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Dennis Scarla / Militant

## Washington March for Jobs

# NEWS ANALYSIS

## Washington Has Second Thoughts on the Refugees

In a speech in New Orleans April 23, President Ford said that the war in Vietnam "is finished—as far as America is concerned." This was taken as the official admission that the White House had no alternative but to recognize the American defeat in South Vietnam and to proceed with the evacuation.

In the same speech, Ford called for "unity." "I ask tonight that we stop refigting the battles and recriminations of the past." He appealed for a "great national reconciliation."

Ford would not have made this appeal if he and Nixon, the crook who put him in his present post, were not so highly vulnerable to attack because of their record in supporting the American imperialist aggression in Vietnam from the very beginning and in escalating that aggression close to the nuclear level. While not hesitating to blame Congress, with its Democratic majority, for the defeat, Ford would like nothing better than to sweep everything to do with Vietnam under the rug.

Despite Ford's wishes the American people are drawing their own balance sheet. It is a bitter one. In the coming weeks and months it can be expected that assessments of the U.S. intervention in the Vietnamese civil war on the side of the counterrevolution, and the consequences of that intervention, will be given considerable public attention in the United States.

Meanwhile the American evacuation from Saigon is preempting the headlines. Some of the anecdotes sound almost fictional, so accurately do they show up the "Ugly American." Here are a few from a single dispatch sent by Fox Butterfield from Saigon and published in the April 27 *New York Times*:

- "Unlike the French, who left a legacy of broad, tree-lined boulevards, yellow-stucco colonial buildings and a taste for good food, the Americans seem to be leaving almost nothing tangible in Vietnam.

- "Already, many American landmarks have vanished or have been swallowed up.

### Next Week . . .

"Protests Spread in French Army." How the movement begun by a handful of draftees demanding their democratic rights has swept through France's armed forces. Don't miss it.

The Rex Bachelor Officers' Quarters in front of Saigon's City Hall, has become a coffee shop. The Magic Fingers Massage Parlor and many of the once-flourishing bars on Tu Do Street are also gone."

- "Gone, too, is the American business community, which has left in panic over the last three weeks. The three American banks in Saigon—the First National City, Chase Manhattan and the Bank of America—have all closed their doors. The local branch of American Express is shuttered behind an iron grill. A small, hand-lettered sign pasted on the door reads 'Closed.' Travelers' checks and American Express cards are no longer acceptable in Saigon."

- "In the sidewalk magazine stalls, there are old issues of Playboy magazine, some dating back to 1965, the year the first United States combat troops arrived in Vietnam. The magazines were taken from the rooms of departing Americans by their maids and sold to the street vendors."

- "The PX is closing.

"The institution that symbolized the American presence to Vietnamese more than any other will shut its doors for the last time in a few days. . . .

"There wasn't much left today in the supermarket-like post exchange at Tan Son Nhut air base: Some cartons of Dr. Pepper, cans of Hawaiian Punch, potato chips, Salem and Marlboro cigarettes.

"Once the hundreds of PX's at every United States Army, Marine, Navy and Air Force base in Vietnam provided a gold mine for smugglers and black marketeers, supplying everything from Welch's Grape Juice and fruit cocktail to tape recorders and Japanese cameras.

"So big was the institution of the PX in the lives of American soldiers here that they called the United States the 'Land of the Big PX.'"

The airlift of so-called refugees to the Land of the Big PX, which was dramatized as a mission of mercy, a living up to commitments made to "our allies," is already running into trouble. A figure of 200,000 was originally projected. But the evacuation was delayed with "callous irresponsibility," as the editors of the *New York Times* put it. On April 23, the State Department announced that the total number to be evacuated had been set at "130,000 or so." Camps, hastily set up in the Philippines, on Guam, and Wake Island were soon overflowing. Because of the crowded and unsanitary conditions, fears

were expressed for the health of the refugees.

The reasons for this procedure can be gathered from the following item, included in a dispatch from Guam published in the April 27 *New York Times*:

"The refugees are confined to their camps for health and political reasons. Guam reportedly was chosen at least partly because it presented no political problems with a foreign host government."

In these camps, the refugees are being processed. This will take many months. "Refugees will have to complete a series of forms that could provide the government with reasons for excluding them from the United States," Andrew H. Malcolm reported in the April 28 *New York Times*. "These would include serious criminal records, a history of subversive activity and various health problems such as insanity."

The main item, of course, is "a history of subversive activity." It would be interesting to know Ford's estimate of the number of "reds" that fought their way onto the planes to escape Saigon before the "reds" captured the city. However it may be only one of the excuses now being cooked up to thin down the number of refugees to be admitted to the Land of the Big PX.

Opposition to admitting the refugees to the United States is being mobilized in other quarters. According to a "source" quoted by Lawrence Meyer in the April 22 *Washington Post*, the Senate Judiciary Committee "to a man was skeptical of the whole process. I think they're skeptical about the numbers. I think they're skeptical about who is coming out (from Vietnam). I think they're skeptical about how these people will be taken care of. We can go down the list of two dozen questions."

Some of the objections are now surfacing in Congress. One is that certain cities will be "inundated by Vietnam refugees." This may be a veiled expression of racism.

A variation of this argument, reported by the editors of the *New York Times* as "fears," is that "an unmanageable mass transfer of population" could lead to "establishment of an émigré community in this country that could only perpetuate political unrest."

In other words, racists are arguing that Vietnamese refugees will certainly find common cause with the Blacks and other oppressed nationalities in the United States.

Still another argument is the costs—a rather strange objection from politicians in Congress who hailed the intervention in Vietnam's internal affairs and voted enthusiastically for about \$400 billion to keep it going.

In an interview April 26, Senator Mike Mansfield, the Senate majority leader, voiced this argument succinctly:

"The question is, how do you take care of

them? What policy has been formulated in that respect? How do they fit into the American labor markets when we have such high unemployment in this country?" It would cost "tens of millions" of dollars to resettle the Vietnamese, he said.

In a news briefing at the State Department April 24, L. Dean Brown, the coordinator of the Refugee Task Force, sought to counter these arguments. He said that "no American city will be inundated by Vietnam refugees." "We're going to try to do this as equitably as possible," he promised.

He also said that other governments are being asked about their willingness to accept some of the refugees. From the viewpoint of the "Ugly American," that would be a happy solution to this embarrassing sequel to the war. The United Nations, too, has been approached to use its good offices to "internationalize" the problem and take some of the refugees off Ford's hands.

The *New York Times*, which has been harping on the "moral responsibility" of the American people to take care of the Pentagon's Vietnamese cohorts, employees, and hangers-on, contends that the problem is not insuperable. "Over half a million Cubans, for instance, were absorbed in this country following an upheaval in their homeland in which the United States played far less a role than in Vietnam."

The point is a fine one. Cuba, a much smaller country than Vietnam, still had to undergo the Bay of Pigs invasion and severe economic reprisals that are still maintained. It is true that Cuba was not carpet bombed; and in that sense, the role of the U.S. was "far less."

The cost argument is brushed aside by the editors of the *Times*: "Politicians who were so recently asked to provide \$722 million to help the Vietnamese people fight, can hardly begrudge the fraction of that amount which will be needed to resettle those Vietnamese. . . ."

Within a few days, however, the editors of the *Times* began sounding other themes, such as "international efforts at resettling refugees, either by returning them to their homes or by opening worldwide opportunities for emigration."

"Worldwide opportunities . . ." Does that include free entry into the United States?

"Returning them to their homes . . ." Have some of the refugees already begun to voice disillusionment with the reception given them by the "Ugly Americans"? Have some already begun to express regret at having left Vietnam? Have some already indicated that they would prefer to return and take their chances?

Such questions are bound to rise and to become more insistent as the refugees discover what the Land of the Big PX is really like. □

May 5, 1975

## In This Issue

Closing Date: April 29, 1975

U.S.A.	580	60,000 March on Washington for 'Jobs Now' —by Dick Fidler
VIETNAM	582	The U.S. Military Intervention Comes to an End—by Peter Green
	584	Reporters Describe Life in PRG-Controlled Areas
	585	So They Say
PORTUGAL	586	How New Nationalizations Were Greeted —by Gerry Foley
	588	How Committees Were Set Up in Armed Forces
ZIMBABWE	596	25 Cases of Torture Documented
NEWS ANALYSIS	578	Washington Has Second Thoughts on Refugees
AROUND THE WORLD	592	
FROM OUR READERS	608	
DOCUMENTS	597	For a May Day Struggle Against Capitalism, Breeder of Economic Crises and of War
	598	Indochina—Solidarity Until the Final Victory!
	602	What Lies Ahead for Us?—by Roy Medvedev
DRAWINGS	587	Alvaro Cunhal—by Copain
EN ESPAÑOL:		
PUERTO RICO	594	La Lucha por la Liberación de la Mujer

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## 60,000 Demonstrate in Washington for 'Jobs Now'

By Dick Fidler

Up to 60,000 workers participated in a "Rally for Jobs Now" in Washington, D.C., April 26. A column of tens of thousands marched along a two-mile route from the Capitol to the rally at Kennedy Stadium.

It was the first such demonstration since the 1932 "bonus army" march of unemployed war veterans—in fact, it was the first major political demonstration by U.S. trade unions directed against the government in decades. And it signaled a mood of rebellion, spurred by the current depression, that is beginning to develop in the ranks of American labor, potentially the most powerful force for social change in the capitalist world.

The largest contingents of demonstrators came from unions in New York and New Jersey, which sent about 30,000 members in 600 buses and four trains—the most since the days of the antiwar protests, according to a railway official. Demonstrators also came in buses and cars from cities throughout the eastern United States.

They represented a broad range of unions in the major sectors of the U.S. economy. The largest contingent was from the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME), especially from District Council 37 in New York City, where the jobs of 23,000 municipal workers are threatened by City Hall's budget cuts.

Other large contingents came from the International Union of Electrical Workers (IUE), District 1199 of the Hospital and Health Care Employees in New York, District 65 of the Distributive Workers of America, the United Federation of Teachers, the Amalgamated Clothing Workers, the United Auto Workers, and the United Steelworkers of America. And there were contingents from many other unions. There was even a delegation from the Midwest region of Actors Equity, with signs calling for creation of a government-subsidized "National Theater."

The composition of the demonstrators reflected the sectors hardest hit by the depression.

A large proportion—more than a third—were Black people, giving the march and rally a certain resemblance to the "Freedom Now" march on Washington in 1963. (Many of the demonstrators from New York told reporters for the *Militant*, the revolutionary-socialist newsweekly, that they had participated in the 1963 march.)

Unemployment among Blacks has been

estimated at 21 percent, more than twice the official rate for whites. Discriminatory layoffs are rapidly wiping out the modest gains Blacks won during the 1960s in hiring and job upgrading. There is a growing assault on the elementary democratic rights won by Blacks in the civil-rights struggles of the last twenty years.

At least half of the participants in the Rally for Jobs were women, reflecting their increased role in the labor force, particularly in the public sector.

The rally was called by the Industrial Union Department of the AFL-CIO, the central American labor organization. A statement distributed at the rally spelled out the AFL-CIO's program: full employment through such measures as a public works program, mass transit expansion and development, "genuine" tax reform, lower interest rates, curbs on low-wage imports, and a national health insurance program.

The banners flanking the stadium reflected these concerns: "Don't Clip Government Workers"; "More Public Service Jobs"; "U.S. Aid for Cities"; "Health Care for Jobless." Some were directed at officials in the Ford administration, such as "Green-span [chairman of the Council of Economic Advisers]: Back to Wall Street." Some were frankly protectionist—"Multinationals Export Jobs"; "Low Wage Imports Rob Jobs"—reflecting the narrow job-trust outlook of the trade-union bureaucracy.

Placards carried by some participants in the march from the Capitol building bore more militant slogans. There were hand-lettered signs, in both English and Spanish, "Tax the Rich, Not the Needy."

A few signs reflected the widespread outrage of millions of Americans at Ford's request for a billion dollars in aid to Saigon while his administration cuts back on welfare and education spending in the United States. District 65 of the Distributive Workers of America carried signs saying "Children Can't Eat Military Aid." Members of the New York hospital workers union carried signs reading "Billions for Jobs, Not War" and a banner reading "No More Arms or Troops for Vietnam."

A banner carried by members of the Puerto Rican Socialist party (PSP) protested attacks on "illegal aliens": "We Need Jobs, Not Immigrant Scapegoats."

But the vast majority of signs and banners expressed variations on the theme:

"Jobs for All." As participants in the first major national labor demonstration in the current depression, these workers were putting the politicians and their corporate backers on notice that the labor movement is not prepared to tolerate the high levels of unemployment, which even official figures place at more than 8 percent of the work force. The workers' view that full employment is a basic right puts them on a collision course with Ford, who recently stated—and the Democrats agree—that high unemployment will persist at least throughout the remainder of this decade.

One demonstrator, Janice Pinder, a garment worker from Cambridge, Maryland, said her job has been cut back so that she works only one day a week. "I feel terrible," she said. "I can't pay my bills."

Virginia L. Morton, vice-president of an electrical workers union in Newark, New Jersey, said that a plant in Newark that used to employ 600 persons on three shifts now has only 150 on one shift making light bulbs.

"The end of the first shift they blamed on prices," she said. "The second shift they said they were shutting down because of the economy. . . . Everything points to them moving out. That's what we're here for today—to fight for our jobs. . . ."

The fact that this rally was held at all indicates the pressure on the labor leadership to do something against mounting unemployment. The American trade-union bureaucrats hate any kind of mass action. AFL-CIO President George Meany, an octogenarian who boasts he has never walked a picket line, opposed the action and rejected an invitation to speak at the rally.

The Washington demonstration was initiated by a group of New York area unions, led by the city workers' AFSCME union. An advertisement supporting the demonstration placed in the April 3 *New York Times* urged: "Everyone is welcome—if you're working or unemployed, Democrat or Republican, union member or not, businessman, housewife, student, retired, or whatever—come with us."

The mounting anger in labor's ranks was reflected in a resolution adopted in March by the executive board of the IUE denouncing military spending on South Vietnam and Cambodia, and urging that the funds be spent "to alleviate unemployment and economic hardship in the United States."

The impact of the antiwar, Black, and women's movements was evident at the April 26 action.

The National Student Coalition Against Racism (NSCAR) endorsed the action, and its supporters distributed thousands of copies of a leaflet to the demonstrators in Washington urging them to join the march against racism slated for May 17 in Boston.

The National Coordinating Committee of the Coalition of Labor Union Women (CLUW), a broadly based organization of women trade unionists, also endorsed the demonstration, and urged women unionists to help build the rally.

The steering committee of the National Peace Action Coalition, which organized many of the massive antiwar demonstrations in Washington and other cities that finally forced the United States out of Vietnam, issued a statement urging opponents of the war to join the April 26 action, around the theme "Jobs, not war," and "Not one more penny for war in Southeast Asia!"

The labor leaders, of course, put forward no program that posed any solution to the problem of unemployment. The organizers of the rally limited the speakers' list to labor officials and Democratic party politicians. But the demonstrators did not come to Washington to listen to speeches from members of Congress, whose prestige is today at what is probably an all-time low.

The chairman's unctuous introduction of Senator Hubert Humphrey, Lyndon Johnson's vice-president, as a "friend of labor" was met with boos and catcalls from sections of the rally participants. Young workers in a contingent of New York hospital workers I was standing among began to chant "war maker" at Humphrey. Later, when Bella Abzug, a liberal Democrat, addressed the crowd as "my fellow workers," she was greeted with derisive laughter from many workers.

Just before Humphrey was introduced, young people began to come down out of the stands and swarm onto the playing field in the center of the stadium, waving banners and placards. Soon swelling into the hundreds, the crowd advanced toward the speakers' platform, which was not protected by marshals, and heckled the invited dignitaries.

The rally soon dissolved in confusion, with platform officials yelling at the crowd in front to sit down and "act like adults," while members of various ultraleft and workerist sects tried to seize the microphone, and the majority of the workers attending the rally gradually filed out of the stands. Within less than an hour, officials announced that the rally had been called off; most of the scheduled speakers did not get to speak.

All the various political currents and

groupings on the left were at the march and rally with their literature. Most handed out leaflets or newspapers. The numerous ultraleft groupings tended to center their fire on the union bureaucracy, although they proposed no ideas on how an alternative leadership could be built, or what kind of programmatic alternative is required.

In contrast to these sideline snipers, members of the Socialist Workers party, the American Trotskyists, expressed full solidarity with the objective of the march—Jobs for All Now—and proposed a program to advance this goal through anticapitalist struggle. They sold about 1,400 copies of the *Militant* headlined "Funds for jobs—not for war"—a figure that, given the size of the rally, compares very favorably with sales at the mass antiwar demonstrations. SWP supporters distributed 23,000 copies of the party's 1976 presidential election campaign program, entitled Bill of Rights for Working People. SWP presidential candidate Peter Camejo participated in the march and rally.

