also urged intensification of the campaign. She has had personal experience with Peru's notorious prisons having been placed behind bars as a hostage while the government hunted down and executed her husband, who played a prominent role as a leader in the movement launched by Luis de la Puente Uceda in 1965. The following letter was sent by Jacqueline Lobatón in behalf of the Committee for the Defense of the Rights of Man which has been active in Lima in defending Peru's political prisoners. It was published in the January issue of La Quatrième Internationale. The translation is by World Outlook.]

* * *

To all those who stand for justice and fraternity,
To the volunteers who are participating in our invincible struggle,

To all of you,

The messages of boundless affection, the letters determined to overcome the tyrants and oppressors, those who hold in their hands the right to deprive a human being of his life by a government decree and in accordance with the law, the fraternal telegrams that have been sent to us, have moved us deeply and all at once we have been given recompense for all our efforts.

I must first express with fervor the thanks of the Committee for the Defense of the Rights of Man for the support which you have given to the struggle we are conducting in behalf of Hugo Blanco, our modest and courageous peasant leader.

I want to send you words of courage and tenderness because the revolution merits it. I am sending you warmest greetings in spite of the distance, in spite of the seas and the rivers, in spite of time, in spite of the censorship.

The formation of the committee in Paris and the actions which it is conducting have been met here with enthusiasm. Shoulder to shoulder we can triumph more easily over oppression, shoulder to shoulder we can face abuse and outrages without fear and root them out of the Peruvian land which nourishes millions of peasants, workers, students -- victims of an infernal yoke.

I only want you to share today the complete triumph of the meeting which we held at the Plaza San Martín Friday, December 2. I want to tell you that the people, free of fear, resembled a soldier resolutely defending the rights that have been trampled underfoot in recent years. Unjust persecution, base crimes, illegal sentences, have sullied our country. But we are convinced -- because we are devoted to tasks which are sweet to fulfill when life is involved -- of the worth and the beauty of human beings.

Perhaps I have not expressed myself well on what is magnificent in the union of your efforts and ours, but I feel moved to the bottom of my heart.

Thanks comrades, thanks friends, thanks dear ones. The defense of Hugo is like a song.

I say go forward, despite the obstacles, despite the profound bitterness of the struggle.

So long.

The Committee.

Jacqueline Elnau de Lobatón

LEADERS OF "MINUTEMEN" CONVICTED

Three leaders of an ultrarightist conspiratorial group, the "Minutemen," were sentenced in Kansas City, Missouri, January 17, to relatively light prison terms. They had been convicted last November 14 of conspiracy to violate the firearms act after a cache of machine guns was seized in a rural area of the state.

The head of the fascist-minded organization, 43-year-old Robert Bolivar DePugh, was sentenced to four years in prison to be followed by five years probation. Troy Houghton, 33, of San Diego, the West Coast coordinator, was sentenced to three years in prison; and Walter P. Peyson, 24, to two years in jail and three on probation.

In New York on December 14, sixteen members of the group were indicted on charges of plotting to burn and blow up three camps of pacifist or leftist organizations. They were arrested the same day they set out to carry out their plot. In raids October 30 the authorities confiscated more than a ton of machine guns, rifles, mortars, grenade launchers that had been accumulated by the group.

Before the arrests, the organization was regarded as one of those capable of having organized the series of bombings and arson attacks on the headquarters of the Communist and Socialist Workers parties, the DuBois Clubs and the Vietnam Day Committee.

No evidence as to the organization's guilt in this has as yet been brought out. It is noticeable, however, that after these would-be storm troopers were taken into custody, the attacks ceased.

RALPH SCHOENMAN DETAINED BY FRENCH POLICE

London

On Tuesday, January 10, at about 11 p.m., Ralph Schoenman, the secretary general of the International War Crimes Tribunal, was abducted by the French authorities while on his way from the hotel to the restaurant at Orly Airport. With five colleagues he was in Paris en route for Phnom Penh as a member of the second investigating team collecting evidence for the Tribunal.

At first, his colleagues suspected nothing, thinking that he must have been called to the telephone, but they later discovered the police in the act of searching through the luggage in his hotel bedroom, on the pretext of looking for his passport. This action is astonishing, as Mr. Schoenman has entered France regularly and without the slightest trouble, showing his passport both at the airport entry point (passport control), and also at any hotel where he has registered. The police refused to answer any questions as to his whereabouts. No one was allowed to see him, or even to speak with him by telephone.

The serious situation was immediately made known to Maître Giselle Halimi and Laurent Schwartz in Paris, and Bertrand Russell in Wales. Protests and enquiries by these three throughout the night failed to elicit any cooperation. Maître Halimi, as Ralph Schoenman's lawyer, took her enquiries to top level in the Ministry of the Interior, but without results. Schoenman was kept for a whole night incommunicado.

This abduction of an American citizen, who was in France for one night on his way to Cambodia, and who holds the position of secretary general of the International War Crimes Tribunal, is particularly hard to explain in the light of the declared foreign policy of the French government.

That Ralph Schoenman is not, in fact, persona non grata in France, and that the whole episode has been, to say the least, an embarrassment to the French government, was strongly suggested by the developments of the following morning.

At the press conference held at Orly Airport at 9 a.m. on Wednesday morning, representatives of the Tribunal in Paris were informed by the Police de l'Air that Ralph Schoenman had been "forbidden entry to France as the result of a request originating from London, perhaps from an American source."

It was stated that the action of the police was "only in response to a particular request, and did not represent any formal decision by the French authorities."

The police spokesman added that Schoenman would be allowed to continue his scheduled trip to Cambodia, and he accordingly left on the 11 a.m. Air France flight to Phnom Penh.

The, presumably, official action of the American government in attempting to prevent Ralph Schoenman's entry into France constitutes a clear acknowledgment of the seriousness with which the United States administration regards the International War Crimes Tribunal. It also reflects a profound misunderstanding of the nature, scale and present development of the Tribunal's activities.

Due, in no small measure, to the groundwork done by Ralph Schoenman, the administrative work of the Tribunal is now in the hands of an established team, with offices in several countries. No conceivable action by the United States government against any individual can halt the preparations now in progress for the Tribunal.

Plans for the public sessions have been agreed and the necessary technical arrangements are in hand. Meanwhile, the investigating teams, which are collecting evidence for the Tribunal, are already operating. The first team, due back shortly from Hanoi, has spent several weeks in north Vietnam studying the effects of bombardment on the civilian population. The team consisted of Setsure Tsurushima, professor of economics at Kansai University, Japan; Leon Matarosso, French lawyer; Roger Pic, French journalist, photographer and authority on Vietnam; Dr. John Gerassi, social analyst and author from the United States; Jean-Pierre Vigier, professor of mathematics, France; and Dr. Malcolm Caldwell, authority on Southeast Asia, from Great Britain.

The second team, accompanying Ralph Schoenman, will spend the next three or four weeks investigating border violations in Cambodia, and interviewing victims and witnesses of civilian bombardment in the liberated zones of south Vietnam. The other members of the team are Lawrence Daly, general secretary of the Scottish Union of Mineworkers; Carol Brightman, editor of Viet Report and a student of chemical warfare, United States; Dr. Behar, doctor of medicine, from France; Tariq Ali, former president of the Oxford Union,

from Pakistan; and Dr. Gustavo Tolentino, a Dominican citizen from Toronto, where he is a physician specializing in radiology. He is a member of Canada's New Democratic party.

Lawrence Daly is a recent full member of the International War Crimes Tribunal. In endorsing the appointment, his union issued a statement that it regarded it an honour that its general secretary had been invited to participate.

JOHNSON ESCALATES BILL FOR WAR

Johnson revealed January 17 that his defense [war] budget for the next fiscal year will be \$73 billion, up \$5 billion for the current fiscal year ending June 30. This represents the third largest in history. In 1945 it was \$79.9 billion and in 1944 \$76.1 billion.

In addition to the \$73 billion, Johnson said he would ask for \$9.4 billion to cover greater expenditures than had been calculated on for the current year.

By way of comparison, the U.S. public debt for 1915 was \$1.2 billion and in 1920, following World War I, it was \$24.3 billion.