The SWP's program includes such demands as a massive, emergency public works program at union wages; an end to U.S. military spending; a shorter workweek with no reduction in weekly pay; catch-up wage increases for all workers; cost-of-living escalator clauses in all union contracts; and an escalator clause on all social welfare benefits, including pensions and unemployment benefits.

About 29,000 copies of the SWP's pamphlet "Why Can't Everybody Have a Job?" were distributed. And more than 1,400 campaign buttons were sold at 50 cents each.

The vast majority of demonstrators on April 26 were not yet at the level of looking for a programmatic alternative to their present leadership. The April 26 action, the first political mass demonstration by American trade unions in many years, was in general on a lower political level than that attained by the antiwar movement in its later stages. That is to be expected. Different social forces are involved. The antiwar movement, too, it will be recalled, began on a very elementary level, with teach-ins and lobbying, and only gradually grew over months and years to the level of massive demonstrations based on the advanced slogan of immediate withdrawal of U.S. forces from Vietnam.

But April 26 was a big step forward for the American workers. And the militant mood of many rank-and-file demonstrators reflected the achievements of the past decade of radicalization among Blacks, women, and youth.

In general there was an absence of hostility toward radicals by the great majority of the April 26 demonstrators, even though they did not necessarily share their views. Militants selling buttons for the

antiracist march on Boston, for example, met with a very friendly reception from Black persons at the rally. Radical groups were allowed to join the march without obstruction from the labor bureaucrats—in part because the latter were themselves divided in their attitude to the march.

In the preceding labor upsurge of the 1930s and 1940s, the Stalinized Communist party dominated the left wing, and was able to block the movement's development in a revolutionary direction. The CP is now only a small fraction of its former strength, and can no longer even hope to prevent the revolutionists from publicizing their views. It was just one current among others on April 26, competing mainly with the SWP for influence.

The bourgeoisie took the April 26 action very seriously. A typical reaction was that of the editors of the *New York Times*, who said, "There was no mistaking the message that putting the jobless back to work is the country's primary task."

The capitalists cannot "put the jobless back to work," however. And that is why there will be more mass labor demonstrations in Washington, bigger and more militant.

On April 26 the sleeping giant of American labor began to stir. Every political current, from the bourgeoisie to the revolutionary socialists, is looking closely to see what the giant will do as it awakes.

April 26 was only a beginning. □

## Signs of the Times

CRESTWOOD, Ill., March 27 (AP)—The authorities have broken up a grade school bomb ring in which boys 12 to 14 years old made crude explosive pipe bombs and sold them to classmates for 35 cents each.

Nine youngsters were implicated, although only two apparently made the devices and peddled them at Kolmar Elementary School in the suburb south of Chicago.

"They were as dangerous as hand grenades," Police Chief John McAuliffe said yesterday, adding that 10 bombs were confiscated at the school and a dozen or more at the homes of pupils.

LONDON, April 5 (UPI)—Violence in British schools has become so widespread that 6-year-olds are mugging and running extortion rackets to get pocket money, a headmaster has charged.

The headmaster, George Kabanagh, told the National Association of Schoolmasters this week that lax parental discipline was partly to blame.

He said that at his school, Anfield Boy's Junior School in Liverpool, three recent cases involved miscreants aged 6 and 7.

## The U.S. Military Intervention Comes to an End

By Peter Green

The curtain came down on American imperialism's thirty-year intervention in Vietnam April 29. The last American officials and military advisers were being plucked out of Saigon by a fleet of helicopters as angry Saigon troops threatened to swamp their final exit.

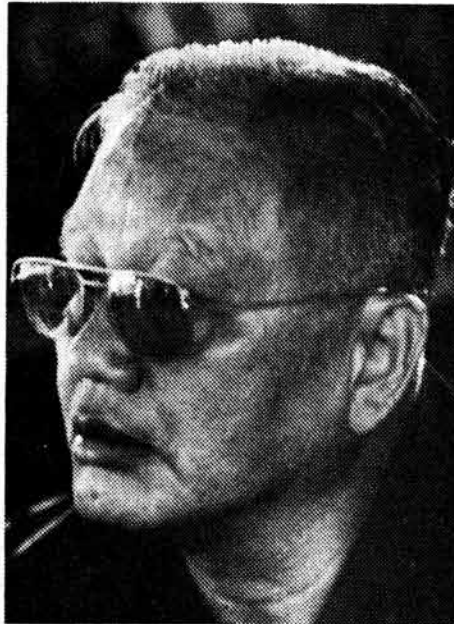
With Washington gone, the war was as good as over. Ford and Kissinger had delayed the final decision as long as they could, hoping that a negotiated settlement allowing them to retain a beachhead in Vietnam might be possible. But after holding off on the outskirts of Saigon for two weeks, the forces of the Provisional Revolutionary Government gave the teetering Saigon regime a final nudge on the morning of April 29.

All roads out of Saigon had been cut off by the PRG forces, and a barrage of rockets on Tan Son Nhut airport threatened to close the last exit for the U.S. forces. Two of the U.S. Marines guarding several thousand Vietnamese and Americans waiting to be evacuated were killed in the rocket attack. A U.S. C-130 cargo plane was destroyed, together with about a half dozen planes of the Saigon air force. Fighting was reported in the streets of Saigon the day before, and four unidentified planes bombed the airport.

The city was ready to "break wide open," and the PRG could just march through Saigon, reported CBS-TV correspondent Eric Cavaliero, as the evacuation proceeded. Cavaliero, a British citizen, said he would stay behind in Saigon. He reported that the fighting was "very, very hot and heavy," but suddenly stopped, as if the PRG were standing aside to allow the Americans to leave. The silence was deafening, he said. It was as if the Communists were saying, "Go, go quietly, but please go."

The danger to the American evacuation came not from the PRG but from the puppet troops. The scene in Saigon was "a mess," said one reporter. Saigon troops fired on the buses taking the Americans to the airport. Soldiers converged on the airport and swarmed around the compound of the American defense attaché. More than 800 marines landed to keep the crowd at bay. They punched and shoved soldiers and civilians to drive them back.

At the American embassy, the other emergency evacuation point, another mad scramble occurred. Crowds mobbed the building. People fought to get over the ten-



"BIG" MINH: Thieu's successor couldn't stave off final collapse.

foot-high embassy wall, only to be impaled on the barbed wire at the top, unable to move. American marines and armed civilians used rifle butts to bash the fingers of people clinging to the top of the wall.

Approximately 4,500 persons were lifted out in the final evacuation, including about 800 Americans. As the Americans left, their deserted apartments and cars were looted and ransacked.

The puppet troops also launched their own evacuation. Thailand reported that about seventy-five fighter-bombers and transport planes arrived carrying 2,000 airmen and their families. The Thai government announced that the refugees would be allowed to stay no longer than a month, and that it would return the U.S.-supplied planes to the next regime in South Vietnam. Helicopters loaded with Saigon troops tried to fly to U.S. ships off the coast. Seven managed to land safely. Ten others were ditched in the sea, and the troops and their families were picked up by the ships. One plane commandeered by puppet troops also landed at Clark air base in the Philippines.

### A Last Attempt to Hang On

As Saigon hovered on the brink of collapse, officials in Washington and the U.S. embassy in Saigon fell over themselves

in their haste to meet the PRG conditions for negotiations. Dictator Thieu, Washington's loyal puppet for ten years, became expendable.

But Washington's new-found flexibility did not come soon enough to save its stake in Vietnam. Both Senate Democratic leader Mike Mansfield and Republican leader Hugh Scott said April 21 that Thieu's resignation had come too late.

A secret CIA report delivered to Congress April 16 was reported to have viewed the fall of Saigon as certain. "The only question is when," said a source quoted in the April 17 *Los Angeles Times*. According to the Pentagon, Malcolm Browne reported in the April 24 *New York Times*, the Communists now have "unlimited military options." Army Chief of Staff Gen. Frederick Weyand said they "have the capability to overwhelm South Vietnam if they want to."

Thieu's replacement, Tran Van Huong, proved unacceptable to the PRG, who called for removal of all remnants of the Thieu clique, not merely the replacement of Thieu alone "or some other flunkies in order to continue the old policies." Duong Van Minh ("Big Minh") was the only Saigon politician they seemed to favor. *New York Times* correspondent Malcolm Browne cabled from Saigon April 26 that the PRG "made a semiofficial statement today for the first time saying that General Minh, long an advocate of a policy of peace and neutrality, would be acceptable to them as head of the new government." Then negotiations might begin for establishing a coalition regime, they indicated.

But the installation of Big Minh also came too late to stave off the final collapse. Minh's inauguration address and his offer of a cease-fire proved unacceptable to the PRG.

North Vietnamese officials in Hanoi said that Minh's return to power had come too late.

Despite Ford's statement April 23 that the Vietnam war was "finished—as far as America is concerned," right to the end the warmongers in Washington held on to a slim hope that imperialism might retain a presence there.

Washington deliberately stalled on the second condition demanded by the PRG before negotiations could occur—the evacuation of American personnel assisting Saigon's war effort. The American evacua-

tion was delayed to the last, and then dragged out as long as possible. Philip Habib, assistant secretary of state for East Asian and Pacific Affairs, said April 25 that "policy does not provide for complete withdrawal." The administration was still hoping for "a negotiated solution, a controlled situation in South Vietnam."

#### Washington Brandishes Big Stick

By April 22 five aircraft carriers, twelve amphibious ships, and twelve destroyers were off the coast of Vietnam, with about 5,000 marines aboard. Another 1,500 marines were to be sent from Hawaii. F-4 Phantom jets specially equipped to jam radar-directed anti-aircraft missiles were rushed to Thailand, together with additional aerial refueling planes.

"The Pentagon is seriously exploring the use of direct air strikes and ground military action if necessary to protect American evacuees," wrote Guy Halverson and Godfrey Sperling, Jr. in the April 23 *Christian Science Monitor*.

Some Pentagon officials, they said, "are troubled that a limited use of troops could in fact spark a larger 'military operation,' since the Marines would presumably be given authority to use whatever force was necessary in their landing operations. . . .

"But given a collapse, and a trapping of U.S. citizens in Saigon, that is a risk that the Pentagon appears prepared to take."

As the end of Washington's intervention in Vietnam drew near, more and more of the rats in Saigon sought to abandon ship.

On April 26, five days after his resignation, Thieu and his retinue slipped into Taiwan aboard a special U.S. military aircraft, along with ten tons of baggage. His wife had arrived earlier. The U.S. State Department said it would consider "with sympathy" any request by Thieu for asylum.

Thieu left only after he managed to assure safe passage out of the country for his gold hoard, estimated to be worth as much as \$76 million. One airline refused to carry it at first.

Thieu's brother-in-law, who is director general of Saigon's bankrupt national airline, had left about four weeks previously. He departed for France with his family to try to collect up to \$3 million owed to the airline by French insurance companies. He took with him the records and the foreign exchange checkbook and refused to return.

"Meanwhile," reported Malcolm Browne in the April 27 *New York Times*, "it was revealed that South Vietnam's gold reserves have been shipped to the Federal Reserve Bank in New York. The amount was not immediately known."

The Pentagon's Saigon office—the U.S.

Military Assistance Command, more commonly known as "Pentagon East"—closed down on April 28, ending twenty-five years of continuous operation of U.S. military missions in Vietnam.

Almost as symbolic was the closing of the U.S. Post Exchange store at Tan Son Nhut air base, "the institution that symbolized the American presence to Vietnamese more than any other," according to Fox Butterfield in a dispatch to the April 27 *New York Times*.

Most civil airlines had stopped service to Saigon by April 25 or were about to. The U.S. Federal Aviation Administration halted all civilian flights to Saigon on safety grounds.

"The diplomats are going out all over Indochina," said one embassy official quoted by H.D.S. Greenway in the April 25 *Washington Post*. The British, West German, Thai, Dutch, and Australian embassies had closed by April 24.

"In the past week ashes from papers burning in chancery gardens have been blowing in the wind," said Greenway. "The more modern embassies have shredding machines."

#### 'Just Like China in 1949'

As it became clear that the fall of Saigon was inevitable, the rush for the exits by those "loyal" Vietnamese who had grown fat off the American intervention developed into a stampede.

"It is just like China in 1949," said one

U.S. embassy official quoted in the April 25 *Wall Street Journal*. "You're witnessing a massive liquidation of assets as people try to scrape up dollars for their escape."

The black-market rate soared to 5,000 piasters to the dollar by April 25, nearly seven times the legal rate of 755. In a few days, Saigon's currency "will only be good for wrapping paper," said one Vietnamese.

Crowds fought in near panic at Tan Son Nhut airport April 25 in an effort to get aboard the U.S. planes airlifting out refugees.

"The people seemed almost half-crazed with the idea they weren't going to make the flight," United Press International correspondent Alan Dawson reported.

"They jostled and knocked over kids trying to get their tickets stamped."

Washington had airlifted out about 30,000 refugees by April 28. A glimpse of their social composition was provided in the April 26 *Washington Post*—"university professors, prostitutes, wealthy young draft evaders and upper class matrons. . . ."

"As they walked down the plane ramps," reported *Washington Post* correspondent Susan Guffey from Guam, "their arms were filled with everything from flight bags heavy with gold bars to stuffed animals and golf clubs."

One Vietnamese in Saigon saw a positive side to the U.S. evacuation effort:

"Perhaps it is better if you take away all the war profiteers, the secret policemen and interrogators," he told an American reporter. □

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### Reporters Describe Life in PRG-Controlled Areas

The seventeenth parallel, which since 1954 has divided North and South Vietnam, is "now just a memory," Jacques Decornoy said in an article published in the April 20-21 *Le Monde*.

The Paris daily's correspondent described his arrival in Da Nang, which at the peak of the war was "the busiest airport in the world after Chicago."

Three weeks after Da Nang's fall to the People's Liberation Armed Forces, the foreign journalists were greeted by a delegation of city officials under a portrait of Ho Chi Minh, the late North Vietnamese president. In the city's stores, their North Vietnamese currency was accepted without difficulty.

Da Nang is "completely calm," Decornoy said. "Everywhere there are the flags of the PRG, blue and red with a gold star; everywhere the portraits of 'Uncle Ho,' and the new slogans," such as "Nothing is more precious than independence and freedom." And everywhere, he said, are posters with the "ten commandments" of the Provisional Revolutionary Government, "urging respect for people, women, private and public property, and so on. . . ."

"Less expected among these decorations are the many Buddhist flags. When the revolutionists entered the city March 29, at 1:30 p.m., they were preceded by vehicles carrying Buddhist youth, a pointed rebuke to Saigon and its former repression against the Buddhists. Another surprise was the profusion of Chinese flags, hanging on stores whose owners are of Chinese origin."

*Le Monde's* reporter found the movie theaters in Da Nang open, but now showing "Vietnamese revolutionary films." In a school filled with small children, even the youngest had quickly learned the "very militant sounding song, 'Let us liberate the South.'" Many schools were still closed but were gradually being opened.

One problem, he was told, was the influx of refugees into the city, whose population had doubled to almost a million persons, within a few days, just before the rout of the puppet army. Another problem was that the curriculum in some subjects, such as history, literature, and social sciences, was being modified.

A French priest who has lived in Da Nang for twenty years told the visiting French reporters that "the liberation forces here were 100 times better behaved than those who liberated my birthplace of Savoie in 1944." There was "terrible looting" by

the panic-stricken soldiers of the Saigon regime before the city fell, he said. "The intervention of the liberation forces—which was firm but not brutal—helped restore calm in less than an hour."

In an Agence France-Presse dispatch from Da Nang published in the April 19 *Los Angeles Times*, Roland-Pierre Paringaux reported that "the first weeks of contact between Da Nang's residents and the Communist forces seem to have reassured both sides.

"The military presence is inconspicuous. Soldiers on patrol are indulgent, even after the 9 p.m. curfew, which is ignored by a few strollers and street merchants. . . ."

"Ordinary soliders [of the Saigon army] have been issued temporary papers and are left free to go where they will.

"Officers have been sent to 're-education' centers where they, along with officials and teachers from the previous administration, will be trained in 'revolutionary civics.'"

The markets are thronged with people, and so far there is plenty of produce, Decornoy reported in the April 22 *Le Monde*. In a letter to *Le Monde* published April 9, a French citizen living in Saigon reported that in the liberated areas, rice is selling for one-seventh the price in the South Vietnamese capital.

Da Nang is under the jurisdiction of a nine-member military revolutionary committee, Decornoy said. The leading figure is Ho Nghinh, a member of the Central Committee of the National Liberation Front.

The new mayor of Da Nang, according to the PRG radio, is Pham Van Luong, who as recently as August 1974 was a major in the South Vietnamese army medical corps and the chief surgeon at Da Nang military hospital. Luong, who is not a Communist, became famous in December 1970 when he appeared on the steps of the National Assembly in Saigon carrying two primed grenades and threatened to blow himself up as a protest against the corruption of the Thieu regime. He was arrested, imprisoned briefly, but later allowed to rejoin the military because of a shortage of doctors.

In a dispatch from Saigon published in the April 19 *Manchester Guardian Weekly*, Martin Woollacott said that "quite a few of the names of new administrators" appointed by the new regime in the coastal lowlands cities "are of men who were members of the Vietnamese Kuomintang, the VNQDD, once the Communist Party's most

bitter rival for power in Vietnam."

In the Central Highlands, he said, "most new officials appear to be members of the Communist splinter of FULRO. This movement began in the early sixties when American-trained Montagnard soldiers rebelled in the town of Ban Me Thuot. The acronym means 'Front for the Liberation of the Oppressed Minorities,' and its aim is the end of Vietnamese exploitation and settlement of the Montagnard homelands in the Central Highlands.

"FULRO was not a Communist movement, and was indeed supported for a while by Lon Nol of Cambodia, in the days before Sihanouk's downfall. But under the pressure of the war it split in various ways, one segment rallying to Saigon, another coming under Communist control. But Westerners, mainly missionaries, who have lived in the Central Highlands say that the present FULRO is still not a Communist movement but primarily a minorities movement. If the Communists really do allow FULRO to run the Highlands, the missionaries say, then the Montagnese will get a better deal than they have had for a long time."

For those who were relatively well paid under the old regime, life in the liberated areas is somewhat more harsh, Decornoy reported from Da Nang in the April 22 *Le Monde*. Civil servants are now being paid 100 piasters a day plus a monthly rice allocation of 18 kilograms. This compares with the salary of 23,000 piasters a month that a schoolteacher said she had been getting previously. But there appears to be no hoarding at the moment, Decornoy said.

The unexpected victories in the South have upset North Vietnam's economic plan and forced the government to assign many cadres to the newly liberated areas. Jean Thoraval of Agence France-Presse reported from Hanoi in the April 4 *Le Monde* that a typical response was the sign in a textile factory at Nam Dinh: "For brother South Vietnam, we are determined to manufacture a million meters of cloth in addition to the quota of the 1975 plan."

Many civil servants, technicians, doctors, and teachers, who have lived in the North for decades are expected to return to the liberated South in coming months, Thoraval said. □

### Correction

In the article "Thieu Tells All in 'Resignation' Speech" in last week's issue, Le Duc Tho was incorrectly identified as a representative of the Provisional Revolutionary Government of South Vietnam. He is a member of the Politburo of the North Vietnamese Communist party and a diplomatic representative of the Hanoi government.



# So They Say

Would have even returned his Nobel peace prize. "A week after the 1973 peace agreement," *New York Times* columnist William Safire recalls, "I asked Henry Kissinger what he would have done if we had the four years to live over, and he replied: 'We should have bombed the hell out of them the minute we got into office.' More thoughtfully, he added: 'The North Vietnamese started an offensive in February 1969. We should have responded strongly. We should have taken on the doves right then—started bombing and mining the harbors. The war would have been over in 1970.'"

**Should have nuked Hanoi right at the beginning.** "We have never lost a war we were allowed to win," declared Adm. Thomas H. Moorer at christening ceremonies for a new attack submarine April 26.

The former chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff said that because the Pentagon did not hit the North Vietnamese hard "at the outset or make them live up to their promises, we see a situation where our country has been subjected to inflation, our image in the world has been diminished by a small country whose population is about equal to Los Angeles and Orange counties in California."

Even worse, he said, "today you see those lying little Communists laughing all the way to Saigon."

**Hawkish hawk still squawks.** Describing himself as the "most hawkish of hawks," Congressman Edward Hébert spoke at the same ceremonies and told how he would have ended the war. "The war would have been over in six months," the former chairman of the House Armed Services Committee said, "if we had bombed Hanoi and mined Haiphong."

He added: "Many of the 50,000 [American] kids who died should not have died in vain" in Vietnam. The war was lost, he said, "because we didn't have the guts or leadership to win."

**Friends of the Pentagon analyze defeat in Vietnam.** John McClellan, chairman of the Senate Appropriations Committee, told a *Washington Post* reporter that one lesson of Vietnam is that Washington must be "far more selective" in deciding where to fight communism. "We cannot police the whole world against communism. . . . There are limits to our resources."

John Stennis, chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee, added: "There's

a whole new situation in the Pacific now. It seems to me that we'll have to find a more useful role for Japan to play there."

**Brazilians welcome orphans.** According to reports from Rio de Janeiro, there has been a "rush of sympathy" among wealthy Brazilians for Vietnamese children.

A newsman remarked caustically: "Get your Vietnamese orphan: it's the new status symbol, better than a Porsche."

Attention is being called to the plight of Brazilian orphans for whom the rich feel little concern.

\* \* \*

**Why Washington prefers not to dwell on the past.** Commenting that it is "hard to fix the blame on any one person," satirical columnist Art Buchwald recently compiled a selection of quotations on Vietnam "to satisfy everyone's political persuasion." Most were taken, he said, from a book titled *The Experts* by Clyde Edwin Pettit. Following are some of the more illuminating quotes.

U.S. Gen. Mark Clark: "I am also impressed by the French military plans, by the apparent Vietnamese determination to fight. I could not make any better plans than those already in existence here. . . ." (February 24, 1953)

Senator Mike Mansfield: "Ngo Dinh Diem's government stands for decency and honesty while those conspiring to bring him down represent corruption." (April 30, 1955)

U.S. Gen. Earle K. Wheeler: "It is fashionable in some quarters to say that the problems in Southeast Asia are primarily political and economic. I do not agree. The essence of the problem in Vietnam is military." (November 1962)

Assistant Defense Secretary Arthur D. Sylvester: "It's the inherent right of the government to lie to save itself." (December 6, 1962)

Defense Secretary Robert S. McNamara: "Victory is in sight." (February 19, 1963)

U.S. Gen. Paul D. Harkins: "By Christmas it will all be over." (April 1963)

Secretary of State Dean Rusk: "The Laotians are very interesting people. They don't like to kill each other." (September 15, 1963)



President Johnson: "We are not about to send boys nine or ten thousand miles away from home to do what Asian boys ought to be doing for themselves." (October 21, 1964)

Senator J. William Fulbright: "Presently the military operations appear to be going better. There have been reports from a military point of view in recent weeks . . . we have also insisted on continuing the bombing as we did in the spring. The President made some very impressive speeches in that direction." (October 24, 1965)

U.S. Gen. Maxwell D. Taylor: "The Viet Cong will just peter out." (October 27, 1965)

Undersecretary of State Eugene V. Rostow: "I view Vietnam as a problem of order." (October 4, 1966)

Henry Cabot Lodge, U.S. ambassador to Saigon: "By the end of 1967, there might be light at the end of the tunnel and everybody will get the feeling that things are much better. . . ." (December 16, 1966)

Vice-president Humphrey: "Vietnam is our greatest adventure, and a wonderful adventure it is!" (November 1, 1967)

U.S. Gen. William C. Westmoreland: "I have never been more encouraged in my four years in Vietnam." (November 15, 1967)

President Nixon: "I will say confidently that looking ahead just three years the war will be over. . . . It will be over on a lasting basis that will promote lasting peace in the Pacific." (October 12, 1969)

Henry Kissinger: "Peace is at hand." (October 26, 1972)

President Ford: "I am absolutely convinced if Congress made available \$722 million in military assistance by the time I asked—or sometime shortly thereafter—the South Vietnamese could stabilize the military situation in Vietnam today." (April 16, 1975)

## How New Nationalizations Were Greeted in Lisbon

By Gerry Foley

LISBON—On April 16, the morning papers here carried banner headlines proclaiming the nationalization of transportation, along with the Portuguese-owned sectors of the steel, electrical, and petroleum industries.

By early afternoon the Communist party had a campaign under way to build a demonstration hailing the new measures. Leaflets appeared in the central plaza of Rossio. Teams went around in cars waving red flags and calling on the people over megaphones to gather in the square at 7:30 in the evening.

When I came to the assembly point at about eight o'clock, I was surprised at the relatively small size of the demonstration. There did not seem to be more than 15,000 participants at most—not an impressive turnout for what was billed as a festival of national rejoicing, built by the huge CP apparatus.

At least 90 percent of the demonstrators followed the banners and the chants of the CP. There was no Socialist party delegation. None of the Maoist groups were present. A few hundred people at most were marching under the banners of the centrist parties, the MES<sup>1</sup> and the FSP.<sup>2</sup>

In recent months, these groups have functioned largely as political satellites of the Communist party. But the FSP's contribution to this demonstration was to add an ultraleft note. Its supporters called for the expulsion of the Socialist party from the government, as if it were a bourgeois party.

Calls for expelling the bourgeois PPD<sup>3</sup> from the coalition seemed attractive to the CP rank and file. However, these chants were apparently not encouraged by the cadres, since they were not taken up by the crowd as a whole, or maintained for very long. The organizers apparently preferred the slogan "Where is the PPD?" which was taken up generally at several points. However, some CP stalwarts were quick to start up chants of "Put the FSP in the place of the PPD."

This small centrist group is one of the left parties that signed the military's "pact-

program." In its communiqué, the FSP called for "strengthening the alliance between the people and the MFA<sup>4</sup> in the struggle for a classless society."

Probably more people marched under the banner of the Fourth International than under those of the centrist organizations. Both Trotskyist groups in Lisbon, the Liga Comunista Internacionalista (LCI—Internationalist Communist League, the Portuguese sympathizing organization of the Fourth International) and the Partido Revolucionário dos Trabalhadores (PRT—Revolutionary Workers party), participated in the demonstration, supporting the progressive aspect of the nationalizations. LCI activists were prominent in the Rossio subway station, selling their paper, when I went through at 6:45.

In its communiqué, the LCI said: "These new nationalizations have dealt a severe blow to the power of the capitalists." It called for the immediate expropriation of the big commercial, industrial, and agricultural enterprises without compensation.

The statement explained: "The only road to final victory over the capitalists is the road of class independence for the workers, of the working-class united front, of the unity of all workers in the struggle against reaction and capitalist domination, for the expulsion of the PPD from the government, along with all the capitalist ministers, for the installation of a workers government, a government of the workers parties and organizations, based on the independent and continuous mobilization of all the workers."

The PRT distributed a communiqué among the marchers calling the nationalizations "another great victory for the working masses. For a long time, these masses have been demanding the nationalization of the key sectors of production.

"The PRT firmly supports these measures, considering them not only a victory won by the mobilization of the workers and the poor masses but also a hard blow against the capitalists, one that reduces their margin for maneuver. However, these gains are not enough. The capitalist owners must not get any compensation. We are convinced that any compensation would only be used to finance new reactionary

coups, new sabotage. All the more when these capitalists feel the ground crumbling under their feet, the greater will be their efforts to regain what has been lost, using every means available to break up the mass movement, to crush it.

"The past reactionary coup attempts have ended in defeat for their protagonists, only because of the power of the mass mobilization. But this mobilization has not yet been sufficient to destroy the roots of reaction, the control of production by the capitalists. Therefore, our position must be: 'Not a penny, no compensation for the capitalists—expropriation!'"

The statement called for spreading and consolidating the forms of workers control that already exist in a number of factories as a means of preventing private interests from regaining control over these sectors.

Along with this, the PRT called for planning of the economy by the workers movement "to assure that today's victories do not become the bases of hopeless economic chaos tomorrow . . . because the desperate resistance of the capitalists to these measures can only lead to an escalation of their counterrevolutionary moves.

"For an economic plan drawn up by the workers movement, discussed by all the workers, organized by Intersindical [the national union federation], with the active participation of the workers control commissions in the plants and of the small-peasants organizations. . . .

"These gains will not be guaranteed by a constitutional pact with the bourgeoisie, by a 'pact-platform,' but by a proletarian and socialist response by the class and its organizations, principally the CP, the SP, and Intersindical. For a workers united front!

"We call for continuing this struggle to win a government of the workers and the poor masses, a government of the CP, SP, and Intersindical, which could guarantee these gains, which could extend them by expropriating all the monopolies and latifundia, which could break the teeth of reaction and assure the transition to socialism!"

Along with these demands, the PRT statement projected the slogan "Against the Pact-Platform, a socialist pact among the workers."

In the demonstration, the main slogans chanted by the PRT participants were

1. Movimento da Esquerda Socialista—Movement of the Socialist Left.

2. Frente Socialista Popular—Socialist People's Front.

3. Partido Popular Democrático—Democratic People's party.

4. Movimento das Forças Armadas—Armed Forces Movement.

“Armed self-defense pickets to guard against reaction,” “For a workers united front,” and “Fight for a government of the workers and the poor masses.”

The LCI also stressed the slogan of a workers united front. Along with this, their main slogan was “PPD out of the government,” which was taken up by significant sections of the crowd at certain points.

The LCI participation was well organized. Its white banners could be read from a long distance even after dark, in a demonstration that did not break up until 10:45. Its chants could be heard clearly from the base of the stairs leading up the the Palácio São Bento all the way to the top. A very large section of the crowd stood in this area at the end of the march.

The non-CP groups were in the rear of the march, but no hostility was shown toward them that I could see. One person standing near me on the steps of the palácio, a fervent supporter of the CP by all appearances, told a friend as the last contingents of the march came in sight: “Look, there is the banner of the PRT up front there.” He did not seem hostile to the organization.

It was a good-natured crowd. There were many families with children, and a fair number of young people were scattered through the assembly. There were also many elderly and middle-aged people. The majority were probably more than forty-five. Many of them were obviously veterans of the Salazarist period, inspired at seeing such a large open CP demonstration.

There was no sign of the kind of monitors that are used by the large CPs of other countries to control demonstrations. If anything, there was a lack of sufficient organization. One man fainted near me in the crush of the crowd, and the organizers had to make a special appeal over a megaphone for a doctor.

There seem to have been other cases of persons overcome by the press of an uncontrolled crowd. I heard some CP rank and file complaining about the “lack of orientation.”

The march was an impressive sight as it came into the square in front of the palace. Many thousands of people and dozens of giant red banners could be seen.

It was hard to estimate the numbers in the darkness, but it was clear that the area was far from filled. One of the reasons for the relatively small turnout may have been the sectarian character of the demonstration. The Communist party dominated it completely. The slogan chanted most frequently, most enthusiastically, and by the largest number of people was: “Assim, se vê a força do PC” (This shows the strength of the CP).

But what made the triumphalist slogans of the CPers still more out of tune was that even the Communist party had not mobilized its full strength. The membership of

the CP in the Lisbon district, to say nothing of the party periphery, must be at least twice what turned up at the demonstration. Intersindical issued a call for the action, but



CP LEADER CUNHAL: Kept demonstration as progovernment as possible.

the huge CP union apparatus did not bring out any organized delegations.

Despite the boasting tone of the chants, the CP leadership's intent was apparently to make only a token show. And even that was to be kept in a frame as opportunistic and progovernment as possible. After the slogans about the “strength of the CP,” the ones pushed the most were “The people are with the MFA,” or just “MFA, MFA, MFA,” and “The people are with the revolution!”

As the demonstration went on, the cadres with the megaphones began to prompt the crowd to call for the prime minister: “Vasco Gonçalves, Vasco, Vasco, Vasco!” Toward the end, the cadres started telling people to pass on the “exciting news” that Vasco Gonçalves was going to meet leaders of the parties participating in the demonstration.

The speakers told the crowd that the nationalizations were proof that the government was heading toward socialism. But the speeches took up only a few minutes of the three-hour demonstration and could hardly be heard, even if you stood relatively close to the sound equipment. Most of it was limited to waving red flags and chanting slogans.

A leader of the PRT demanded the right to speak to the crowd. The CP's centrist satellites told him that naturally they were not opposed to his speaking, but that it would be “undemocratic” for them to make any “personal decisions” about this. The

result was that the only speakers were from the CP and the centrists.

The following day, the CP paper *Avante!* appeared with a front-page editorial that pointed up rather clearly the point of the exercise:

“Those who call everything social-capitalism [a reference to the Maoists—G.F.], who fear more than anything else that the revolution will go forward, have been set back still further by the great, genuine national effort to consolidate the present gains and assure the future steps.

“The measures approved the day before by the historic plenary session of the Council of Ministers, which put into practice the broad political lines adopted recently by the Conselho da Revolução, are an integral part—as the prime minister has said—of ‘the direction we want to give our revolution’ so that it will ‘advance to socialism.’

“This was a true statement. And shoulder to shoulder with the workers, alongside the people's mass movement, our party is the guarantor of this, because it has long struggled and will continue to struggle to concretize and advance these historic measures.”