On a per capita basis, the figure is perhaps not so staggering. It is expected that the population in the U.S. in mid 1967 will reach 200 million. Thus each man, woman and child will share in the war budget for the next fiscal year to the amount of \$365.

Lest this seem a mere trifle, it should be remembered that the rich do not pay for wars. This is done only by the poor, who have sturdy backs and are accustomed to carrying heavy burdens. In addition, since most children have but limited earning capacity, the full weight generally falls on the parents. An American family of six, in calculating its share of war costs, must figure \$2,190, plus what the rich evade, and that's just for the next fiscal year.

JOHNSON'S "INTEREST" DOES FREI NO GOOD

The Chilean Senate dealt President Eduardo Frei Montalva a stinging rebuff January 17 on a routine motion to grant him permission to leave the country for a scheduled official visit to the United States. His request was turned down. It was the first time such a thing ever occurred in the history of Chile.

The preparations for the trip were already well advanced. A round of appearances had been set for Washington, New York and Boston. Johnson had laid out the red carpet in his own inimitable way in an announcement last December 20: "I am particularly interested in learning more from President Frei about the achievements of his great experiment of revolution in freedom."

Johnson, of course, doesn't have the slightest interest in anything south of the Rio Grande so long as it does not constitute a "Communist threat." The sentence was just ground out by some anonymous speech writer. In Chile, however, the sentence was taken at face value as showing direct backing from the White House for Frei's Christian Democratic campaign propaganda. Thus, in the Senate, the only ones to vote for the trip were the members of Frei's own party and three independents. The "no" vote was an indirect way of censuring Frei for his too flagrant stand in favor of the Yankee master.

Frei had no choice but to try to conceal his embarrassment and cancel the junket abroad.

The Chilean senators, naturally, are not revolutionists. In fact part of the vote came from right-wing bourgeois forces in opposition to even the largely demagogic agrarian reform sponsored by Frei. The left, including Socialists and Communists, cast their votes to preserve their public image of champions of the people. Whatever the reasons, it was expected that there would be widespread approval of the vote.

It was reported from Santiago that the Christian Democrats will seek to overcome the effects of the public blow to Frei's prestige by staging a series of demonstrations. If these should be countered by critics of the president's kowtowing to Washington, a period of political turbulence could open in Chile.

THE WITCH-HUNT CONTINUES IN MEXICO

By Ricardo Ochoa

Mexico City

The most cynical and outrageous repressive action of the many that have taken place in Mexico in the past two years under the Díaz Ordaz government occurred at the end of 1966 in Poza Rica, the oil city in the state of Veracruz. It involved two doctors, Fausto Dávila Solís and Tito Armando Rodríguez Lara and a lawyer Genaro Jongitud. The three were "accused" of belonging to the "Partido Obrero Revolucionario (Trotskista)" [Revolutionary Workers Party (Trotskyist)], the followers in Mexico of J. Posadas. Two students were also arrested.

All of them were seized without a warrant and taken to the Federal District, more than 400 kilometers away.

At first both local and federal authorities denied knowing the whereabouts of the victims, a maneuver that was thought to indicate they had been marked for execution. However, the reaction was such in Poza Rica itself, that the municipal authorities felt obliged to open the jails for inspection so that the public could see that they were not being held there under suspicion of having sabotaged the city's oil installations.

On the same day that the federal authorities admitted holding the victims, the two students were released. On December 10, the two doctors and the lawyer were formally charged with "conspiracy and criminal association." The "criminal" association, of course, referred to their real or alleged membership in the POR.

At first the authorities sought to charge them with "sabotaging" the oil installations at Poza Rica (where approximately forty percent of Mexico's oil is produced and refined). But the charge had to be dropped because of its obvious absurdity. The truth is, as the defendants insisted at the police hearings, the management at these installations is guilty of criminal irresponsibility; and you don't need to live in Poza Rica very long to become aware of the frequent explosions due to carelessness in running the plant equipment.

In addition the charge was absurd on the face of it inasmuch as the POR advocates the nationalization of all industries and it would run against its principles to damage an industry that has already been nationalized and that only needs a more responsible administration.

The Poza Rica kidnapping was, in reality, a bald political maneuver the principal objective of which was, on the one hand, to intimidate the working class and make more difficult the defense of the many political prisoners now behind bars; and, on the other hand, to introduce the methods of an inquisition in the vain hope of masking the inability of the present regime to halt the mounting opposition throughout the country.

These two aims stand out clearly if the background is known. In Mexico the words "Poza Rica" bring to mind a rich city controlled by gangsters who run the oil workers union, city hall, business, etc., and who are building bank accounts in various ways -- embezzlement, gouging the peasants in the surrounding area, nicking the paychecks of thousands of workers in return for permission from the trade-union bureaucracy to work at Petróleos Mexicanos [PEMEX], operating the vice centers that exploit both men and women.

Eighty percent of Poza Rica's economic life, it is estimated, depends on the refinery. The oil workers have the reputation of being well paid, although what they really have is just the reputation. For many years the workers have sought to convert their union into something capable of advancing their aspirations for an improved standard of living, but the local authorities, controlled by the corrupt union bureaucrats, have always fiercely defended their gangster patrons.

The city officials, who come into office every three years, are just as unpopular as the union heads. This became crystal clear in 1958 during the municipal elections. The official candidate was opposed by an independent candidate who had gained immense popularity as a doctor who took care of endless files of patients and who not only did this but gave them the necessary medicine, all at ridiculously low fees and in many instances without any fee at all. This was a doctor who, in his student days, became a Trotskyist. Upon graduating he devoted himself entirely to his profession but without giving up his revolutionary views in the least.

This doctor entered the 1958 elections due more to the popular appeals than to any personal desire. His name was Fausto Dávila Solís.

Running against such venal opponents, he received an overwhelming majority of votes. But in accordance with Mexico's "directed democracy," the election board declared the official candidate to be the winner.

The dissatisfaction of the voters burst out in demonstrations. These were met with the customary "persuasive" methods of the authorities at all levels, city, state and federal. The police, the army, tanks and jet planes were used to fill the jails and mortuaries. The independent candidate was kidnapped, tortured, imprisoned. His wife and relatives were persecuted along with his partisans and he was finally driven from the area.

Some months later, the federal and state authorities discovered that the "strongman" of Poza Rica, Jaime J. Merino, general superintendent of PEMEX in the city, who had fought ferociously against the independent candidate was guilty of fraud. In addition to other crimes, he had abstracted 20,000,000 pesos [one peso = US\$.08] from PEMEX.

With this change in the situation, Dr. Dávila was able to return to Poza Rica and resume his practice.

For some years the wave of repression was followed by political apathy in the city. This lasted until the union gangsters split into two groups. Thereupon, a little more than two years ago, an interbureaucratic conflict broke out over control of the oil workers union. The two groups had to appeal to the ranks, and in so doing began to voice some of their demands.

A new modus vivendi was reached and the two cliques closed ranks, forgetting their promises and picking up where they had left off in their racketeer practices. One thing had changed, however. The workers had again become preoccupied with their problems, a change that paralleled a rise in discontent among the peasants in the region.

Up to now, no mass movement has developed in Poza Rica but it is clear to even the most superficial observers that a tense political climate exists in the city. Hence the interest among the Mexican authorities in taking preventive measures. No one could think up anything better than to remind the population of the bloody events of 1958. The independent candidate of that year, Dr. Fausto Dávila Solís had to be removed from the scene. The people had to be "warned" so that it would not occur to them to again seek an independent candidate. Thus Dr. Dávila was treated to a repetition of what had been done to him in 1958.

Upon illegally seizing him and taking him to Mexico City, the police of the so-called Dirección Federal de Seguridad [DFS] threatened to execute him, utilizing the "law of flight." [The prisoner is shot and it is announced that he was killed while trying to flee.]

The doctor had learned what the police were up to and had left a letter saying that if anything happened to him the police were guilty and that he had no intention of committing "suicide."