It was not hard, in fact, for the CP to ridicule the Maoist groups that denounced the nationalizations simply as a “reinforcement of capitalism.”

By these nationalizations, in sectors where strong state intervention had already begun, the government and the coalition parties supporting it had proved that they were charting a course toward socialism, the CP claimed. And that should be enough.

On April 16, after a meeting between representatives of the coalition parties and the prime minister, a communiqué was issued saying: “In view of the reports that point to sharpening social tensions in the coming days, we consider that actions that might provoke a sharpening of social tensions are inopportune and should be condemned, especially after the advance scored by the Portuguese revolution with the important decisions on economic and social policy that were taken on April 15.”

In fact, it is only by mobilizing to extend the nationalizations that the workers can defend the gains they have made. Otherwise, these timidly defensive, if not outright demagogic, measures will not solve the economic and political crisis in Portugal, but only aggravate it and succeed in the final analysis in provoking a violent reaction from the bourgeoisie and the strata that follow its lead. Without a perspective of mobilizing the workers to take complete control of the economy and the society, the CP's demagogic boasting and halfhearted “shows of strength” are nothing but a provocation that sooner or later can prove disastrous for the Portuguese workers and for the party itself. □

## How Committees Were Set Up in Portugal's Armed Forces

[The following interview was given to Gerry Foley on April 9 in Lisbon by an activist of the Portuguese Trotskyist organization, the Liga Comunista Internacionalista (LCI—Internationalist Communist League). He has not had an opportunity to check the translation, which is by *Intercontinental Press*.]

*Question. What happened in your barracks on the day of the March 11 attempted coup?*

*Answer.* On March 11 the soldiers in my unit heard about planes buzzing certain installations. My unit, since it belongs to the military police, has special characteristics. It is 100 percent operational. The personnel met in the barracks and decided to take over the barracks themselves, since the command staff gave no direction.

The comrades decided to set up surveillance over the barracks to prevent any deployments that might help the reactionaries, and to keep a watch over the weapons, over the arsenals where the rifles and other weapons were kept. They also kept a watch on all persons in the area to prevent any action by reactionary officers.

Next, they went to the commander and demanded that he explain his political position. When he refused to take a stand, the soldier comrades demanded that he be purged, and on the following day he was removed from command.

*Q. What forms of organization arose in the wake of the abortive coup?*

*A.* After March 11, a general assembly of soldiers was held. Not only the commander and deputy commander were purged, but all the Spínolista officers down to the level of sergeants. A cousin of Gen. Galvão de Melo, who was a junior sergeant, was also purged.

The comrades felt a need to move forward and take control of the barracks. They decided in the general assembly to form various committees. They felt acutely the lack of rights to meet and discuss inside the barracks. Some squads that were assigned to guard ministries and other places felt this need especially. They had never had any organized discussions. So they decided to form a political education committee. This committee could not, of course, give a well-rounded political education. But lectures were given and discussions were

organized in which the soldiers could discuss the main national events as well as the international ones.

The first topics taken up were the following: the occupation of buildings, the occupation of lands that the capitalists held out of production, occupations carried out by armed groups of peasants, who took up weapons to defend the land they occupied; and the need for the workers and the soldiers to struggle together.

Clippings from various newspapers were put up dealing with these questions, and the comrades clearly saw the need for establishing links with the workers and toilers and their independent organizations such as *Comissões de Trabalhadores* [Workers Committees] and the *Comissões de Moradores* [Tenants Committees].

One of the first subjects of discussion was the nature of imperialism, in particular, the role played by NATO in our country.

*Q. Have any links been established between the committees in the barracks and those in the factories and the neighborhoods?*

*A.* No links have really developed here like those that developed in one operational base I know of, where the soldiers came out looking for the *Comissões de Trabalhadores* to get their permission to come out into the streets. This has not happened in my barracks.

But the comrades have felt the need for a certain form of control over orders so that they could refuse improper orders. They have also felt the need in the case of any new March 11, when it might be necessary to go into action massively, to hold a general assembly first so that the objectives of the action could be clarified.

*Q. What kind of relationship exists now among the various ranks in your barracks? What has happened to the military hierarchy?*

*A.* The commander and deputy commander that were removed were both lieutenant colonels. Their place was taken by a major and a captain. Now both are majors. The second change occurred because a fusion took place between the Second Lancers and the Seventh Cavalry. The combined unit is called just the Military Police Regiment. This was part of the reorganization of the army.

After the purge, the military hierarchy was broken, since the ousted commanders were replaced with lower-ranking officers. A soldiers committee in which officers and sergeants were also represented met to choose a new commander. Of the list of seventy lieutenant colonels, there were only two they trusted.

One of these was in the colonies; the other was involved in reorganizing the PSP [Policia de Seguranca Pública—Public Security Police, the ordinary cops] and the GNR [Guarda Nacional Republicana—Republican National Guard, the riot police]. Thus, the force of the hierarchy was not felt in the barracks at that time, since the order of seniority was broken by the appointment of a junior officer as commander.

As for the way the barracks is organized, we have a committee to handle problems before they come up. That is, it is a committee that gathers information. When they get something that goes beyond the normal range of military police business, it is submitted to a general assembly to be discussed. And any decisions about it will be made by the general assembly.

At present the relationship of forces in the barracks makes it possible to carry out a certain mobilization inside. I should say that so far there is no organized link between the professional officers and the soldiers who are organized in various committees, but there is a generally accepted feeling that the soldiers have to be able to trust the officers.

As for the class of militia [nonprofessional] officers who have been in the army a short time, they have not established any ties with the soldiers. They are afraid of being identified as leftists. They are afraid the professional officers will have them removed. I think they have a false view of things. They should realize that if they joined with the soldiers, they could establish a relationship of forces that would make it impossible to transfer them to other units of service.

I should list the other committees that the soldiers formed. One was a political education committee. Another was an external affairs committee. The objective of this one was to link all the barracks, to exchange information and to coordinate the mobilizations. This committee was charged with getting in touch with the workers committees in the factories and the tenants committees in the neighborhoods.

These are not clandestine committees;

they have a kind of semilegality, since the command staff knows they exist and allows them to function. Another committee was a sports committee, whose job it is to assure that the unit can engage in sports like judo, volleyball, basketball, and football.

Another was on "professional upgrading." The reason for forming this committee was that after a certain period of training and specialization, the soldiers never pick up a gun again. We know that in the present conditions, we may have to face another coup attempt by careerist officers, and so we will have to be ready, to have the weapons in good condition, and the men will have to be trained to defend themselves.

Another committee was organized to provide technical support for the soldiers' activities, to set up general assemblies and show films. A program of film showings has already begun. For example, at 4:00 this afternoon, they showed *Potemkin*.

Another committee was set up on good and welfare and purging rightists. This deals with problems in the barracks like the food and the removal of reactionary officers and sergeants. Reactionaries are those who show by their behavior that they do not agree with a whole series of measures that have established a kind of relationship between the soldiers and officers that must be maintained at the present time.

*Q. Are those committees actually functioning now?*

A. Yes. But they are still not functioning 100 percent. Some of them have just started operating, such as the ones on political education and good and welfare and purging rightists. All of the committees have been set up, and their program of activity has been more or less defined. Now regular meetings of these committees are going to be set for definite days so that they can carry the process forward.

A committee is going to be formed to coordinate all these activities on the regimental level and arrange for general assemblies every two weeks where all this work will be discussed.

I should stress the initiative from below in all this. It is a process of workers self-organization, self-organization of the workers in uniform, the soldier comrades. But there is a danger that these committees can be co-opted in structures like the general assembly of the Movimento das Forças Armadas [MFA—Armed Forces Movement]. Many soldier comrades are not alert enough to this problem.

*Q. What is the percentage of privates in these committees?*

A. Soldiers are still not in the majority.

Militia sergeants also participate. In two meetings of the political education committee, it was generally felt that privates should be in the majority on all these committees. We came to the conclusion that the reason this had not been achieved was the failure to mobilize the soldiers for the assembly on forming committees. This was not carried out in the right way.

Now, these assemblies are being held where the privates are, in their barracks, in the privates' lounge. And they have felt the need to join the committees and make up the majority. For example, an assembly has been called for tomorrow so that these comrades can join the committees.

*Q. What possibilities do the conservative officers have to use the military police to repress political activities among the soldiers?*

A. At present, I do not think the conservative officers have any possibility for doing that. At the moment, the military police are not operating in the other barracks. They are staying in their own barracks. And, as for this barracks, I don't say that there are no reactionary officers. There may be some who sympathized with the March 11 coup attempt but who decided to lay low when they saw it wasn't going well. But they don't dare raise their heads.

For the present, I see no obstacles to political activity among the soldiers. They do still prevent the sale of the papers of the revolutionary groups and even of the reformists. But the kinds of discussions that I mentioned show that we are no longer operating within the traditional legal framework. We are discussing the question of housing occupations and the practices of capitalists who destroy houses to keep rents high; we are discussing the occupation of lands by armed peasants. We have seen concretely what NATO is. We have pointed out what countries are in NATO and what their intentions are, what the chances are that they may intervene in Portugal.

They cannot stop such discussions now. I am convinced that if they tried it, they would create an even greater danger, because the soldiers would unite to demand the right to discuss.

The soldiers are no longer only concerned with these questions, that is, the right to discuss and organize in the barracks, but also problems such as why they do not get the national minimum wage, and why workers called into the army do not have the right to maintain their links with their unions. Another problem is that privates do not have the right to enter and leave the barracks in civilian clothes, while the sergeants and officers have this right.

Another concrete problem is that while the militarized police, the PSP and the GNR, are allowed to ride buses and trains

free, we have to pay for tickets. We get 250 escudos a month [about US\$10], and we can't pay for transportation with that.

*Q. What do you think the chances are for imposing direct democracy in the armed forces, for example, direct election of officers?*

A. At present, I think this possibility is rather remote. But what is not remote, as I have said, is exercising a control over officers. I have mentioned the purging and removal of squadron commanders. This happened in my regiment. But I don't see the possibility for imposing the election of officers in the armed forces in general, because the relationship of forces varies greatly. A mobilization for such a demand would not be permitted.

I know that the case of a comrade who asked a question in a sessão de esclarecimento [educational session] about the real role of the MFA raised some doubts. In many cases, progressive officers lead these sessions. But this time it was the commander himself. There was direct repression against this comrade. He was deprived of his weekend leave. So I don't see the kind of democratization in the army that would enable the soldiers to elect their own officers.

*Q. Isn't it true that there is already a committee in the navy that exercises a control over the orders given by officers? Do you think this example can spread?*

A. I can't see this becoming general. Attempts have been made to organize general assemblies in the services, for example in the navy. An attempt is now being made to push for a general assembly of soldiers. But I don't know how much can be achieved.

I have explained how we hope to get organization going in my barracks. But I don't know about the armed forces as a whole. Because we know that there are still many reactionary officers. There are reactionary officers in every barracks.

For example, in my unit, two communiqués appeared. One was from a Grupo Coordenador de Acção Anticomunista [Group to Coordinate Anticommunist Action]. It is a group in the north. They say that the MFA is Communist, that it is a bunch of Reds, and that the sessões de esclarecimento are performing the same function as the Red Committees in the Russian army.

The other communiqué was also supposed to come from some officers, the so-called Movimento Democrático das Forças Armadas [Democratic Movement of the Armed Forces]. These are maneuvers to create divisions in the barracks.

Another factor is that up until the

September 28 coup attempt, there was a steady drop in matriculation at the military schools that train professional officers. After that time, there was a sudden jump in matriculations. So, we could draw various conclusions from this.

On the other hand, big steps forward have been made. A meeting was held where the commander and deputy commander explained that the March 16, 1974, abortive coup was an attempt by the Spínolistas to head off the captains' coup and they explained the role of the reactionary officers. Now the officers have taken a position calling for a "Portuguese road to socialism." I do not think they are prepared to go backward. I do think there is a chance to enforce the election of officers in the most politicized units, if not in the army in general.

*Q. How much of a political hold does the MFA have over the ranks of the armed forces? Do the soldiers accept its lead in an uncritical way?*

A. Up until now, the MFA has not had direct control in the barracks, because it has not carried out an educational program or made changes in the barracks themselves. It seems that it is trying to do so now, but it has not yet done it. They say now that they recognize the need to democratize the army, but this has not been done.

Their influence is felt only through the slogans they issue from the outside, like the need for an alliance between the MFA and the people. Aside from the *sessões de esclarecimento* and the *sessões de dinamização cultural* [cultural promotion sessions] they are holding around the country, they have exercised no political influence. But the soldiers do feel that there is a need to defend the MFA.

*Q. In this context, what impact has the LCI electoral campaign had? Has it had an impact in your barracks?*

A. The LCI has not yet carried out a campaign aimed at the armed forces, although I understand that such a campaign has been planned. So, up until now the impact of the electoral campaign has not been very great.

But the LCI has an implantation in the neighborhood of my barracks. It is involved in the tenants committee. Occupations have occurred. There has been a kind of tacit support from the military police, in the sense that there has been no repression. Some comrades, even reformist comrades, have told me that the LCI is right as regards some concrete measures that should be taken by a workers united front. This is not a general thing but involves a number of individuals in the barracks, a half dozen

persons whom I talk to regularly. They understand the need for links between the soldiers committees, the workers committees, and the tenants committees. They see that it is only by uniting the soldiers and the workers that we can create a new society. Even the reformist comrade I mentioned can see, not in practice but in ideological discussion, that the only solution is a socialist Portugal.

*Q. What are the central slogans of the LCI regarding the MFA?*

A. There are two central slogans, as I see it. The slogan "Workers, soldiers, the same struggle" has the same dynamic as the slogan of a workers united front.

*Q. What is the second one?*

A. The call for a workers united front.

*Q. What is the relationship of forces in your barracks between the right and the left, and among the various left groups?*

A. At the present time, we cannot talk about a relationship of forces between the right and left. The right cannot raise its head. I mentioned the case of a cousin of Gen. Galvão de Melo. A general assembly decided to purge this person and not tolerate his presence in the unit for one minute more. That shows the relationship of forces between the right and left.

On the left, the relationship of forces is first between the reformists and the far left. The strongest force in my barracks is the Communist party. But when we talk to these comrades, we find that they understand the dynamic of a series of slogans, of the struggle that it is necessary to carry out.

Among the nonreformist forces, there is a Maoist line and a revolutionary Marxist line. The revolutionary Marxists are a small current, perhaps two or three in my barracks. Among the Maoists, the most prominent group in the barracks is the MRPP [Movimento Reorganizativo do Partido do Proletariado—Movement to Reorganize the Proletarian Party]. These are the reformist and far-left forces that exist in the barracks. But this should not be taken out of context.

Comrades belonging to all these groups are united in the various committees. For example, in the committee in which I work, the one on political education, reformist comrades, Maoist comrades who support the MRPP line, and Trotskyist comrades participate. But we follow the line of the workers united front. We discuss before making any decision. There are problems of different ideological conceptions. The MRPP comrades are profoundly sectarian. They do not accept any other explanation for facts but the one given by their own

group. But when we deal with the practical problems facing the soldiers, they understand in practice what a workers united front is.

*Q. How many soldiers participate in the political education committee in your barracks?*

A. There are about twelve or thirteen soldiers and militia sergeants. There are no militia officers. These twelve or thirteen get together before doing any concrete work and discuss politically. Six or seven of these are privates. There is not much difference between privates and militia sergeants.

*Q. How many are in each category on your base?*

A. There are about 500 privates. There are 80 to 100 sergeants. We have about 25 officers, that is, militia officers. And there are about 6 professional officers.

*Q. Is there any body that centralizes information on the level of the armed forces as a whole?*

A. There is within the MFA. At the rank-and-file level, there is not. But there are contacts between the most politically advanced units. It is on this basis that our committee for external relations has operated.

*Q. How many copies of the LCI paper do you sell in your barracks?*

A. As I mentioned, it is still not permissible to sell left papers in the barracks. But I sell about five copies of the LCI paper to the comrades with whom I discuss politically. As for the paper *Frente de Soldados e Marinheiros Revolucionários*, I have seen only one copy. However this paper is not

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sold, but distributed for free. Copies are left around the barracks for people to read, as a way of starting discussions.

*Q. Are there differences among various layers in the armed forces? For example, are there many Black soldiers with their own problems?*

A. I understand why you raise this question. That is certainly a problem in the United States. But not here. In my barracks, where there are more than 500 men, there is only one Black man, and he has never had any problems with anybody.

*Q. Aren't there differences between soldiers from peasant backgrounds and soldiers from urban backgrounds?*

A. This difference is noticeable. The most politicized elements are the ones who come from Oporto and Lisbon, who have contact with various struggles. The others are often indifferent to political questions. But this difference did not show up on March 11. All the soldiers understood the need for resisting the attempted coup. The mobilization was total.

*Q. Soldiers are still being sent to the colonies, to Angola for example. What is the attitude of the soldiers toward this problem?*

A. The soldiers have not taken any attitude toward this problem. In the period after April 25, 1974, when struggles were still taking place with the Spínolas, who were opposed to decolonialization and wanted a clearer form of neocolonialism, when massive shipments of troops were still being made to the colonies, struggles did occur. Some groups of soldiers even refused to go.

Now only a very small percentage are being sent, and they are not resisting. The soldiers are not happy about going to Angola; fighting is taking place in the streets there. But the time of military service has been reduced and can be reduced still more when you serve overseas. A company of military police, for example, is about to go to Angola. These comrades say, "Well, we will have to stay there eight months or so but then we will get out of the army after only fourteen months."

*Q. Do the soldiers have the feeling that the colonial problem has been solved? Do they think the war in the colonies is over?*

A. Not much discussion of colonialism has taken place in my barracks. The persons I have spoken to personally think the struggle will continue in one form or another.

*Q. But the soldiers no longer fear having to fight in a colonial war?*

A. In general, this fear no longer exists.

*Q. Do the soldiers feel that a real possibility of foreign intervention in Portugal exists?*

A. They do think that there is a chance of foreign intervention. There has been discussion of an intervention by NATO in Portugal. But the soldiers think that there was no intervention because March 11 did not turn out favorably for the reactionaries. They think that if the reactionaries can create a climate of civil war, this will be used as a justification for intervention by NATO.

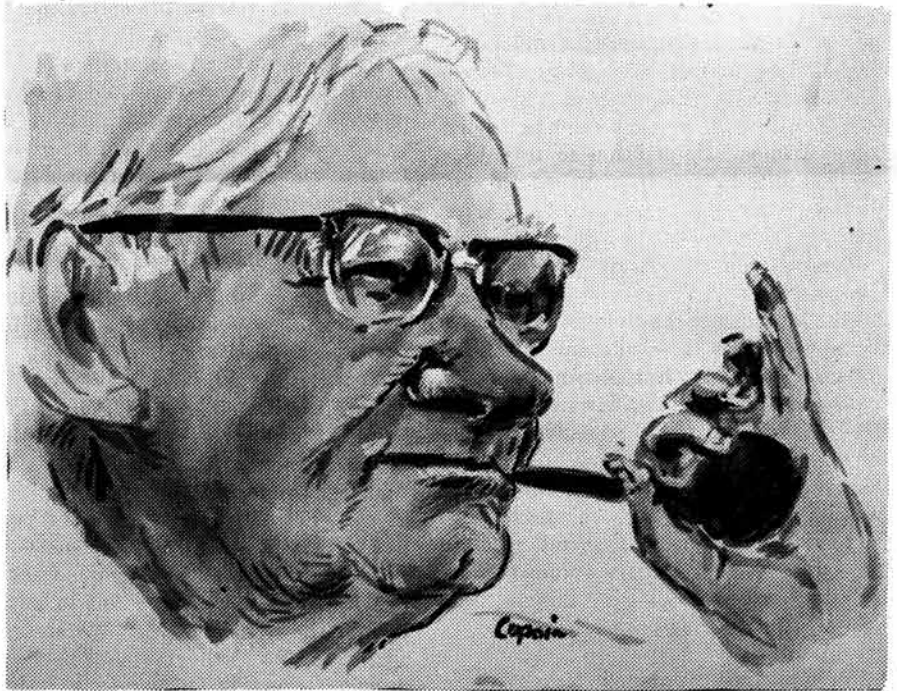
*Q. Do the soldiers realize that they are in the vanguard of the revolutionary process in the world now?*

A. Yes, they do feel that.

*Q. Do you think that if there were an intervention by U.S. armed forces, the Portuguese soldiers are ready to put up a determined fight against it?*

A. Yes. I have no doubt whatever that if an intervention by NATO or the U.S. took place, the Portuguese soldiers would take up the fight en masse and struggle to the death. And because of the colonial wars, there are probably a million men in this country who have had military training. □

## Special Offer



James P. Cannon

To help celebrate the tenth anniversary of *Intercontinental Press*, reproductions of sketches by Copain, artist for *Intercontinental Press*, were published by the New York Local of the Socialist Workers party and bound in an 8.5" x 11" book. The aim was to use the money gained from sales to help us begin publishing articles in Spanish.

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The drawings, of various sizes, include portraits of Hugo Blanco, Malcolm X, James P. Cannon, Che Guevara, Cesar Chavez, Leon Trotsky, and many more, some of which are suitable for framing.

A limited number of copies of this collection of drawings are now available for only \$5.

# AROUND THE WORLD



## Like the British in India

Sarah Webb Barrell, a special correspondent of the New York *Daily News*, reported from Saigon April 27 that many of the Americans "regret that they are leaving this life behind forever." She quoted Dennis Simpson, a former petty officer in the navy.

"I have an apartment with three bedrooms, a patio and a maid—it costs me 30 U.S. dollars a month. Food? I shop at the market. Costs only about 100 U.S. dollars a month—and I have filet mignon every night.

"I guess we were sort of like the British in India. If you're not Vietnamese, you're all of a sudden the upper class."

## The PRG's Main Source of Arms

The Provisional Revolutionary Government forces have already picked up \$5 to \$10 billion in U.S. weaponry left by fleeing Saigon soldiers. In addition to this, they now "stand to inherit an awesome array of military equipment left by the United States," according to a dispatch from Washington in the April 23 *Christian Science Monitor*.

"The equipment, ranging from sophisticated jet aircraft to small arms, is worth billions of dollars. It represents, as one Pentagon official puts it, 'virtually most of the weapons that the U.S. fought with in Vietnam for a decade.'"

Among other things, the "South Vietnamese are known to have had roughly 600 M-48 and M-41 tanks, which, combined with the estimated 900 North Vietnamese tank force, means perhaps the largest tank inventory in Southeast Asia."

## Didn't Ask for Volunteers

The Vietnamese air force, anxious to save its own, sent three C-130 transport planes to Da Nang to pick up stranded Saigon airmen and their families. The planes became seriously overloaded when armed soldiers piled on to the open rear cargo ramps. The first two made it into the air—only to crash in flames a few hundred yards from the end of the runway.

According to a report in the April 25 *Chicago Sun-Times*, the pilot of the third plane issued a frantic appeal for his passengers to lighten their load.

"Everything portable went out the hatches . . . the infantrymen threw away

their weapons. The air force men, massed in the front of the plane, then rushed on the soldiers and hurled almost a hundred off the rear cargo ramp at an altitude of from three to four thousand feet. That plane reached Bien Hoa safely."

## Kremlin Bars Yelena Sakharov From Going Abroad for Medical Care

Yelena Bonner Sakharov, the wife of dissident Soviet physicist Andrei Sakharov, has been refused a visa to travel to Italy for vital eye treatment. She has already lost sight in her left eye because of glaucoma. She expects to lose the remaining sight in her right eye within six months unless she is allowed to receive the specialized treatment.

An official at the Moscow visa office told her that the visa request had been turned down because no Soviet citizen could travel to a Western country without an invitation from a relative. He then suggested that she reapply in one year.

## Volkswagen Lays Off 25,000 Workers

Volkswagen, the giant auto company of West Germany, announced April 15 that it would cut its work force by about 20 percent, laying off 25,000 workers. Federal Chancellor Helmut Schmidt defended the move as "economically necessary" after the auto firm reported that it had lost more than \$200 million in 1974. Unemployment in West Germany is already at 4.8 percent, the highest in almost two decades.

Two short strikes the previous week were held at the Neckarsulm plant in anticipation of the announcement. Workers representatives said they would oppose the decision, possibly by ignoring orders to close various departments in the plant.

## U.S. Losing Edge in Productivity

United States industries "no longer dominate the world's technological progress," Dr. J. Herbert Hollomon of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology told a session of the National Academy of Engineering, meeting in Washington at the end of April. "We have now become the strongest nation amongst many."

Hollomon, who formerly served as assistant secretary of commerce for science and technology, said that growth of productivity in the United States in the last fifteen years

was "the lowest of any industrial nation in the world with the exception of the United Kingdom."

Another Commerce Department analyst, Dr. Michael Boretsky, said that the productivity lag "must at least in part be attributed to the relative decline in the overall rate of United States technological advance."

He said that since the middle 1960s, output per hour of labor has been growing at half the average rate maintained in the previous 100 years.

## Return-Rights on 'Operation Flying Carpet'

The Republic of Yemen (Sanaa) has invited Yemeni Jews who emigrated to "occupied Palestine" (Israel) to return to Yemen "to live in safety and peace, and to enjoy all the rights of citizenship."

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs, according to an Agence France-Presse dispatch in the April 22 issue of *Le Monde*, promises that "Yemeni Jews will have the same rights and duties as other citizens, in accordance with the Constitution. All applications for return will be given serious consideration."

Between fifty and sixty thousand Jews from Yemen emigrated to Israel from 1948 to 1951, in what was called "Operation Flying Carpet."

## Argentine Police Report Discovery of International 'Extremist' Center

Buenos Aires police reported April 11 the discovery of a center of an alleged international subversive organization, the "Junta Coordinadora Revolucionaria" (Revolutionary Coordinating Board). The "Junta" was said to be composed of members of the Chilean MIR (Movimiento de Izquierda Revolucionaria—Movement of the Revolutionary Left), the Bolivian ELN (Ejército de Liberación Nacional—National Liberation Army), the Uruguayan Tupamaros, and the Argentine ERP (Ejército Revolucionario del Pueblo—Revolutionary People's Army).

Two "extremists" were killed in the operation and twenty-five persons were arrested, twenty-one of whom were foreigners, according to the report.

## Kim Il Sung: Patron of the Sciences

"In the biology laboratory at Kim Il Sung University in Pyongyang the stuffed exhib-



its include his red setter hunting dog, his tame bear that is said to have been killed by an American bomb, and three rarities—a hitherto unknown species of fish he caught, a hermaphrodite pheasant he shot, and an albino sea cucumber he found in an inland sea.

"Special importance is attached to any chairs or benches he sits on. The university has a room full of chairs covered in white satin and piped in gold to commemorate his use of them, and indignation greets any visitor intrepid enough to try them. And on the subway in the capital a car circulates forever empty, with one of its seats draped in satin to record the occasion when Mr. Kim rode the rails."—From a dispatch in the April 25 *Christian Science Monitor*.

### **State of Emergency Declared in Two Basque Provinces**

Dozens of persons were arrested April 26 in the Basque provinces of Guipúzcoa and Vizcaya. The arrests came the day after the Spanish government declared a state of emergency in the region.

Under the state of emergency, police have unlimited powers to search homes and to arrest and hold suspects for an indefinite period without bringing charges. Newspaper articles are also subject to censorship.

The measure was imposed in an attempt to repress the nationalist group Euzkadi ta Azkatasuna (ETA—Basque Nation and Freedom), which the government claims is responsible for a recent step-up in terrorist actions in these provinces. In the past month, two policemen have been killed, and several shops and villas have been blown up.

As of February 28, Basque nationalist sources reported that there were 226 Basques in prison for political reasons. Among those who have been sentenced are Xavier Izko de la Iglesia (110 years), Lorenzo Eguia Lizaso (100 years), Jose Iarza Etxenike (160 years), and Jesus Zabarte Arregi (100 years).

### **West German Guerrillas Seize Stockholm Embassy**

Alleged members of the Holger Meins Commando of the West German urban guerrilla group, the Rote Armee Fraktion (RAF—Red Army Faction), seized and blew up Bonn's embassy in Stockholm April 24 in an abortive effort to win the release of twenty-six RAF members in jail in West Germany.

In the process three persons were killed—West German military attaché Lieut. Col. Andreas Baron von Mirbach, another hostage, and an RAF member who died following a suicide attempt when facing capture. In addition, several persons were injured when the building was blown up, allegedly as part of an escape attempt.

All surviving members of the commando

squad were said to have been captured. Four have already been returned to West Germany to stand trial.

### **Peronists Expel Cámpora**

Héctor Cámpora, former president of Argentina, was expelled from the Peronist movement April 22 as part of a purge of the movement's left wing.

Cámpora, who served as Juan Perón's stand-in in the March 1973 presidential elections, served for seven weeks until he was forced to resign to pave the way for Perón himself to take office.

Following Perón's death in July 1974, Cámpora moved to Mexico City. He recently opened a dental office there, resuming a profession he had left for politics more than thirty years ago.

### **300,000 Greeks Protest NATO**

About 300,000 Greek youths demonstrated against NATO and the presence of U.S. military bases in their country April 21, the eighth anniversary of the 1967 military coup. The demonstration, which was called by the youth groups of left political parties, began peacefully. It was attacked by police in front of the U.S. embassy, however, when some demonstrators burned the U.S. flag. Police reported that twenty-six demonstrators were injured.

### **Unemployment Up in Canada, Belgium, Netherlands**

Statistics released April 8 revealed that unemployment in Canada had risen to 7.2% in March, compared with 6.8% the month before. In Belgium the unemployment rate rose to 6%. In the Netherlands it climbed to 4.5%, compared with 4.2% in February and 3.1% a year ago.

### **Military Coup in Honduras Overthrows López Arellano**

Following disclosure of a \$1.25 million bribe paid by the U.S. conglomerate United Brands to Honduran "high officials," President Oswaldo López Arellano was overthrown April 22 in a bloodless coup. The president was the only Honduran "high official" who refused to let investigators examine his foreign bank accounts.

The new government is a military junta headed by Col. Juan Alberto Melgar, the commander in chief of the armed forces. It has pledged full support to the bribery investigation. The junta has also promised "all possible incentives and guarantees" to foreign investors.

On April 24 a spokesman for the new government said that it might stay in office five to ten years to "promote social change" to prevent "a bloody revolution in Honduras."

The first concrete measure was an agrarian reform decree that would distribute 1.5 million acres of uncultivated land to 120,000

families over the next five years. The measure would affect holdings of both United Brands and Standard Fruit, the other large U.S. banana exporter in Honduras.

### **U.S. Scraps 'Antiterrorist' Program**

After almost three years of operation, the surveillance program designed to keep Arab "terrorists" out of the United States has been scrapped by the State Department. Although the screening program, called Operation Boulder, processed 150,000 names, its efforts resulted in refusing visas to only seventeen persons.

John Gatch, deputy head of the State Department's "antiterrorist" operations, said, "From the standpoint of cost effectiveness, it was not worth it.

"It cost a lot of sweat and overtime. It was a tremendous extra workload and a source of heartburn for the other Governments," he added.

### **Ford's 'Popularity'**

About 37% of those polled in a recent public opinion survey said that they approved of the way President Ford was handling the government. The current rating is 34 percentage points below the 71% approval rating he received in August 1974, shortly after taking over from Nixon. The survey was taken before Ford urged congressional approval for sending U.S. troops back to Vietnam.

### **Korean CIA Detains Five Journalists**

The South Korean Reporters Association said in a statement April 25 that its president, Kim Pyong Ik, and four other leading members of the association were being detained by the Korean Central Intelligence Agency.

Rev. James P. Sinnott, an American priest who took part in a protest against the recent hanging of eight political prisoners, was ordered to leave the country by April 30.

### **Rudenko Released by Soviet Police**

Mikola Rudenko, a member of the Soviet branch of Amnesty International who had been arrested April 18 by the Soviet secret police, was released two days later, according to dissident Soviet physicist Andrei Sakharov. Andrei N. Tverdokhlebov, another member of Amnesty International arrested the same day as Rudenko, was still being held, Sakharov said, and was accused of "anti-Soviet slander."

### **Italian Wives Win Legal Equality**

The Italian Parliament passed a new family code April 22 granting wives full legal equality with their husbands. The code replaced a century-old law giving the husband the right to make all key decisions in the family.

## La Lucha por la Liberación de la Mujer en Puerto Rico

[La siguiente entrevista con Ana Rivera y Maritza Durán fue llevada a cabo por *Intercontinental Press* en Nueva York el 5 de marzo. Rivera y Durán son miembros de la Junta Editorial de *El Tacón de la Chancleta*, periódico feminista puertorriqueño. El segundo número de este periódico mensual, publicado en febrero, tuvo una tirada de 6,000 ejemplares.

[La idea de publicar *El Tacón de la Chancleta* fue de miembros del grupo feminista, Mujer, ¡Intégrate Ahora! (MIA) que empezaron a ver la necesidad de un periódico que representara a sectores más amplios del pensamiento feminista de los que representa MIA.

[Suscripciones a *El Tacón de la Chancleta* cuestan 3 dólares al año en Puerto Rico y 5 dólares en el exterior. Pueden ser solicitadas en Apto. 21515, Estación U.P.R., Río Piedras, Puerto Rico 00931.