Later, in Mexico City, the head of the DFS, indicating the interest of the head of Petróleos Mexicanos (whose political importance in the government is equal to that of a secretary of state) "suggested" to the doctor that he sign a statement that had been drawn up for him. When this "suggestion" was rejected, the threat was made that the doctor's wife would be arrested and that she would sign charges suggested by such an important government functionary "in order to gain her freedom."

Another of the victims is the lawyer Genaro Jongitud, who has been serving as attorney for previous political prisoners of the Posadista group and Adolfo Gilly.

Since Genaro Jongitud took up the defense of these political prisoners, he has been the target of constant threats. He was even held in jail for two months in Poza Rica when he talked with some foreign journalists about the status of the case involving his defendants.

Practices of this kind reflect the policy of the Mexican government in relation to political prisoners. On the one hand the government seeks to obstruct their defense; on the other hand it tries to create an atmosphere that will assure their being sentenced to heavy penalties, including execution.

There are many examples of this. For instance Demetrio Vallejo, the railway union

leader, has been imprisoned for seven years. On various occasions they have tried to kill him, utilizing criminal elements in the prison itself. Such provocations ended once with a brutal attack that put him in the hospital.

Those who have been imprisoned since then have not been treated any better. The group of political prisoners to which Víctor Rico Galán belongs have been submitted to similar provocations. Recently a group of criminal "ex-police" were put in their dormitory with the deliberate aim of provoking them. The prisoners have reported that the government, not content with holding them in jail, prevents their families from trying to gain aid. Police agents follow their wives and relatives as they seek help. The prisoners are denied books to translate, blocking them from intellectual work, all that is open to them.

Only one of the Poza Rica defendants is politically active. This is Dr. Tito Armando Domínguez, who states that he joined the POR eight months ago and that neither Dr. Dávila nor the attorney Jongitud belong to the party.

The most ominous aspect of the current case is its inquisitional character and the fact that from all the evidence it may constitute the first step in a new stage of political repression in the country. The police moves in Poza Rica were prepared in systematic fashion by the bourgeois press and -- even more revealingly -- by publications which had long covered up their mercenary nature with a screen of liberalism.

The magazine Siempre! and the daily El Día joined the McCarthyite big press, scoring the "mutinous actions" of the "lunatic" left. In general the targets of these attacks have been "Trotskyists," the label pinned on all those who have been victimized by the government.

The Stalinist background of some of those who write for or edit these publications makes them especially fit instruments of the bourgeoisie in this reactionary game. In Siempre!, Lombardo Toledano has become the most expert fingerman in behalf of the bourgeoisie. Few of his weekly articles fail to attack the left, from the Mexican Communist party to the Trotskyists. He accuses the Communist party of having "united with the Trotskyists," formerly its "traditional enemies." His cheap confusionist demagoguery serves to keep up the "revolutionary" pretenses of the government, answering any "extremist" who "dares to criticize" the arrests made by the government in violation of the constitution. He has even reached the strange conclusion that the arrests are legal because they are "blows against imperialism."

In the January 11 Siempre!, for instance, he writes: "Pressure...[against the government] is also exercised through a series of small groups of provocateurs, who, claiming to belong to the left, in practice coincide with the maneuvers of American imperialism from which they receive sustenance. Adventurers of all kinds -- Trotskyists, anarchists, pro-Chinese, etc. -- who succeed in taking in a few ignorant, desperate or romantic people, have raised the slogan of armed struggle against the government of the Republic." (Emphasis added.)

At the "New Year's banquet" of what remains of his Partido Popular Socialista, he offered the following inspiring words, worthy of any anti-Communist: "The PPS is ready to enter into a dialogue with any of the parties and groups except the lunatics because the foreign police have no right to intervene in the domestic affairs of Mexico." (El Día, January 8.)

The "lunatics," naturally, are "Trotskyists, anarchists, pro-Chinese, etc." They and the "foreign" police are one and the same thing. Ergo, the Mexican state has the right to defend itself against foreign intervention, arresting its agents.

For its part, El Día, which is edited by the former deputy Enrique Ramírez y Ramírez, has published innumerable attacks against the "lunatics," among them a series of articles ironically entitled, "Every revolution that respects itself, defends itself." The irony comes from the fact that what is being "defended" at the moment is the counterrevolutionary status quo.

The fact that these two mercenary writers are now so active in applauding the repressive actions, is a certain sign that they are devoting themselves as in former days to preparing for the most reactionary moves. These same two figures, today in the service of the Mexican bourgeoisie, were formerly willing instruments of Stalin and the GPU in preparing the assassination of Leon Trotsky. It was Trotsky himself who cited Enrique Ramírez y Ramírez and Lombardo Toledano as spokesmen of the propaganda that the May 24 machine-gun assault on Trotsky's home had been organized by Trotsky himself. This propaganda, which was advanced in Toledano's "theoretical" magazine Futuro, aimed at diverting the police in uncovering the criminals, who happened to be Lombardo's friends

and comrades working for the GPU and who did not succeed in their first attempt to assassinate the old Bolshevik.

According to the resolution of the Federal Public Ministry, the full text of which was published in the December 12 issue of El Día, the "crimes" committed by the defendants consist of being partisans of Marxism-Leninism-Trotskyism, of advancing their ideas, of meeting in groups to study and apply it to the conditions of the country in order to gain more influence among the populace. Under the witch-hunt, such acts are considered to be "criminal."

The only innovation introduced by the new government is to list political "crimes" under the Penal Code instead of under the category of "social dissolution," which was aimed at political opponents, particularly revolutionists. Perhaps the reason for this is that the López Mateos regime became widely discredited for utilizing the formula "social dissolution" as a charge against the leaders of the railway workers in 1959. Since then, the category of "social dissolution" has been subjected to sharp criticism.

The strictly political nature of the charges lodged against the Poza Rica defendants can be judged from the following paragraph of the indictment:

"Those detained are in agreement that the ideology they profess requires a change in the public power by any means possible, including violence, and it is easy to see that in no case do they refer to an electoral process in the terms specified in our Constitution. Violence is to act on persons and on things in such a way as to cause them injury or damage. In other words, to employ violence is to go against the prohibitions laid down by the Penal Code, depriving persons of their lives, affecting their health or damaging their inheritance. These deeds constitute the crimes of homicide, injury, damage to the property of others, etc., and upon being embraced in a group's program of action and its intention of following such conduct, it comes under the provisions of Article 164 of the Penal Code; that is, participating in an association organized for crime, since the proposition of applying violence in order to change public institutions involves in a necessary and inescapable way the commission of the indicated acts."

The reference to the electoral process is particularly out of place since one of those against whom this charge is directed is Dr. Fausto Dávila.

The most scandalous feature of the charges, of course, is that the defendants are accused of intent to commit acts which the police themselves project in a revolution yet to come.

Revolutionary circles in Mexico were slow in reacting to this new blow. The government caught them by surprise. However the attack was of such nature as to underline the need for joining in a common front despite ideological differences. The enemy is obviously following the tactic of picking off the left, sector by sector, beginning with the most isolated and vulnerable groups.

The editors of Política appear to have understood this. In No. 159 of this well-known magazine, they say: "Política is far from undertaking an ideological defense of Trotskyism. But this is quite different from remaining silent in face of the increasing number of members of a party who have been made political prisoners solely because the party claims to be under the guidance of the Fourth International, this being distorted to mean sinister 'international' Communist propositions. This could be applied to the Mexican Communist party or to any citizen who accepts the laws and principles of dialectical and historical materialism, forcing them first into the underground and then into prison, since no one is ignorant of the fact -- at least those who have a modicum of literacy and culture -- that what is involved is laws of a universal character."

Meanwhile the repressive drive is continuing. On December 16, some days after the kidnapping of Fausto Dávila and his friends, other members of the POR were arrested -- Alfonso Lizarraga, the editor of Voz Obrera, two workers and a student attending the University of Mexico.

In this instance, the pattern was reversed. They were arrested in Mexico City and taken to Veracruz. They have been held incommunicado a much longer time than the previous ones. The dangers they face are much greater also due to the fact that they are less well known and the actual place they are being held has not yet been learned.