[La entrevista se llevó a cabo en español. Rivera y Durán no han tenido la oportunidad de revisar el texto ya editado.]

\* \* \*

*Pregunta. Se comenta bastante aquí en la prensa la campaña que se está llevando a cabo en Puerto Rico sobre la esterilización de la mujer. ¿Qué datos pueden dar al respecto?*

*Respuesta.* En 1974 el gobierno anunció oficialmente que pensaba rebajar la tasa de crecimiento en Puerto Rico, que es de 24 alumbramientos por cada 1,000 habitantes, a 15 alumbramientos por cada 1,000 habitantes. Esto lo anunciaron oficialmente a principios de año, pero todo mundo en Puerto Rico sabe que el gobierno ya había empezado esta campaña pero siempre lo habían negado. Prueba de esto es que una tercera parte de las mujeres de Puerto Rico entre las edades de quince y cuarenta y nueve años están esterilizadas actualmente.

*P. ¿Cómo pudo el gobierno llevar a cabo esterilizaciones a una escala tan masiva?*

R. Esto se debe en gran parte a que se aprovecharon de la ignorancia de muchas mujeres. Había una campaña en los hospitales públicos. Las mujeres que tenían tres hijos se les decía que deberían esterilizarse, y en muchas ocasiones las mujeres aceptaban sin tener conciencia plena de qué era lo que estaban aceptando. La mayoría de nuestras madres, por ejemplo, fueron esterilizadas.

*P. ¿Y no se plantea otras soluciones a la mujer para controlar la natalidad? ¿El aborto, por ejemplo?*

R. No, porque el gobierno lo que quiere es algo rápido y barato, y el método más barato es la esterilización.

*P. ¿Quieres decir que a pesar de que la Suprema Corte de los Estados Unidos a legalizado el aborto, no es posible conseguir un aborto legal en Puerto Rico?*

R. A pesar de que la decisión de la Suprema Corte debe aplicarse en Puerto Rico, el gobierno se ha negado a aceptarla. Se consiguen abortos en hospitales privados pero son bien caros, 250 dólares los más baratos. O se puede recurrir a los métodos antihigiénicos y peligrosos que utiliza la mujer pobre.

*P. ¿Cómo se justifica que no se aplique la decisión de la Suprema Corte?*

R. No tratan de justificarlo, sencillamente se ignora. El gobierno ha utilizado la política de decirles a los puertorriqueños que es una decisión yanqui. Han utilizado el nacionalismo que esto genera entre los puertorriqueños para argumentar a favor de no aceptar la aplicabilidad.

Por otro lado, cuando esto fue a corte, ellos simplemente dijeron que era una cosa de los médicos. Entonces uno va a un hospital y no hay ningún médico dispuesto a hacer un aborto. Y los hospitales no están dispuestos a buscar las máquinas necesarias para ello porque dicen que estarían discriminando contra otro tipo de personas que necesitan otro tipo de intervención quirúrgica.

Es muy interesante en Puerto Rico que la controversia sobre el aborto se ha mantenido en términos políticos. En ningún momento la cuestión del derecho de la mujer a controlar su cuerpo ha sido tratada. La controversia es sobre la política de status de Puerto Rico con respecto a los Estados Unidos.

Por ejemplo, los dos casos que se llevaron al Tribunal Federal de Puerto Rico, los moldes de los dos casos eran de sacar a relucir la situación política de Puerto Rico. No estaba la cuestión del derecho de la mujer.

*P. ¿Qué quieren decir cuando dicen que el problema se trató en términos "políticos" y cuando hablan del "nacionalismo" como*

*una cuestión contrapuesta al derecho de la mujer al aborto.?*

R. Bueno, cuando al gobierno le conviene que se apliquen cosas federales a Puerto Rico lo acepta muy bien, por ejemplo los fondos federales. Pero cuando son cosas que van en contra de la supuesta moral tradicional del pueblo puertorriqueño, entonces el gobierno saca esos principios de supuesta puertorriqueñidad y los pone como argumentos a favor de ellos.

En este caso dicen que el aborto es una cuestión que está violentando la tradición del pueblo puertorriqueño. Usan esto para sacar el sentimiento nacionalista que esto trae, como si esto fuera una imposición cultural del pueblo de los Estados Unidos al pueblo de Puerto Rico y no un derecho fundamental de la mujer.

*P. ¿Qué impacto ha tenido en el movimiento de izquierda y en el movimiento femenil la campaña de esterilización y la cuestión del aborto?*

R. La izquierda siempre ha mantenido que esto es un plan de genocidio contra los puertorriqueños. O sea, que cualquier tipo de intento de control de la natalidad se ve como un intento más de los imperialistas contra el puertorriqueño.

Lo que pasa en Puerto Rico es que ha habido una falta terrible de planificación del gobierno. Puerto Rico cambia súbitamente de una sociedad agrícola a una sociedad industrializada. Se desplazó a una gran cantidad de personas que se quedaron así, con la indiferencia del gobierno, sin empleo. Esta gente se fue para los Estados Unidos y se quedaron ahí.

En Puerto Rico hay mucha gente. En realidad creo que hay trece veces más gente por milla cuadrada en Puerto Rico que en los Estados Unidos, y 60 por ciento más que en la India. Si a esto le sumamos la mala distribución, la incapacidad del gobierno, entonces el problema de la sobrepoblación se hace una carga.

El gobierno no ve esto, sino que dice vamos a esterilizar a la gente y ésa es la solución. Jamás ha aceptado que la planificación ha sido un fracaso desde hace mucho tiempo.

*P. ¿Hay algunos grupos dentro del movimiento feminista que llamen al derecho de la mujer a controlar su cuerpo?*

R. Sí. Mujer, ¡Intégrate Ahora!, que fue el

primer grupo feminista de esta época en Puerto Rico. Este se formó hace tres años. Una de las primeras cosas que MIA hizo fue una campaña pública a favor del derecho de la mujer a controlar su cuerpo. Esto incluía el aborto y el derecho a métodos anticonceptivos. También MIA ha criticado los planes del gobierno de esterilización masiva, porque ve a la mujer como un objeto más para sus fines y se opone a la integración de la mujer a la sociedad.

*P. ¿Qué clase de actividades ha llevado MIA en esta campaña?*

R. Nosotras hemos recogido muchas firmas para mandárselas a la legislatura cuando se estaba discutiendo el proyecto para liberar la ley de aborto. Y la campaña pública ha sido a base de comunicados de prensa a los periódicos dándonos nuestra opinión. Hemos llevado una campaña en la radio y en la televisión.

*P. ¿Ha habido alguna manifestación en Puerto Rico en contra de la esterilización?*

R. Contra la esterilización no, contra de que se liberara la ley del aborto ha habido dos marchas organizadas por la iglesia católica.

*P. En cuanto a los derechos de la mujer trabajadora, ¿qué interés y qué acciones han habido?*

R. En Puerto Rico ha habido interés entre las mujeres trabajadoras desde principios de siglo. Está Luisa Capetillo que es de ese período. En el último número de *El Tacón de la Chanqueta* hay un artículo sobre ella.

Ahora parece que hay un interés de algunas mujeres que pertenecen a las uniones [sindicatos] que luchan por sus derechos. La Federación de Mujeres Puertorriqueñas<sup>1</sup> reúne un gran número de miembros, que son principalmente mujeres obreras. En la mayoría son de sindicatos.

Cuando se inició la Federación de Mujeres Puertorriqueñas tuvo que ver mucho con una declaración de MOU [Movimiento Obrero Unido], un frente unido de trabajadores que agrupa varios miles de obreros. El MOU hizo una declaración pública a favor de los derechos de las trabajadoras, y crearon dentro de su mismo frente, una comisión para los derechos de la mujer trabajadora. Entonces decidieron formar algo aparte que recogiera otras uniones obreras y a otras mujeres interesadas. Así fue que surgió la Federación de Mujeres Puertorriqueñas.

1. Ciento ocho delegadas invitadas asistieron el 2 de febrero a la conferencia de fundación de la Federación de Mujeres Puertorriqueñas.

*P. ¿Qué clase de demandas plantean las mujeres trabajadoras?*

R. Ellas plantean la plataforma de la Federación de Mujeres Puertorriqueñas.<sup>2</sup> Claro, pero principalmente lo que plantean son facilidades para las mujeres trabajadoras, principalmente la cuestión de las medidas protectoras, que se ponga en vigor la cláusula constitucional de que no se discrimine por el sexo, y la creación de centros de cuidado para los niños.

Aquí en los Estados Unidos tienen la lucha por el Equal Rights Amendment [Enmienda de Igualdad de Derechos]. En la Constitución de Puerto Rico ya está esa cláusula que prohíbe la discriminación en base al sexo. La Constitución de Puerto Rico es muy bonita pero no se aplica nada.

*P. ¿Hay interés dentro del movimiento estudiantil sobre la cuestión de la mujer?*

2. La plataforma que adoptó la Federación de Mujeres Puertorriqueñas es la siguiente:

Que se active y se ponga en vigor el Artículo II—Carta de Derechos—de la Constitución de Puerto Rico de 1952, que garantiza igualdad de los sexos ante la ley.

Que se garantice igual paga por igual trabajo. Que no seamos sub-utilizadas en los empleos y que se nos reconozca nuestra labor, tanto para ascensos, como para posiciones de dirección.

Que se garantice salario completo y seguridad de empleo a la mujer embarazada.

Que se eliminen las llamadas "leyes protectoras de la mujer" que en realidad son discriminatorias.

Que se revisen las leyes en torno al contrato matrimonial, especialmente las que bregan con la administración de la sociedad de bienes gananciales.

Que se exija de las agencias encargadas (Administración de Fomento Económico) iguales incentivos para negocios que emplean mujeres, como para negocios que emplean hombres.

Que se provean para la madre trabajadora centros de cuidado infantil con atención adecuada y otras facilidades relacionadas.

Que se implemente una revisión total del sistema de educación, sus textos, sus programas de estudios y su nuevo curso de educación sexual—entre otros—para eliminar la indoctrinación de roles estereotipados que presentan a la mujer como un ser inferior y que no se le discrimine en cuanto a oportunidades educativas.

Que se elimine de los medios de comunicación masiva la utilización de la mujer como objeto sexual.

Que se fomente la integración de la mujer a las fuerzas productivas del país.

Que se promueva la sindicalización de la mujer en todas las ramas del trabajo, incluyendo las trabajadoras en labores domésticas.

Que cese inmediatamente la utilización de la mujer como conejillo de indias en los experimentos con métodos anticonceptivos y esterilización masiva.

Para vincular nuestra lucha con la lucha internacional de la mujer, y participar en eventos internacionales.

Para luchar porque no se utilice la celebración del Año Internacional de la Mujer para comercializarla, y para demostrar unos supuestos logros de la mujer, que en realidad no existen.

R. Los estudiantes universitarios tienen interés. Pero el interés no es tan grande como para que activen, pero definitivamente los estudiantes tienen mucho más interés que otros sectores de la población.

*P. ¿Participaron estudiantes en esta conferencia de la federación?*

R. Había algunos, la mayoría no eran estudiantes. Pero la cuestión de que los estudiantes hagan esto tiene impacto. Obviamente la lucha estudiantil y la lucha de los trabajadores han estado siempre unidas. Los estudiantes siempre han apoyado al movimiento obrero.

*P. ¿Se ha visto alguna acción feminista allá que se pueda señalar?*

R. En Puerto Rico es muy difícil poder agrupar a un número de personas. A diferencia de acá, nuestra situación es política, el status político de Puerto Rico divide a las personas en cualquier cosa, cualquier movimiento, en cualquier lucha. Estamos atrasados en todo en cuanto a eso, el problema de status nos ha atrasado históricamente en todo.

*P. Como ustedes saben, una forma que tomó el movimiento en los Estados Unidos al principio fue los grupos de concientización, donde las mujeres discutían el carácter de la opresión. ¿Creen ustedes que ésa es la etapa por la que está pasando el movimiento femenino en Puerto Rico?*

R. Yo creo que sí, que estamos en esa etapa. Por ejemplo, nosotras el grupo femenino Mujer, ¡Intégrate Ahora! hemos estado juntas en un grupo de concientización. En Puerto Rico todavía estamos en esa etapa en cuanto que la mayoría de las mujeres todavía no tienen ninguna conciencia de su opresión. Y todavía hay que sacarles esa furia que tienen adentro, todavía estamos en esa etapa.

*P. ¿Creen ustedes que los grupos independentistas ven una contradicción en la lucha por los derechos de la mujer y la lucha por la independencia?*

R. Sí, hasta ahora los grupos independentistas han asumido la posición de que cualquier movimiento de liberación femenina es un movimiento que va a dividir la causa del pueblo puertorriqueño, que es luchar por su independencia.

Ellos ven el feminismo como algo traído del los Estados Unidos, una táctica imperialista para debilitar al movimiento por la independencia. Usan la cuestión de defender nuestra puertorriqueñidad, de defender el machismo, la virginidad. Cualquier cosa que vaya en contra de eso es un ataque a la

puertorriqueñidad, un ataque contra los puertorriqueños.

*P. ¿Cómo se explica que en este ambiente tan machista y antifeminista hayan logrado interesar a algunas mujeres para formar a MIA y dar una lucha por los derechos de la mujer?*

*Rivera.* Es una buena pregunta. Yo fui la primera presidenta de la organización, actualmente soy coordinadora general. Cuando hablo sobre los prejuicios mucha gente me ataca diciéndome: "Lo que pasa es que tú eres 'neoriquen' [puertorriqueño de Nueva York]. Seguramente tú viviste mucho tiempo en los Estados Unidos donde sacaste estas ideas." Pero, ¿esta ha sido la primera vez que salgo de Puerto Rico! Así es que no podían atacarme por ese lado.

Yo siempre he tenido estas ideas y cuando vi la oportunidad de organizarnos, seguí adelante.

Yo estudio leyes en la Universidad de Puerto Rico. Mi padre es decano de Humanidades de la Universidad y mi madre da clases en la escuela elemental [primaria]. Mi familia no me crió interesada en los asuntos sociales del momento pero sí en una preocupación por la lectura y por estar al tanto de todo. Eso sí quizá tuvo que ver.

Por otro lado, yo soy una de las pocas personas negras en Puerto Rico que están metidas en cosas como éstas.

*Durán.* Mi caso es diferente. Yo viví aquí unos años, pero no creo que tenga mucho que ver, aunque sí en el sentido que aquí hay más independencia. La mujer por la misma necesidad de vivir en Nueva York tiene que ser más autosuficiente.

Yo soy hija de padres divorciados. Siempre me crié alrededor de mujeres. Y mi madre, aunque ella no entiende nada de porqué yo soy feminista y mi preocupación por eso, es una mujer que siempre tuvo que valerse por sí misma, trabajar para mantenerse ella y a mí. Yo siempre me acuerdo esto de que una mujer no pueda cargar diez libras o que no pueda clavar un clavo en la pared, o que no pudiera pintar. Mi madre era carpintera, electricista y de todo en la casa. Yo aprendí de ella. Todo lo tenía que hacer yo por lo tanto nunca tuve esa dependencia hacia los hombres.

*Rivera.* La mujeres que formaron MIA vienen de diferentes experiencias. Esto sólo se puede explicar por el hecho de que en Puerto Rico hay mujeres concientes y capaces que al final de todo se dan cuenta. Yo no creo que sea por influencia de los Estados Unidos que surja en Puerto Rico el movimiento feminista.

Hay una tradición feminista en Puerto Rico. Se desarrolló un movimiento sufragista muy fuerte a principios del siglo. Se

desarrolló un movimiento de mujeres trabajadoras bajo el liderato de Luisa Capetillo y otras mujeres como Juana Colón también muy fuerte. O sea, que en Puerto Rico hay una tradición de luchar por los derechos de las mujeres incluso en círculos intelectuales.

*P. ¿Hay algún grupo en la izquierda que haya llamado a la liberación de la mujer?*

*R.* Yo creo que personas individuales

dentro de la izquierda. Ultimamente hay gran número de personas que se están preocupando realmente dentro de la izquierda por tratar de entender el movimiento feminista y por tratar de hacer ver dentro de la izquierda que no es tal cosa como un ataque imperialista. Cuando se muestre que el feminismo no se contraponen con la lucha por la independencia de Puerto Rico, la izquierda va a luchar por los derechos de la mujer. □

## Church Leaders Score Brutal Treatment of African Prisoners

### 25 Cases of Torture Documented in Zimbabwe

Further instances of torture and murder of political prisoners by the Ian Smith regime came to light when eleven religious leaders in Zimbabwe (Rhodesia) sent an appeal to 500 white church figures documenting cases of brutality by Smith's police and army.