It is difficult to ascertain how many political prisoners there are at present in the jails of Mexico. The first group to be seized included the journalist Adolfo Gilly and a number of members of the POR. The next blow was directed against members of "Francisco I. Madero" group in Sinaloa. Later it was the turn of the Movimiento Revolucionario del Pueblo headed by Víctor Rico Galán. Then came the students at the University

of Morelia who were arrested. A little later members of the Mexican Communist party were seized in Tampico. Finally, in December, came the latest incidents involving Dr. Dávila in Poza Rica and Alfonso Lizarraga in Mexico City.

In 1965, during the first year of the Díaz Ordaz government, similar blows were struck in Guerrero, Yucatan and Chihuahua (in the latter instance, in September 1965, more than twenty peasants were killed after they took up arms).

Under the previous government there were some spectacular cases beginning with the leaders of the railway workers. Altogether Mexico has an impressive number of political prisoners.

DABERNAT'S REVELATION ABOUT PEKING AND VIETNAM

Has the Mao regime used indirect diplomatic channels to inform the Johnson administration on how far it can go in escalating the war in Vietnam without touching off a powerful series of actions by the People's Republic of China? A report of such a move was sufficient to make headlines in the Western press and cause a stir in a number of capitals.

The report came from René Dabernat, foreign editor of the magazine Paris-Match and a contributor to the Paris daily Le Monde. In a copyrighted interview in the January 23 U.S. News & World Report, he was asked, "Do you see Communist China getting into the war?" This was his reply:

"I won't make predictions. I'd rather stick to facts. First, Communist China and the U.S. have given each other assurances not to extend the war in Vietnam. Last spring, a diplomat from the Red Chinese Embassy in Paris asked the Quai d'Orsay [the French Foreign Office] to let Washington know that Peking would not enter the war on three conditions. These were that the U.S. not invade Red China, that they not invade North Vietnam, and that they not bomb the dikes of the Red River in North Vietnam. France transmitted the message. I verified this in Washington. Later, President Johnson, Rusk, McNamara and Harriman gave the necessary signals to Peking in various public speeches to show that they agreed to these conditions.

"I have to point out, however, that all this happened before the Red Guards started running wild in China.

"Then, after the Manila Conference, Communist China was informed through diplomatic channels that President Johnson wanted to bring about a process of stabilization and peace in the Pacific, if only Red China did not try to use force to extend its influence in Asia."

Dabernat's supposed revelations were at once denied by both Washington and Paris officials. Spokesmen for the State Department and Quai d'Orsay said it was news to them. In view of the well-known credibility gap in both capitals, particularly in their diplomatic departments, the denials meant little.

The question arises, however, as to why Peking would choose Paris as an intermediary in view of the fact that its own representative in Warsaw is able to see an American diplomat whenever he wishes. The two countries have in fact maintained a tenuous contact in this way for a number of years, most of the interchanges being off the record. One explanation might be that in using a French go-between, Peking would be in better position to deny it. A proposal for a limited deal at the expense of the Vietnamese people and their heroic struggle would scarcely redound to the credit of the Mao regime if it became known.

A still more likely explanation is that the State Department utilized Dabernat to float a trial balloon. Thus, instead of "revealing" a proposal made by Mao, Dabernat is relaying a question from Johnson, the gist of it being, "If the U.S. stays within these limits in Vietnam, can we count on China continuing to stay out?"

Most likely of all is that the "revelation" was masterminded in Washington as propaganda aimed at feeding dissatisfaction in Hanoi with Peking's attitude. The clear import of Dabernat's story is that Peking deliberately stabbed the Vietnamese revolution in the back.

Still another possibility is that it was planted by Moscow as counterpropaganda to the Chinese claims that the Khrushchevists have made a deal with Johnson at the expense of both China and Vietnam.

"MYSTERIOUS DEATHS" IN AFTERMATH OF KENNEDY ASSASSINATION

By Arthur Maglin

(Second of three articles)

It would appear that Ruby's death is not the only mystery-shrouded demise that has occurred in the aftermath of the Kennedy assassination. David Welsh reports on ten other "mysterious deaths, possibly related to the assassination of the President" in the November issue of Ramparts magazine. In very summary fashion they are as follows:

Jim Koethe was a young Dallas reporter who had investigated the assassination and was preparing a book on it. He was found dead in his apartment on September 21, 1964 swathed in a blanket. The notes for his book were removed from his ransacked apartment. The apparent cause of death was a karate chop.

Bill Hunter was present at a gathering at Jack Ruby's apartment along with Jim Koethe, Tom Howard and Ruby's roommate George Senator on November 24, 1963 just after Ruby killed Oswald. Hunter was shot to death by "accident" by a police detective in the Long Beach, California police headquarters on April 23, 1964.

Tom Howard who was Jack Ruby's first lawyer after he killed Oswald was taken to the hospital on March 27, 1965 by an unidentified person and died there. The doctor, without benefit of an autopsy, said he had suffered a heart attack.

Earlene Roberts managed the rooming house where Oswald was living. She was one of the key witnesses before the Warren Commission. She died January 9, 1966 in Parkland Hospital. Police said she suffered a heart attack in her home. No autopsy was performed.

Nancy Jane Mooney was a stripper in Jack Ruby's Carousel Club. She provided the alibi for a man accused of attempting to kill a witness to events following the slaying of Officer J.D. Tippit, which Oswald is alleged to have done. She was picked up about a week later for disturbing the peace. Within a few hours she was dead. Police said she hanged herself with her treading pants, in her private cell at the Dallas City jail. This occurred on February 13, 1964.

Hank Killam was so interesting to men representing themselves as "federal agents" investigating the assassination that they caused him to lose one job after another from their frequent visits. Killam moved to Tampa, Florida where on March 17, 1964 he was found on a sidewalk in front of a broken plate-glass window with his jugular vein cut. He bled to death en route to the hospital.

William Whaley was the taxi driver who picked Oswald up as Oswald was leaving the Texas School Book Depository. He was thus one of the few who had the opportunity to talk alone with Oswald between the assassination and Oswald's arrest. Whaley was killed in a head-on collision on December 18, 1965. Whaley had a perfect accident record since 1936 and was the first Dallas taxi driver to be killed on duty since 1937.

Edward Benavides was fatally shot in mid-February, 1964 in the back of the head in a Dallas bar. Police said it was a pistol shot, wrote up a cursory report and marked the case "unsolved." Edward Benavides resembled his brother Domingo who was a witness to the slaying of Officer Tippit. Domingo's father-in-law, J.W. Jackson, was so unimpressed with the police investigation that he started an inquiry of his own. Two weeks later Jackson was shot at in his home.

Dorothy Kilgallen, the widely syndicated gossip columnist, was passionately interested in the assassination case and told her friends that she firmly believed there was a conspiracy and that she would find out the truth if it took her all her life. Miss Kilgallen was once granted a 30-minute interview alone with Jack Ruby, something granted to no other reporter. Miss Kilgallen was also responsible for a number of important newsbreaks on the assassination case. She died in her bed on November 8, 1965. Dr. James Luke, a New York City medical examiner, said the cause of death was "acute barbiturate and alcohol intoxication, circumstances undetermined."

Lee Bowers was one of 65 known witnesses to the president's assassination who thought shots were fired from the area of the Grassy Knoll to the west of the Texas School Book Depository. Bowers was also uniquely situated in a 14-foot high railroad tower directly behind the Grassy Knoll. From that position he said he saw three cars slowly cruising around the parking area on top of the Knoll in the 35 minutes before the assassination. He also observed the activities of two men on the Knoll just before and after the shots that killed Kennedy rang out. On the morning of August 9, 1966,

Bowers was driving south from Dallas on business. His brand new car veered from the road and hit a bridge abutment. A farmer who saw it said the car was going 50 miles an hour, a slow speed for that road. There were no skidmarks to indicate braking. Bowers died of his wounds that afternoon in a Dallas hospital. There was no autopsy, and soon afterward he was cremated. Doctors saw no evidence that he had suffered a heart attack.

In reporting at length about the circumstances of these ten deaths, David Welsh comes to this conclusion:

"The 'mysterious deaths' and intimidations alone are compelling enough reason for a new investigation, if only to establish whether or not they are related to the Kennedy assassination."

In other news connected with the Kennedy assassination and the Warren Report, Democratic Senator Russell B. Long of Louisiana, whose father was killed by assassination while in office as a senator, said on November 21 that he has always thought that a second person was involved in slaying President Kennedy. Long, who is the Democratic party's number two man in the U.S. Senate, said that although he did not doubt that Oswald played a part in the assassination "whoever fired the second shot was a much better shot than Oswald." He called for a new investigation.

Arthur M. Schlesinger Jr., a well-known historian and a former aide to President Kennedy, was reported on November 22 to have said that it "appears to me substantial facts and doubts do exist which would warrant a very intensive inquiry."

Sitting on the other side of the fence was the Democratic party's majority leader in the House of Representatives. The November 23 New York Times reports:

"Representative Carl Albert of Oklahoma, the House Democratic majority leader, said he believed 'the commission answered the basic questions.'"

"Mr. Albert said he had kept up with its proceedings through the newspapers and had read the book titled 'Portrait of the Assassin,' which was written by one commissioner, Representative Gerald R. Ford, Republican of Michigan.

"I never did get excited about minor inconsistencies such as an extra bullet," Mr. Albert said."

The New York World Journal Tribune of November 30 reported what appears to be the only overt contribution by any member of the Kennedy family to the current controversy over the Warren Report. The paper quotes Senator Robert F. Kennedy as saying, "I've made it a practice not to comment on the Warren Report." In referring to the article in the November 25 issue of Life magazine which criticized the findings of the Warren Commission, Kennedy added ambiguously, "That thing in Life last week -- terrible."

In this connection, it is worth noting that the November 21 New York Times quoted Mark Lane as saying that he knew that Robert Kennedy had sent a message to Professor Hugh Trevor-Roper, who had written the introduction to Lane's book on the Warren Report, Rush to Judgment, in which Kennedy had said to keep up the good work. The Times went on to say that Roper denied this.

Lane says that the Times garbled this story. He reports that what happened is that two days after Roper had published some newspaper articles in Britain criticizing the Warren Report, a friend of Roper's was at a party in the United States at which Robert Kennedy told him to tell Roper when he got back to Oxford to "keep up the good work." Roper considered this person a reliable source of information and so informed Lane of what had transpired. After the Times heard Lane's story, the Times' London man asked Roper if he had received a "letter" from Kennedy which is what Roper responded to in the negative.

Fact magazine in its November-December issue contains another interesting comment by Lane:

"The rumors about Johnson? Well, I've been on many radio and television telephone-format programs, where people call in, and at least 20% of the calls were from people who suggested Johnson was the assassin. I myself don't see any evidence that President Johnson was the assassin. I don't know who did it. I do know that the Warren Commission's conclusion that Oswald did it alone is ludicrous, but I don't know who did it. I'll have to leave the speculation to the Warren Commission."

THE HEALY SCHOOL OF FALSIFICATION

By Henri Valin

The Liège demonstration of last October 15 still continues to be discussed among vanguard youth organizations and militants all over Europe. The Jeunes Gardes Socialistes, under whose auspices the march of more than 4,000 members of working-class and youth organizations from many European countries was staged in Belgium against the imperialist aggression in Vietnam and against the international imperialist NATO alliance, have now called for a conference in February of progressive youth organizations in Europe in order to consider ways and means to better coordinate such struggles.

The impact of the Liège demonstration on the youth in the East European workers states and the Communist youth organizations in Western Europe was such that the official Moscow daily Pravda thought it advisable to print a photograph of the demonstration in its issue of October 21 together with a favorable caption, although it did not disclose to its readers the identity of the sponsors or the nature of the British contingent they photographed.

The World Federation of Democratic Youth, led by pro-Moscow Communist parties, made a lame attempt at parrying inquiries from its members as to why it had not taken the initiative in organizing international actions and demonstrations in support of the Vietnamese revolution and against the U.S. imperialist aggression in Vietnam. It issued an appeal for a stepped up solidarity campaign with the Vietnamese people which was published in the November 14 issue of the French Communist party daily l'Humanité.

The tiny pro-Chinese sects represented the Liège demonstration as a combination of "Trotskyists and fascists," and the Belgian pro-Mao paper La Voix du Peuple [Voice of the People] even ran an obviously faked photograph to "prove" its charge. The headline on this article was "Trotskyists, fascists and cops 'fraternally' mix in an anti-Communist 'demonstration.'"

Aside from them, the only attacks in the international labor movement against the demonstration have come from the ultraleft British sect, the Socialist Labour League headed by Healy, and its French followers.

Their method of attack, like that of the Belgian pro-Maoists, echoes the methods used by Stalinism -- slander, forgery, repetition of brazen lies.

Thus in the January 7 issue of The Newsletter, the official weekly of the SLL, Gerry Healy, the national secretary of the organization, in speaking of the leaders of the Fourth International in Europe, of the Socialist Workers party in the United States, says the following:

"Since the Hungarian Revolution personified the struggle of the international working class against bureaucracy, it was only natural that these running dogs of Stalinism and social democracy should resent the appearance of a banner defending that Revolution on the October 15 demonstration.

"It was only natural that they should call for the police to have the banner removed so that a tiny handful of Stalinist youth would be placated."

Did the leaders of the Jeunes Gardes Socialistes call in the police to haul down the banner of the Young Socialists in defense of the Hungarian Revolution?

At this late date, Healy is still repeating a lie that was exposed immediately after the demonstration. Let us recall the facts in this unsavory matter.

The October 22 issue of The Newsletter carried the following statement:

"When the [British] Young Socialists who were carrying them [banners commemorating the Hungarian Revolution] refused to take them down, Germain's rather elderly young socialists called up the assistance of the Belgian police to haul the Hungarian banner down."

This statement was nothing but an outrageous lie, used as "proof" for the slander that the organizers of the anti-imperialist demonstration at Liège were just "handmaidens of imperialism" (this choice epithet appears in the same article).

As was to be expected, such a falsification provoked a vigorous reaction. In its issue of October 29, the Belgian left socialist weekly La Gauche, with which the

Jeunes Gardes Socialistes are closely linked, exposed and denounced the slander. On November 1, the national secretary of the Jeunes Gardes Socialistes sent a letter to the National Committee of the British Young Socialists in which he asked this body to repudiate the lies published in The Newsletter concerning his organization and stating that until this was done the Jeunes Gardes Socialistes were breaking off all relations with the Young Socialists and would not invite them to the next projected conference of progressive youth organizations in Europe which the JGS was sponsoring.

No revolutionary socialist interested in advancing support for the Vietnamese Revolution is going to sit at a conference table with people whose contribution consists of calling him a "police agent" or a "handmaiden of imperialism" and who fabricate "proofs" to bolster such slanderous epithets.

Healy's response was to add new lies to the old one. The Newsletter printed the following in the November 12 issue:

"We went to Thiry [national chairman of the JGS] to ask him about the order of the march and instead of answering this question he began to demand that our banner on the Hungarian revolution should be taken down. Our reply was that there could be no question of this.

"He then said that in that case we would not be part of the march. I replied that as we, together with our French comrades of Revoltes, made up more than half the march, we were really not concerned about his permission.

"At this stage two men who had been standing by Thiry, and who were unknown to us, intervened. They said that they were police officers and they should make it clear that if we were not part of the official march, we would not be allowed to march.

"We replied that we had been officially invited by the Belgian Young Socialists to the march and that we were therefore officially part of the march. Thiry then intervened and repeated that if we persisted in keeping the banners up, we would not be recognised by him..."

The rest of this account in The Newsletter deals with the British Young Socialists' own private negotiations with the police and has nothing to do with the subject.

Two things are to be noted in this account: (1) It does not claim that the Jeunes Gardes Socialistes called in the police. It in fact confirms the truthful report which appeared in World Outlook of November 18, that the police intervened on their own initiative.* (2) The account does not confirm the claim of the October 22 Newsletter that the police were called "to haul the Hungarian banner down," although the author seeks to make up for this by alleging that the JGS "were quite happy to have the police do it for them."