Although the eleven religious leaders indicated their opposition to the African nationalist struggle, which they called "terrorism," they investigated twenty-five cases of torture against Africans.

"These cases," they said, "are not exhaustive, but they reveal a pattern of persistent and deliberate illegal conduct by certain members of the security forces. They include examples of prolonged and brutal assaults upon innocent people, beatings on the face and body with sticks, kicking with boots and the use of electric shocks. In none of the cases quoted was the victim subsequently detained or charged with giving support to the insurgents."

In the case studies attached to the appeal, some of which were reported in the April issue of the London monthly *Africa* magazine, the names, dates, and places were changed to protect the victims from reprisals.

Paul Rigaro, a thirty-two-year-old village head, was arrested in northeastern Zimbabwe. "I was ordered to life flat on my chest," he said. "I did. Then the African CID [Criminal Investigation Division] who had a rope tied my hands to my knees [and] bent [my] legs at my back. Then they adjusted electric wires to the lobes of my ears. I received a shock—and I passed out. After a while I regained consciousness. They asked me to tell them about the terrorists. I received another shock and passed out again."

Silas Mutema, a shopkeeper in northeastern Zimbabwe, was taken into police custody. An extract from a hospital report quoted by *Africa* revealed his treatment: "Inside chest pains; left side pains and

right arm as from shoulder to elbow joint: all these due to beatings at Kurova station by the police (4 CID: 2 whites and 2 Africans) two weeks ago on 31 May [1974]. Using electric probe, sticks and boots. Hung by feet with chain and beaten while head in water until out of breath. Twenty-two double burns, abdominal."

The case of Peter Knembi indicated the aid given to Portuguese forces by Rhodesian troops during the war in Mozambique. Three years before his arrest, Knembi's village had been devastated by Portuguese bombing raids. When he was arrested with his wife and two children by Rhodesian troops inside Mozambique, he was taken to a Rhodesian police station and questioned about Frelimo (Frente de Libertação de Moçambique—Mozambique Liberation Front). He was beaten with a gun barrel, given electric shocks, and abandoned in the wilderness. It took him three days to reach a clinic.

Rhodesian security forces entered the village of Michael Ndaramba after a land mine exploded. One inhabitant was taken into a hut and beaten so badly he was unable to walk. Michael's brother, Jackson, was beaten and taken away in a helicopter. Eight days later it was announced that he was dead, but the security forces refused to return the body.

Rhodesian Minister for Justice and Law and Order Desmond Lardner-Burke "claimed Jackson had broken his own neck while stretching it to point something out on the ground to security forces in the helicopter," according to *Africa*. "The body, he said, had been buried at a police camp but when the likelihood of it being exhumed arose he claimed it had been cremated." □

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## For a May Day of Struggle Against Capitalism, the Breeder of Economic Crises and of War

[The following statement was adopted unanimously April 19 by the United Secretariat of the Fourth International.]

May Day, a day celebrating the international struggle and solidarity of the working class, coincides this year with a tremendous advance of the liberation struggles in Southeast Asia. The lightning successes of the revolution in Cambodia and South Vietnam have dealt a heavy blow to the military, political, and moral positions of imperialism throughout Southeast Asia and even well beyond this geographic region. These victories are victories for the workers of all countries.

At the same time, the wave of workers struggles that has developed over the past several years in West Europe is continuing. In Portugal, where the dictatorship fell little more than one year ago, a prerevolutionary situation has developed; the Portuguese working class is beginning to challenge the very foundations of capitalism. This development, too, has its broader consequences. In Spain, prerevolutionary conditions are maturing and threatening to topple the Franco dictatorship. These developments could stimulate a revolutionary upsurge in several countries of capitalist Europe.

Today, there is an exceptionally serious conjuncture for the international capitalist system. This system has been shaken by the first generalized economic recession since the beginning of the Second World War. In all the major imperialist countries production and national incomes are falling, and more than fifteen million workers are totally unemployed. The toiling masses of many colonial and semicolonial countries have been hit even harder.

In this situation, the international bourgeoisie is exhibiting clear signs of a crisis of political leadership, whose root cause lies not in the absence of capable bourgeois politicians but in the contradictions that have accumulated over the post-World War II period, particularly the serious deterioration of the worldwide relationship of forces between capital and labor. The capitalist political, economic, and financial order after World War II, which was based upon the overwhelming world military and economic superiority of American imperialism, has been undermined (although the American bourgeoisie still retains its preeminent position within the capitalist world). The crisis of leadership of the bourgeoisie is immediately aggravated by the worldwide

economic recession, which accentuates interimperialist competition and makes it more difficult for the various imperialist powers to agree on common economic and monetary policies. Furthermore, the combativity of the workers in the imperialist centers, particularly in Western Europe, remains unbroken; the workers have shown no willingness to accept capitalist solutions for the crisis.

But the aggravation of the overall crisis of the capitalist system does not mean that the system will collapse automatically or that the bourgeoisie will allow itself to suffer important defeats without reacting or preparing counterattacks. As long as the bourgeoisie continues to wield the decisive levers of economic, political, and military power it will fight for its survival even at the cost of new catastrophes that would far surpass the horrors before and during the Second World War. However, despite setbacks and defeats—and there will be many before a final victory can be achieved—opportunities for revolutionary successes will present themselves ever anew.

The bourgeois solution to the economic crisis is simple and straightforward: to make the workers pay the costs. But to impose such a solution implies an attack on the social and political conquests of the proletariat in the imperialist countries, threatening democratic and trade-union rights, including the right to strike. Their political strategies include, if necessary, the establishment of "strong states," or even military dictatorships or fascism. In the colonial and semicolonial countries, wherever its prerogatives are challenged, the imperialists are prepared for new wars of aggression, even at the risk of dangerous escalation into nuclear catastrophe. They retain their ultimate goal of destroying the USSR, China, and the other workers states and reintroducing capitalism there.

The preservation of the capitalist system entails the wasting of enormous unused productive capacity that could otherwise serve to satisfy the needs of millions of disinherited people. This callous and criminal disregard for human needs is most apparent in the decisions in several capitalist countries to limit fertilizer production and the area of land under cultivation in order to boost world market prices—with the inevitable result of creating famine in the poorest areas of the world.

In face of capitalism's attacks on the

working class and the impoverished masses, the Social Democratic and Stalinist parties counsel class collaboration, particularly in the form of reformist experiences or popular-front-type electoral or governmental alliances with sections of the bourgeoisie. For their part, the ultralefts project sterile sectarian and adventurist policies. These false strategies undermine the combativity of the workers, divert them from the struggle to overthrow capitalism, and pave the way for capitalist reaction, including bloody dictatorships. Of particular help to the imperialists are Moscow and Peking, which in pursuing their goal of détente with Washington, seek to come to the rescue of capitalism whenever it is threatened by the workers.

Only the overthrow of the capitalist system and the establishment of a democratically planned economy on a world scale will permit a way out of the present chaos and will spare the human race new wars, famines, and dictatorships. Likewise, the development of the international socialist revolution will help the masses in the bureaucratized workers states to carry out a political revolution and oust the privileged bureaucracies that have usurped power there, and to march forward towards genuine workers democracy and worldwide fraternal building of a socialist society.

Only the revolutionary mass action of the proletariat and its allies in the oppressed and toiling masses will make it possible to overthrow capitalism and build a better world. This historic task requires the construction of mass revolutionary-Marxist parties capable of leading the coming revolutionary upsurges to success through the conquest of state power by the workers. That is what the Fourth International stands for.

\* \* \*

On this May Day, the Fourth International calls on the workers of all countries to give a resolutely anticapitalist, anti-imperialist, and antibureaucratic character to their demonstrations and strikes. In particular, we call for mobilization around the following:

- For solidarity with the heroic Indochinese revolution. Mobilize against any renewed attempts by imperialism to intervene and rob the toiling masses of the fruits of their victory, paid for at the price of so many sacrifices.
- For solidarity with the Portuguese revolution. Bar the road to any imperialist attempts to strangle it through economic blockade or military intervention. Thwart all Social Democratic and Stalinist attempts to slow down and betray the struggle by maintaining it within the bounds of class collaboration.
- Oppose the criminal hand of imperial-

ism, which threatens to unleash new wars of aggression in the Arab East, Africa, and elsewhere.

- Oppose political repression, police brutality, and torture, which are features of capitalist rule the world over. For the release of all political prisoners from Spain to Chile, from Sri Lanka and India to Brazil and Argentina.

- For a workers boycott of aid to the Pinochet dictatorship.

- Against the victimization of communist and socialist oppositionists in Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia, and the other bureaucratized workers states of Eastern Europe. Free all political prisoners in the USSR; stop the criminal policy of confining dissidents to mental institutions. Free the Chinese Trotskyists, revolutionists who still remain in prison.

- Beat back the employers' offensive against the working class. For the sliding scale of wages and the sliding scale of hours to counter inflation and unemployment. For the radical reduction of the workweek with no loss of pay. For the nationalization without compensation and under workers control of all companies that are subsidized, threatened with closure, or closed by the bourgeoisie.

- For the greatest fraternal solidarity among the workers of all countries. For a common international workers front opposing the multinational corporations. Against the Europe of the trusts, for the Socialist United States of Europe.

- End discrimination and victimization against immigrant workers and oppressed national minorities. Solidarity with the self-determination struggles of Palestinians, South African Blacks, the Irish people, the people of Euzkadi and Catalonia and other nationalities oppressed by the Spanish state, Blacks and Chicanos in the USA, and other oppressed nationalities.

- Support the worldwide women's liberation movement. Fight to win and defend the right of free abortion on demand.

- Support the struggles by soldiers for democratic rights and against the oppressive conditions they face in the bourgeois armies.

For workers power based on workers councils freely and democratically elected with the most scrupulous regard for workers democracy and for the diversity of tendencies and parties within them.

Forward against capitalism, fomenter of crisis, unemployment, and war; toward the world socialist revolution! □

Saigon region. The military potential of the puppet army, with its mastery of the air, remained largely superior to that of the revolutionary forces. In spite of the relative reduction in U.S. aid, the puppet army was not short of motor-fuel, munitions, or spare parts. This shows just how deceitful are the excuses that have been officially advanced in Saigon and Washington to justify the retreat.

The sudden collapse of half of the puppet army is only the reflection of the internal decay of the Saigon regime and of the progressive evolution of the political and social relationship of forces in South Vietnam. The profound cause of the current American-puppet debacle is to be sought in the deepening of the revolutionary process after the signing of the Paris accords of January 27, 1973. The halt of the air attacks on Indochina and the withdrawal of the U.S. expeditionary corps confirmed the failure of the earlier American strategy. This certainly did not mean the abandonment of the counterrevolutionary U.S. policy in the region, but rather indicated a reduction in the objectives and means of implementing that policy. "Such a withdrawal would not in itself (guarantee) the victory of the permanent revolution in South Vietnam. It (would imply) only that the process of this revolution (could) develop with a reduced, but not eliminated, counterrevolutionary interference," declared the resolution adopted by the International Executive Committee of the Fourth International in December 1972. The victories currently being registered by the revolutionary forces show that they were able to take advantage of that new situation.

The defeat of Thieu and his imperialist master is first of all political and social rather than military. In Saigon the economic crisis impelled a new rise of struggles for demands, limited by the scope of the repression but nevertheless very significant for the disintegration of the base of the regime. The gravity of the repression was unable to prevent the development of movements of struggle for the release of the political prisoners, for the restoration of democratic rights, and for the return of peace. The expansion of the urban opposition to the puppet regime was such that it provoked a deep cleavage within the regime itself between those who desired the preventive resignation of Thieu and those who feared this.

In the meantime, the liberated zones, freed of the heavy bombing despite the "nibbling" operations launched by the Saigon army, went through an economic reconstruction and an acceleration of the agrarian reform. A social class was eliminated in the liberated countryside, namely the large landlords, while the prevailing

## Indochina—Solidarity Until the Final Victory!

[The following declaration was adopted by the United Secretariat of the Fourth International by a majority vote April 19. We have taken the text from the April 24 issue of *Inprecor*.]

1. The Fourth International hails the very great victories won by the peoples of Indochina during the past several months. These victories take on an exceptional importance for the evolution of the situation both in the region and on a world scale. With the liberation of Phnom Penh and the outbreak of the general crisis of the Saigon puppet regime after the collapse of the puppet forces in central Vietnam, the struggle of the Indochinese workers enters a new phase: a phase in which final victory in the long revolutionary battle against French and Japanese colonialism and against American imperialism is becoming an immediate reality.

The imperialist debacle in Cambodia and Vietnam has profound international repercussions. It confirms the ultimate failure of the policy of intervention to which successive U.S. governments had committed all their authority and efforts and sharply highlights the crisis of political leadership that is racking imperialism today. The victories of the Indochinese revolutionary fighters are accentuating the modification of the worldwide relationship of forces between the classes.

The considerable import of the latest turn in the history of the Indochinese revolution is a result of the nature of the revolutionary process under way, which is challenging the bases of capitalist and neocolonialist domination in Vietnam; of the deep interaction that links the struggles being waged in the three countries of Indochina, which has committed the Cambodian, Laotian, and Vietnamese peoples to the same struggle; and of the international stakes that have been involved and still are involved in the war in Indochina.

2. The form taken by the rout of the puppet forces in South Vietnam in the Central Highlands, in the northern provinces, and along the coastal provinces of the center throws a glaring light on the causes of the defeat of U.S. imperialism and on the nature of the revolutionary process that it tried to crush. In January and March 1975 the Provisional Revolutionary Government (PRG) did not unleash a general offensive comparable to the Tet offensive of 1968 or to the spring offensive of 1972. On the contrary, before Thieu decided to abandon the provincial capitals of Kontum and Pleiku, the Peoples Armed Liberation Forces (PALF) had committed only limited military forces to the fighting; after that, their progress had been made without great fighting until the battle of Xuan Loc in the

social and political conditions do not presently permit the formation of a ruling class of capitalist peasants. Consequently, the liberated zones have begun to play a stimulating role in the political crisis shaking the cities controlled by the puppet army, where galloping inflation and tragic unemployment are the rule.

Such were the axes around which we thought "the revolutionary offensive of the toiling masses of South Vietnam" would develop, as expressed in the resolution of December 1972, which drew the consequent conclusion that "the combined effects of the processes" thus described would result in "the disintegration of the puppet military and administrative apparatuses both in the cities and in the countryside." This is what has happened, and it once again confirms that the power of the Indochinese revolution derives from the combination of social, political, and military struggles, from the combination of a struggle for national liberation and a process of social revolution, that is, from the dynamic of permanent revolution.

3. The power of the Indochinese revolution derives not solely from that combination, but also from its regional dimension. The offensive of 1953-54, which ultimately led to the very great victory of Dien Bien Phu, had already given expression to the close links between the struggles in Vietnam and Laos. This time, after the constitution of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam and the entry of the Cambodian masses into the Indochinese Revolutionary Front, the Indochinese revolution took on new scope. It was the successes registered by the FUNK in Cambodia after the 1970 coup and by the Neo Lao Haksat in Laos after the American-Saigonese intervention of 1971 that prepared the 1972 spring offensive in South Vietnam. It was the signing of the Paris accords on Vietnam in January 1973 that led one month later to the signing of the Vientiane accords and then on August 15, 1973, to the halt of the massive bombing of Cambodia—a halt likewise imposed by the extraordinary victorious resistance of the Cambodian fighters. The liberated zones of South Vietnam were able to lean more firmly on the North Vietnamese workers state, which assured the liberated zones economic aid for reconstruction, military aid against the Saigon nibbling operations, and cultural aid.

This time, in January 1975, Washington's inability to respond to the closing of the Mekong River—along which pass 80 percent of Phnom Penh's supplies—and its inability to break the encirclement of the Cambodian capital showed the Thieu regime and its armies that the power of American imperialism was very much limited. In turn, the collapse of the puppet army in the center of South Vietnam sounded the death knell of what was the

Lon Nol regime: no longer could it hope for any support from Saigon. Finally, the defeats suffered by the neocolonial regimes in Cambodia and South Vietnam are ever more reducing the maneuvering room of the Vientiane administration in Laos: The dissolution of the puppet "National Assembly," which had been decided a long time ago but the implementation of which had been blocked by the bourgeoisie, has just been decreed.

This constant interaction of the struggles of the three countries of Indochina, this extension of the Indochinese revolution relative to what had been the case during the initial resistance to the French, also illustrates the dynamic of the permanent revolution at work in the region.