These admissions, which actually expose the lie in the October 29 issue of The Newsletter, are utilized to offer a new version; namely, that a parley occurred between the Young Socialists, Thiry and the police. In other words, the first lie is patched up.

The fact is that when the police intervened, the political secretary of the Jeunes Gardes Socialistes, George Dobbeleer, told them to mind their own business and to let the question of the banners in the march be decided by the organizers of the march themselves. The police thereupon withdrew.

As we now learn from The Newsletter, they withdrew; but the representative of the Young Socialists negotiated with them privately.

This was of no concern to the JGS so long as the police did not intervene in discussions they engaged in with other participants in the demonstration; and in fact the police did not intervene again.

The account in the November 12 Newsletter thus confirms the following four points of fact printed in the November 18 World Outlook:

"(1) That the leaders of the Communist Youth objected to the above-mentioned banners and had asked the Jeunes Gardes Socialistes to have them removed, since they did not conform with the stated objectives of the demonstration.

*The presence of police officers near the head of demonstrations is a common custom in Belgium as it is in most bourgeois democratic countries.

"(2) That the Jeunes Gardes Socialistes had asked the British and French Healyites to remove these banners in order not to break up the united front character of a demonstration in defense of the Vietnamese revolution.

"(3) That when these attempts proved unsuccessful, due to the incurably sectarian character of the Healyites, the Jeunes Gardes Socialistes agreed to leave the banners even if this meant that the Communist Youth would withdraw (which they promptly did).

"(4) That when the police tried to intervene at this point, in order to play the role of 'arbiter' in the dispute, they were firmly told by the Jeunes Gardes Socialistes to mind their own business and not to interfere in an internal dispute among the demonstrators that was none of their business."

In their November 26 issue, the editors of The Newsletter made an interesting concession. They published an article by Aileen Jennings defending the course of the Young Socialists at Liège which does not so much as mention the intervention of the police or the lie that they had been called in by the organizers of the demonstration. The article is a polemic that tries to justify the sectarian policies of the Young Socialists. As part of her argument she quotes as follows from the official statement of the National Bureau of the Jeunes Gardes Socialistes which appeared in the October 22 La Gauche. Referring to the Young Communists (we indicate in brackets errors or omissions in The Newsletter's translation):

"They had shown [stated] their agreement with the slogans of the demonstration but found themselves confronted with an unforeseen [unexpected] situation [at the assembly point itself], Yser Square. The Young Socialists held up [unfurled] a huge banner for [to] the glory of the Polish and Hungarian revolutions of 1956.

"The Belgian Communist groups [group of Belgian Communists] threatened to leave [withdraw] then if the banner was not removed.

"We were in a delicate situation.

"On the one hand, we could not tolerate unforeseen banners [banners not agreed upon] among the official slogans [objectives]; on the other hand it was not possible to remove the banner [these banners] without unleashing a [pitched] battle. Basically, even if we had used means to remove it, we would never have wanted to remove such a banner. [Basically, even if we had had the means to do it, we would never have been willing to remove such a banner.]"

Let us emphasize the last sentence, which even in its garbled form, was the first indication readers of the Healyite press had of the true attitude of the Jeunes Gardes Socialistes: "Basically, even if we had had the means to do it, we would never have been willing to remove such a banner."

This, as we have seen, has not prevented Healy from continuing to repeat his first lie, alleging that the Jeunes Gardes Socialistes called the police "to haul the Hungarian banner down."

Grasping at anything that might be twisted into a semblance of "substantiation" of the slander, the November 19 issue of The Newsletter quoted from a letter by Pierre Le Grève, a socialist member of parliament in Belgium, which was published in both the October 29 and November 5 issues of La Gauche. According to the author of the item in The Newsletter, Sheila Torrance, Le Grève's letter is a bald attempt to justify the "right to call in the police."

Since this letter has been distorted in this way, it is necessary to include it in the record. Here is the full text:

"I expected to find in La Gauche a report of the Liège demonstration underlining its positive aspects but which would also seek to account for certain errors for which the organizers bore no material responsibility. They run the risk, however, of being charged with moral responsibility for these errors if they don't clearly disavow them. The unsigned article,* appearing to speak in the name of La Gauche, however, which was published on page 12, was disappointing.

*Le Grève is mistaken. The article was signed by the National Bureau of the Jeunes Gardes Socialistes. The layout of the article, however, created some confusion.

"Here is what should have been said, in my opinion, about the appearance of slogans that had not been agreed upon: 'We disavow an act that consists in introducing into an antimilitarist, anti-imperialist and anti-NATO demonstration, called in behalf of unconditional solidarity with the Vietnamese people, slogans that have nothing to do with the aim of that demonstration.'

"This was the case with the slogan concerning the events of 1956 in Budapest. Nothing would have prevented you from then adding that you were in agreement with the opinion inspiring that slogan but that a mere slogan does not permit sufficient differentiation between the attitude supporting the movement of the Hungarian workers in favor of workers councils, which is our attitude, from the anti-Communist exploitation which the reaction has tried to wring out of it.

"The principle should have been recalled that it is impermissible in a united front demonstration for certain participants to arrogate to themselves the right to impose slogans which a participating tendency considers inadmissible. Differences have never been resolved through provocations but through discussion. Having made this clear, no one could have blamed the JGS for not having used force or -- still worse -- for not having called for the use of force, in order to impose respect for the decisions that had been reached in good faith. It would have counteracted the impression among the demonstrators who finally withdrew that they had been taken in."

Of this letter, only the last paragraph was cited by The Newsletter and not in a faithful translation. Still even there it is quite clear that Le Grève is defending the JGS for not having used force and for not having called the police. He is defending them against critics who maintain that they should have called the police. These critics included the leaders of the Belgian Communist Youth who withdrew from the march. Le Grève's own criticism is that the JGS should have explained more clearly afterward why they were opposed tactically to introducing into this demonstration the slogan concerning the Hungarian Revolution, while agreeing with the general appreciation of the 1956 events represented by the slogan.

It needs all the cheek and cynicism of a Healy to transfer this clear statement into its exact opposite; i.e., a statement -- to use the words of the November 19 Newsletter -- which "justifies your right to call in the police"!

Only a Stalinist-type bureaucrat with monumental contempt for his own followers could think he could get away with utilizing the very words with which Le Grève confirms that the JGS did not call in the police and did not want to call in the police as "proof" that they did the opposite!

Is Healy's slander the result of a wrong impression or was it deliberately concocted? Consider the following:

After the demonstration October 15, a big mass meeting was held. The next day a joint discussion among the vanguard youth organizations took place. At both gatherings, representatives of the Young Socialists were present. Also present were their allies, the French group "Révoltes."

The Young Socialists, conducting themselves in a correct and disciplined way, made all the political points they had a mind to make. The Révoltes group also made all the points they cared to present, but they behaved in hooligan fashion, shouting and interrupting other speakers and making a spectacle of themselves.

Yet in neither gathering did either the Young Socialists or Révoltes mention so much as once the charge that the Jeunes Gardes Socialistes had "called upon the assistance of the Belgian police to haul the Hungarian banner down."

Surely this was the time and place to confront the perpetrators of the alleged crime with this grave accusation!

The fact that it took Healy and his French allies an entire week to come up with this charge is a good indication that it was conceived and hatched in the editorial offices of The Newsletter.

The whole sordid affair can be epitomized in the following dialogue:

Healy: The JGS called upon the assistance of the Belgian police to haul the Hungarian banner down.

JGS: That's a downright lie. We did not call the police in. Your banners were not hauled down. We would never remove by force -- or still worse -- call in the police

to remove a banner with which we are in fundamental agreement even if we thought it ill-advised to introduce it into a united-front demonstration for the defense of the Vietnamese Revolution.

Healy: But the police were there and intervened didn't they?

JGS: Of course the police were there, as they are at all public demonstrations in Belgium. But they intervened on their own initiative as you yourself now admit. As for us, we at once told them to mind their own business. That ended the matter.

Healy: But didn't your adult leader Pierre Le Grève justify your right to call in the police?

JGS: He did nothing of the sort. From the letter which you yourself quote it is clear that he specifies we did not call in the police and he justifies our right not to call the police and says that nobody could have blamed us for not calling the police provided we made our stand clear on the questions of principle and tactics involved.

Healy: Anyway your leaders are handmaidens of imperialism and their line is such that it comes natural for them to call in the police...

The pattern echoes the one followed by the Stalinists in the day of the crude GPU frame-ups. At the first big Moscow trial, for instance, three defendants were accused of having met Trotsky's son, Leon Sedov, in Copenhagen in 1932 in order to get "terrorist instructions" from Trotsky. One of the defendants, Holtzman, actually confessed having met Sedov in the vestibule of the Bristol hotel in the Danish capital. This was the only tangible link which the prosecution advanced at the trial to "prove" that the defendants actually did have links with Trotsky and his movement.

Unfortunately for the frame-up artists, it turned out that there was no "Bristol" hotel in Copenhagen in 1932. To this exposure of the frame-up, which resounded throughout the world, the forgers responded: "But there was a Bristol café."

This only got them into deeper difficulties. First, the Bristol café didn't have a vestibule. Second, Sedov was able to prove that at the time he was supposed to be meeting with Holtzman in the nonexistent vestibule of the nonexistent hotel, he was not even in Copenhagen.

With imperturbable cynicism, the apologists for Stalin's crimes retorted: Who cares about the Bristol hotel, the Bristol café, a café with a vestibule or a café without a vestibule? The Soviet Union is in danger; "objectively" the Trotskyists are counterrevolutionaries, so you have to support the Moscow trials.

This is the school which Healy has now adopted as his own. The unfortunate thing is that Healy still thinks it worthwhile to masquerade as a "Trotskyist."

In accordance with the logic of such methods, Healy has provided evidence of a strong inclination to proceed beyond mere slander in dealing with opponents with whom he is at factional odds.

In Paris November 4 at a meeting organized by his French followers to commemorate the tenth anniversary of the Hungarian Revolution, Healy was featured as the main speaker. He spent most of his time berating factional opponents, including the Jeunes Communistes Révolutionnaires, a group of Communist youth militants who were expelled from the French Communist movement because of revolutionary opposition to Khrushchevism. When some of them sought the floor to answer the slanderous charges levelled against them and against the Jeunes Gardes Socialistes in relation to the Liège demonstration they were handled very roughly by the Healyite stewards.

Next came the severe beating administered November 17 to Ernest Tate at the entrance to a meeting sponsored by the Socialist Labour League in London. Tate was selling socialist literature, including copies of the International Socialist Review and the pamphlet, Healy "Reconstructs" the Fourth International. In the presence of Healy himself, a gang, recognized by witnesses to be members of the SLL, set upon Tate and beat him so severely that he had to be hospitalized. Healy's excuse for this use of force against a Trotskyist was that the SLL stewards were clearing the pavement.

When Ernest Tate sent copies of a letter to various British left-wing publications, in order to protest this use of force, which is completely alien to the revolutionary tradition, he promptly received a letter from Healy's solicitors threatening to drag him before the bourgeois courts! Tate had dared to accuse him of responsibility

for the beating...

In addition, Healy sent solicitors' letters to two left-wing publications that had published Tate's letter, threatening to drag them into the bourgeois courts unless they immediately published formal retractions and paid him costs.

Thus has Healy demonstrated how things turn into their opposites. In his version of what happened at Liège he slanderously accused his opponents in the world Trotskyist movement of calling "upon the assistance of the Belgian police to haul the Hungarian banner down." Within weeks he himself was running to the bourgeois courts to bring the bourgeois law down on a Trotskyist because he dared to protest being the victim of force employed under Healy's direction!

And why does Healy do this? Because he is caught in the logic of blind, dead-end factionalism. He is in deathly fear that the ideas and arguments of the world Trotskyist movement, which he is incapable of meeting in reasoned argument and debate, will spread among the members of the Socialist Labour League. Therefore he seeks in his own way to block this development and to poison relations with the world Trotskyist movement.

The use of physical violence to prevent militants or tendencies in the labor movement from voicing their opinions publicly, is a characteristic of fascism. It was introduced into the labor movement by the Stalinists. In the end, coupled with their disastrous policies, it resulted in their almost total isolation in the labor movement and their being regarded as moral lepers by the rest of the working class.

The democratic right of any group of workers or any tendency of the labor movement to publicly advance its views in an effective way, however abhorrent they may be to us, is a basic right emphasized by Lenin in State and Revolution as one of the reasons for the superiority of proletarian over bourgeois democracy. The Trotskyist movement has defended this principle and this right under the most difficult conditions against fascists and Stalinists alike. It will continue to do this against anyone who violates it, including those who debase the good name of Trotskyism with their despicable methods.

We do not doubt that many members of the British Young Socialists and the SLL genuinely want to build a revolutionary-socialist party and that they joined because they thought they had found the Trotskyist movement. Sooner or later they will ask themselves: Why does Healy resort to organizational methods characteristic of Stalinism? Doesn't this dishonor the SLL and give it a most evil reputation throughout the Labour movement? Why is Healy so afraid of workers democracy and the free flow of ideas if he has any confidence in the strength of his own positions?

In endeavoring to find rational answers to these questions they will inevitably find themselves turning in the direction of the world Trotskyist movement and away from Healy's insistence upon keeping the SLL in national isolation, committed to the aberration of building "Trotskyism in one country."

THE SLASH IN THE RICE RATION IN CEYLON

[The following statement was issued by the Political Bureau of the Lanka Sama Samaja Party (Revolutionary) on January 9. It deals with the announcement by the United National party regime December 17 that the rice ration is to be cut in half, from two measures (about four pounds) a week for each person to one measure.

[Rice, the staple food of the people has been subsidized by the government for some years. The population of Ceylon requires about 900,000 tons of rice a year. Of this, 500,000 tons are imported (from China, Burma, Thailand, etc.). The balance is purchased locally at subsidized prices; i.e., much higher than prices on the world market.

[The foreign exchange involved is about Rs.300,000,000 (one rupee = US\$.21). Together with other imported subsidiary goods, the foreign exchange involved in the food bill is very large for Ceylon -- some Rs.450,000,000. Ceylon earns foreign exchange almost exclusively from tea, rubber and coconut. The sector of industry devoted to manufacturing is extremely weak and small. In this context, particularly due to low prices in tea, rubber and coconut, the mounting import bill frequently leads to a crisis in foreign exchange.

[This crisis in turn stems from the crisis of the economy -- an import-export

economy based on the plantations. All governments have sought from time to time to resolve the crisis in foreign exchange by drastic cuts in food subsidies and social services. It has been the political repercussions that have held back all governments from striking more frequently at the living standards of the people.

[In 1953 the United National party, headed then too by Dudley Senanayake, raised the price of rice from 25 cents a measure to 70 cents. The UNP government also raised train and bus fares, postal rates, etc. This led to a mass uprising in August of that year. Again in 1962, under Mrs. Sirimavo Bandaranaike, the Sri Lanka Freedom party regime sought to cut the rice ration. The attempt was abandoned in face of certain defeat in parliament and open opposition among the people.]

[Since coming to office in March 1965, the UNP government has been making preparations to withdraw subsidies and cut down on social services. The World Bank has repeatedly insisted on this as a condition for aid.]

* * *

The reduction of the rice ration by one measure is a severe blow on the people. By this action the government has deprived the people of a substantial portion of their staple food. Their decision to give one measure free is evidently in the belief that the people, for that reason, would be less inclined to oppose and resist the government on the rice cut.

The action of the government to cut the ration is not the result of a sudden decision but the implementation of a plan laid well in advance. The excuse that there is a shortage in the rice-producing countries is urged only to conceal the truth that what the government is faced with is the crisis of foreign exchange.

This foreign exchange crisis stems directly from the crisis of the capitalist economy, which has been manifest now for several years. In fact very soon after taking office the UNP government was complaining that the country was in the "throes of an economic crisis." It may be recalled that it was the crisis of the economy that found open and acute manifestation in 1952 during the first Dudley Senanayake government, and more recently in 1962 during the Sirimavo Bandaranaike government. It is the further deepening of the economic crisis that the country is faced with today.

This present crisis is rooted in the colonialist plantation economy built by British imperialism in this country. In this setup, economic development was practically confined to tea, rubber and coconut production to the serious neglect of domestic agriculture and the manufacturing industries. Despite the changes that have taken place since 1948 all past governments were incapable of undertaking the development of the manufacturing industries. In the field of domestic agriculture, so-called colonization and irrigation projects, involving a colossal expenditure of money, have failed to raise rice production and the production of subsidiary foodstuffs to levels adequate to meet the growing needs of the people.

For many years now, continuing conditions of economic stagnation in the context of a rapidly increasing population has been the prevailing picture in the country. In such a context depressed export prices of tea, rubber and coconut, with the continuing manipulation of the market for these products by imperialism, the foreign exchange earnings fall far short of what is necessary to meet the rising bill for essential imports, including rice, the staple food of the people and raw material and machinery for new industries.

The UNP government, as well as all past governments, have sought to move out of recurring conditions of acute crisis in the economy by resorting to drastic reduction of essential imports, withdrawing or cutting down on food subsidies and social services and by enforcing a general squeeze on consumption by the people. It is precisely in furtherance of such policy, and following the dictates of their mentor -- the imperialist-controlled World Bank, the UNP government has now effected a cut in the rice subsidy. It is inevitable that the government will seek to increase still more the burdens of the people and depress still more the already low living standards of the people.

The way out of this crisis, consistent with the protection of the interests of the people, is the immediate and complete take-over of all commercial banks, the stopping of the transfer out of the country of all dividends and profits, nationalization without compensation of all estates. But this is just what this government and all capitalist governments will not do.

The government is conscious that the present blow on the people is a severe one and that the people will oppose and resist this action of the government. That is the

reason why the government has armed itself with emergency powers. Undoubtedly, the government plans to stifle opposition and use the police and the army against the people and force them to submit to their blows. It is to further their plans of using force to suppress the people that a so-called Land Army of 100,000 unemployed youth is to be organized.

The action of the government has affected adversely all sections of the workers, wage-earners, poor peasants and the middle classes. Mere protests and resolutions in parliament will not easily frighten this government to undo what they have already done, and to abandon their plans to strike further blows. The people cannot wait till a general election to obtain relief. What is imperative is the immediate mobilization of the people to oppose and fight the government on this issue. It is the view of the LSSP(R) that the widest and most effective mobilization of the people could be achieved only through a united front of trade unions, political parties and people's organizations in the perspective of action against the government on this issue.

Edmund Samarakody
Secretary
Lanka Sama Samaja Party (Revolutionary)

WOMEN OF LATIN AMERICA CRY, "ENOUGH!"

[Tricontinental Solidarity Week, celebrating the first anniversary of the Tricontinental Conference, was observed January 3-10 in Cuba as well as other areas in the world where support exists for the Organization of the Peoples of Asia, Africa and Latin America (OSPAAAL), the permanent body that was set up by the delegates at the conference last year. In Havana the Federation of Cuban Women organized a series of meetings with women of other Latin-American countries who were present for the occasion. At the conclusion they issued the following statement, which was published in the January 15 English-language edition of Granma, the official organ of the Central Committee of the Communist party of Cuba.]

* * *

We, the representatives of the militant women of Colombia, Guatemala, the Dominican Republic, Peru, Cuba and Venezuela meeting in Havana from January 4 to 6, for an interchange of experiences accumulated in the development of the national liberation movements of our respective countries, salute the first anniversary of the Conference of Solidarity of the Peoples of Asia, Africa and Latin America. This conference was of great importance to the Tricontinental unity of the national liberation movements in the development of a solid anti-imperialist united front. Its political resolution proclaims that in the face of the criminal alliance of the forces of reaction, the peoples of the three continents must respond with active, effective and militant solidarity, determined to counter each imperialist aggression with revolutionary action, and to continue the struggle to the final elimination of all forms of imperialist aggression with revolutionary action, and to continue the struggle to the final elimination of all forms of imperialist and colonialist oppression. The profound revolutionary content of this statement indicates the path we must follow, opposing reactionary violence with revolutionary violence as the only means to put an end to the misery and exploitation of the people, eliminate the shameless intervention of imperialism and achieve true independence.

Women, in addition to the exploitation they suffer as ordinary members of capitalist society, are further humiliated because of their social position, the result of traditional bourgeois laws. They are affected as wives, mothers and citizens, and cannot remain isolated from the struggle of their people for national liberation, the only path that guarantees their children the right to a decent life. Their aspiration is to achieve their own rightful position as members of society and to make a contribution to establishing a just society and a true peace.

In the course of this meeting, we have learned more about the active and determined participation of women on various battlefronts, making their presence felt in mass organizations, in resistance in the cities and as heroic combatants in guerrilla fronts. It is clear to us that imperialism will use all forms of aggression on our continent in its attempt to maintain its political hegemony and criminal domination and exploitation. In the face of its increased aggressiveness, we are convinced that the peoples must respond with continental unity of their revolutionary forces and with simultaneous and daring struggle in each country throughout our America. An anti-impe-

rialist front must be opened up in each one. The victorious example of the Cuban Revolution has shown the way and proved that this continent can achieve true liberation through heroic struggle.

In Viet Nam, where the most pitiless aggression known to mankind is being waged, the criminal nature of imperialism is evident. So is its impotence in the face of the impetuous advance of the peoples' struggle. The most brutal methods of extermination have not made them falter, and they will not cease in their struggle for liberty until final victory is achieved.

The militancy of the Vietnamese women, whose role has been a vital one in this heroic war for national liberation waged by the people against imperialism, is an example of abnegation and valor. The women of Latin America have learned much from them, and we firmly resolve to enter massively into the liberating struggles of our peoples, making each one of our countries a battlefield against imperialism.

Women of Latin America: We cannot passively stand by while our children die of hunger and misery. Our maternal spirit is wounded by the shocking reality of a system that spurns the right to life and happiness.

Women of Latin America: We cry ENOUGH! before the murder of our loved ones, ENOUGH! before the repression of our peoples. The struggle for our freedom is the struggle against imperialism!

Long live the solidarity of the women of Latin America!

Long live Tricontinental anti-imperialist unity!

Death to imperialism!

TRUMAN AS A PEACEMONGER

History will little remember Harry S. Truman -- save for one thing, and for that he will never be forgotten. He was the first ruler to use nuclear weapons on human beings.

Several times since that decision in 1945, which set an ominous precedent for a possible third world war, the former president of the United States has said that he did not regret what he did. He has argued that he dropped the two bombs, one on Hiroshima, the other on Nagasaki, in order to "shorten the war" and to "save American lives."

The truth was that the Japanese government, admitting defeat, had already sought to open negotiations to end the war. The bid was ignored. Two reasons have been offered for this: (1) A group in and around the Pentagon wanted to experiment with the atom bomb on a live target. (2) Wiping out a couple of Japanese cities would serve to intimidate the Soviet Union. American ruling circles at the time were thoroughly convinced that the Soviet Union lacked the know-how to produce an atom bomb, not to mention lacking the "secret." American monopoly of the bomb would therefore constitute a major diplomatic weapon in the postwar period. But it had to be proved that the U.S. government would not hesitate to use it.

Looking back today, does Truman still think his decision was correct? Most likely. But he may also suffer occasional twinges of conscience, or a certain fear that after all, unlike the previous two world wars, the United States might not emerge from another one with its home soil unmarred by a single bomb crater.

To a group of admirers in Los Angeles, who have organized the "Harry S. Truman Center for the Advancement of Peace," he sent a message January 18 saying that the survival of mankind depends on the abolition of war.

"War is fruitless, senseless and a tragic adventure," he said, in which "there are no victors -- only victims."

Of course a cynic might think that what Truman really has in mind is running for the presidency in 1968 as a "peace" candidate. He knows the effectiveness of that gimmick since that's the way the Republicans beat the Democrats in 1952 when Eisenhower ran on a promise to get the country out of the war that Truman took the U.S. into in Korea.

As yet, however, he is playing it cautiously and backing Johnson in Vietnam.