4. It is in this regional framework that the implications of the liberation of Phnom Penh must be analyzed. The last country to be fully integrated into the Indochinese revolution, Cambodia has become the first to be completely liberated from imperialist aggression. The scope of the success achieved during five years of revolutionary war in this country of 7 million inhabitants despite the American-South Vietnamese invasion of 1970 and despite the attempted genocide from the air committed by Washington in 1973 is exemplary in that it demonstrates the extraordinary strength of an armed liberation struggle and of a revolution. Humanity is indebted to the conscious sacrifices made by the Cambodian toilers—like those of the other countries of Indochina—in their battle against the policeman of the world. Fully 10 percent of the population were killed or wounded as a result of the imperialist intervention!

The final inglorious and unremitting fall of the puppet regime in Phnom Penh will have deep implications in South Vietnam. In Saigon it can now no longer be concealed that American imperialism is prepared to abandon its creatures. The flight of American nationals from the Saigon region, coming after Ambassador John Gunther Dean's flight from the Cambodian capital, can deal a fatal blow to the morale of what remains of the puppet apparatus in South Vietnam.

Apart from the recognition of the importance of the imperialist defeat in Cambodia, the analysis of the regime that has been born out of these five years of struggle is made more difficult by the small amount of information available. Much less is known about the amplitude of the social transformations that have gone on in the liberated zones or about the history of the communist movement of this country than is the case with Vietnam. But since Cambodia forms an integral part of the Indochinese revolution, it is nevertheless possible to locate the revolutionary process now going on there. A deep agrarian reform has been carried out in the countryside, analogous (despite real

differences linked to the structure of agricultural property) to that in South Vietnam. The Cambodian comprador bourgeoisie was organically linked to the puppet military and state apparatus and to the imperialist presence, and thus finds itself suddenly uprooted, while repeated popular mobilizations have taken place in Phnom Penh during recent years. Finally, hegemony in the FUNK and the GRUNK is incontestably held by the "Khmers Rouges," the leaders of which come from the Cambodian communist movement.

What is on the agenda in Cambodia today is the socialist revolution! The character of the Cambodian revolution is nevertheless not yet decided definitively. The consolidation of a new workers state in Asia will in fact require a series of deep economic, political, and social measures. Above all, the fate of the Cambodian revolution is profoundly linked to that of the Indochinese revolution as a whole and most especially to the future of the revolution in South Vietnam. The revolutionary battle continues; it must conclude in the formation of the socialist states of Indochina!

5. The latest turn in the history of the Indochinese revolution confirms the failure of the policy worked out two and more years ago by American imperialism: the "Kissinger plan." This strategic failure comes in the wake of many others.

U.S. imperialism's commitment to the war in Vietnam predates even the Geneva accords of 1954. In intervening, U.S. imperialism wanted to break the process of the Asian revolution and to prepare to reopen China to its penetration. That was the policy of "containment and roll back." After the defeat of French colonialism, U.S. imperialism had first of all to consolidate a puppet regime in South Vietnam, that of Diem. The general relaunching of the armed struggle in 1959-60 then led U.S. imperialism to begin the "local war." In spite of the sending of American advisers, the puppet regime was on the point of complete collapse in 1964. Washington then decided to send the U.S. expeditionary corps—which landed at presently liberated Da Nang—and to open the air attacks both against the liberated zones of the South (which meant the heart of the countryside) and against the DRV, taking advantage of criminal Soviet passivity. The Tet offensive marked the failure of this "local war." U.S. imperialism consequently agreed to an initial reduction—at least provisionally—in its objectives. It no longer counted on immediately breaking the North Vietnamese workers state. Instead, it concentrated the essential part of its resources on breaking the back of the National Liberation Front in the South. That was "Vietnamization," with its acceleration of the policy of "forced urbanization" and the new

intensity of the air war. The de facto aborting of the coup fomented by the CIA in Laos in 1970 and of the occupation of the Laotian part of the "Ho Chi Minh trail" in 1971, like the 1972 spring offensive in South Vietnam, provoked the abandoning of this policy.

In signing the Paris accords on Vietnam, U.S. imperialism renounced the destruction in the immediate future of the NLF, the FUNK, and the Pathet Lao. But it no less maintained three key objectives: to isolate these revolutionary movements in the Indochinese countryside through the consolidation of its power in the cities; to establish a new line of defense along the Mekong protecting Thailand; and to attenuate as much as possible the worldwide repercussions of its previous defeats. Phnom Penh and the principal cities of South Vietnam, except Saigon, have been liberated. Social struggles have broken out in the urban centers of Laos. The "Mekong line" has been broken, while Thailand is now experiencing an important development of social struggles and a resurgence of guerrilla actions. And the first two objectives are not the only ones to have been blocked during recent months. The third has also been blocked. The complete collapse in Cambodia and the still partial one in South Vietnam have come so rapidly and so sharply that it has become impossible to camouflage U.S. responsibility and paralysis in the debacle. And the frenzied poisonous campaign orchestrated around the question of the Vietnamese refugees and orphans will not be able to conceal the reality, either.

The only ones fleeing the advance of the forces of the PRG are those who fear having to account for their activities of collaboration with the imperialist undertaking—the torturers, military and police officers, the bourgeoisie, the traffickers, and the profiteers. The others are only trying to escape the fighting or the reprisals that are traditionally perpetrated by the puppet forces against newly liberated zones, which have been bombed or transformed into "free-fire zones." The major part of the population—including the urban population—has remained in the territory liberated during past months or is returning there. Moreover, the advance of the revolutionary forces has been accompanied by regional uprisings and actions by clandestine urban militias.

At the end of 1974, the Saigon regime lost or abandoned about 50 percent of its military posts in the Mekong delta solely because of the extension of a popular guerrilla war. In March the liberation of the provincial capital Ban Me Thuot was the work of a thousand Montagnards known previously for their adherence to the FURLO, an organization created out of

whole cloth by the CIA! In fact, the retreat of the Saigon troops was precipitated by the uprising of the ethnic minorities of the Central Highlands. The advance of the forces of the PRG along the coastal plain of central Vietnam, given an impetus by the collapse of the puppet army, was combined with significant defections from that army, with actions by clandestine popular militias previously organized in the cities, and with a certain number of urban insurrectional movements. Finally, the popular welcome received by the FUNK upon the liberation of Phnom Penh could not be ignored by the press agencies.

For the first time, American imperialism has been defeated in a counterrevolutionary war for which it had directly and massively organized its forces—and this by the populations of small, poor, rural countries. This fact by itself underlines the importance of the recent victories of the Indochinese revolution.

6. The successive failures of the various counterrevolutionary strategies of American imperialism in Indochina in face of the resistance and heroic struggles of the Cambodian, Laotian, and Vietnamese populations is of capital importance in the world arena. The reasons for the intervention of the United States, as well as the forces committed and the stakes involved, have always been international. Washington was not concerned with defending massive investments in the Indochinese countries themselves. The stakes involved in the aggression against the Indochinese revolution were the totality of imperialist positions in Southeast Asia and even imperialism's capacity to defend its positions throughout the world. This revolution has become one of the points of crystallization of international social and political contradictions, the advanced trench of the world proletariat.

Consequently, the imperialist defeat in Indochina is not solely the result of the combat of the Indochinese peoples. The American war was aimed not only at the Indochinese revolution, but also at the workers states. This led the Chinese and Soviet leaderships to agree to furnish aid that, despite its limits and fluctuations, played a decisive role in arming the revolution. The very existence of this aid, like its tragic deficiencies, fully justifies the slogan of the united front of workers states in defense of the Indochinese revolution, which was put forward by revolutionary Marxists from the very first stages of the second Indochina war. The same can be said of the organization of militant support in the imperialist world, in which the Fourth International fully participated. The U.S. defeat in Indochina in fact also depended on the emergence of an international movement of solidarity with the

Indochinese revolution and on the growing breadth of antiwar sentiment in the United States which, in the present economic context, imposes immediate limits on Washington's ability to intervene. In turn, the Indochinese revolution has played a direct role in the formation of new generations of revolutionaries throughout the world outside the grip of the traditional reformist and Stalinist workers bureaucracies—and this in the context of the strategic weakening of the most powerful imperialism and of the disequilibrium of the international monetary system. The Indochinese revolution has clearly been the bridge linking the postwar revolutionary wave with the revolutionary wave through which we are living today.

After the signing of the Paris accords, one of the keys to the "Kissinger plan" was the isolation of the Indochinese fighters through making overtures to the Soviet and Chinese bureaucracies. Imperialism was forced to recognize the People's Republic of China. It hoped to make use of the consequent turn of Chinese international policy. The announcement in July 1971 of Nixon's trip to Peking—made without taking account of the needs of the Indochinese revolution—demonstrated the breadth of this turn. It demobilized an important part of the antiwar movement in the United States and throughout the world by suggesting that a peaceful settlement of the conflict had become possible. It indicated to the Vietnamese fighters—who immediately denounced its function in the framework of the "Nixon doctrine"—that they could not hope for a strengthening of international solidarity to put an end to the escalation. This is probably the major reason why they agreed no longer to make the departure of the Saigon regime a precondition for any accords, as had been demanded until then in the "PRG Seven Points." The current victories of the Indochinese masses confirm both the independent position vis-à-vis the Soviet and Chinese bureaucracies that has been adopted by the Vietnamese Communist party, the FUNK, and the Pathet Lao, and the possibility of a new upsurge of international class struggle despite the efforts made to put the brakes on it by means of openings toward the Soviet and Chinese bureaucracies.

The initial consequences of the turn that has been made by the Indochinese revolution have not been long in coming—first of all in Southeast Asia, where the regimes set up by American imperialism at the time of the cold war are experiencing a deepening crisis. This is apparent above all in Thailand, where the rightist government of Kukrit Pramoj is demanding the withdrawal of U.S. bases from the country, even though Peking has recently made it known that it favors their retention as a counterweight to



Soviet influence in the Indian Ocean.

Also in Thailand, the guerrillas are now experiencing a forward development. In the United States, the crisis of the system of government, opened by the massive American intervention in Indochina and underlined by the Watergate scandal, is being aggravated. In capitalist Europe uneasiness is being manifested in government circles in face of the absence of political leadership from American imperialism, policeman of the capitalist world, and thus in face of the "leadership crisis" of the so-called Free World. Washington's control over its allied and satellite states is weakening along with the decline both in American "credit" and in confidence in American commitments. The weight of the Indochinese defeat of U.S. imperialism is all the heavier in that the Indochinese revolution is no longer the only problem U.S. imperialism has to deal with; rather, it is today combining with the new rise of workers struggles in West Europe, the social crisis in the United States, the weakening of NATO, the failure of American diplomacy in the Middle East, etc.

Ten years ago, Washington was able to concentrate all its forces on Indochina alone. It was the beginning of the most ferocious military escalation in history. Ten years ago the workers movement was living through one of its most serious defeats in Southeast Asia, the bloody crushing of the Indonesian Communist party and the massacre of at least 500,000 people. Three years later, there was the Prague spring, the French May, and the Tet offensive—a symbolic year for the dialectic of the world revolution. What we are seeing today is the general reorganization of the forces of the revolution and of the counterrevolution.

7. International support must assert itself in this crucial hour for the Indochinese revolutionaries. It is not simply a matter of affirming our full solidarity with the peoples of Indochina in their victory and in their test and of thereby denouncing the poisonous campaign being waged around the question of the refugees. It is also a matter of remaining at the sides of the Indochinese fighters in a struggle that is still not finished.

American imperialism is maintaining an aerial bridge to Saigon; General Brown is announcing preparation for a new intervention; the U.S. fleet is massing along the Indochinese coast; Ford is asking for a thousand million dollars for his puppets and is talking about sending in U.S. troops under the pretext of protecting American lives. It seems unlikely that the United States will commit new infantry troops and aviation to the conflict for any length of time. But Washington continues to bear the responsibility for the present sufferings of the peoples of Indochina and could want to

wage serious retaliatory operations in order to show the world what price has to be paid for challenging Pax Americana. We must be prepared for this.

We must also be prepared for new political maneuvers by imperialism. Tomorrow Washington could decide to do what it had refused to do six months ago despite the pressing request of the Saigon right opposition: attempt to set up a "Thieu regime without Thieu" in such a way as to maintain some minimal control of the situation. This operation, which was previously considered too risky, would obviously have to be attempted under very much deteriorated conditions: after the extension of the liberated zones, which now cover 75 percent of the country's territory and include about 50 percent of the population; a situation in which the specific weight of the PRG has been sharply increased and in which the internal crisis of the puppet regime has been dramatically aggravated; at the time of the liberation of Phnom Penh and of American discredit.

Under these conditions, the replacement of Thieu could accelerate the tendency toward the decomposition of the puppet apparatus instead of strengthening it. That is why the operation has not yet been attempted, despite the debacle.

It is in this context that the possible establishment of a coalition government in Saigon (in accordance with the Paris accords) must be considered. As was affirmed in the IEC resolution of 1972, "It is our duty to clearly explain that no 'national concord' is possible between the exploiting classes and the exploited classes, in Vietnam or elsewhere. The Fourth International is and will remain opposed to governments of coalition with the bourgeoisie, whatever the concrete composition of these governments. Even when the bourgeois ministers of such a government are hostages of a state power that is in fact already proletarian, their presence does not facilitate the conclusion of the process of the seizure of power and cannot fail to disorient the class consciousness of the proletariat.

"But this principled opposition to any government of coalition with the bourgeoisie does not authorize us automatically to define each of these governments as equivalent to a popular front government stabilizing and defending the economic power and state of the owning classes."

On the contrary, in the event of the complete disintegration of the puppet forces in the manner that it has occurred in Hué, Da Nang, etc., such a so-called coalition government would be but an organ of transition between the PRG's entry into Saigon and the establishment of a new revolutionary administration. In the event that this disintegration were not complete, open dual power would then dominate the

Saigon region, and the coalition government would not be able to durably interrupt the process of national liberation struggle and social revolution now under way.

The military victory of the forces of the PRG over the Saigon puppets would, of course, not in itself guarantee the socialist growing-over of the revolution in South Vietnam; the revolution's consolidation in the cities will depend on a series of social, political, and economic measures. But the process of permanent revolution will enjoy conditions very favorable for its development; the overthrow of the organs of puppet power and the dissolution of the reactionary parties in the newly liberated cities are an indication of this. Finally, in view of the degree of organization of the urban masses and the limits that have been imposed on this organization by the repression and by the traditions the Vietnamese CP inherited in this area from the Stalinized International, it is unlikely that the forms of proletarian power that will be born in the cities will be free of serious bureaucratic deformations. It is especially in this area that the forms of coalition government (even if the bourgeois ministers are simply hostages) can weigh negatively on the development of the class consciousness of the Vietnamese workers and masses. The victory of the revolution in South Vietnam and the initiation of a process of reunification with the workers state of the North will nevertheless pose new problems for the whole of the Indochinese revolution, both in the area of economic reconstruction and in the area of social and political organization.

In face of the continuing political and military intervention of U.S. imperialism in Indochina, the movement of international solidarity must affirm its most total solidarity with the struggles of the peoples of Indochina, must denounce the poisonous campaign orchestrated by imperialism around the fate of the refugees, and must demand the immediate recognition of the PRG and the GRUNK, the withdrawal of the U.S. fleet from Indochinese waters, the ending of the aerial bridge to Saigon, and the cessation of all imperialist interference.

It is now thirty years that the peoples of Indochina have been engaged in a long fight against colonialism, and then against imperialism. They have had to confront the most serious of counterrevolutionary undertakings under conditions of sometimes tragic relative isolation. They have paid a very heavy price in the struggle of humanity for its liberation. At the time when the decisive victory over U.S. imperialism and its instruments is possible, solidarity must come to the fore: to stop Washington from committing any act of criminal retaliation, so that the victory of the peoples of Indochina may truly be the victory of the workers of the entire world. □

## What Lies Ahead for Us?

By Roy Medvedev

[On March 3, 1974, the London *Sunday Times* published Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn's "Letter to Soviet Leaders." (The *Sunday Times* editors declared the letter to be Solzhenitsyn's first public statement since his expulsion from the Soviet Union on February 13, 1974. Actually, the letter was dated September 5, 1973.)

[Because of the broad publicity surrounding Solzhenitsyn's expulsion from the Soviet Union, this 15,000-word letter, covering a broad range of topics, addressed to the leaders of the Soviet government, received extensive international coverage. In addition, the character of some of Solzhenitsyn's proposals, which had pronounced reactionary overtones, e.g., a recommendation that Russia retreat to the technology and social institutions of the past, prompted a number of responses from political activists both within and outside the Soviet Union.<sup>1</sup>

[One of the more important consequences of Solzhenitsyn's letter was the discussion it provoked among Soviet dissidents themselves. In fact, it helped both to focus and to fuel the unofficial political discussion, which had been unfolding within the Soviet Union since the autumn of 1973, involving three prominent Soviet dissidents: Solzhenitsyn, physicist Andrei Sakharov, and unofficial Soviet historian Roy Medvedev.

[The strengths and weaknesses in the thinking of these three men and the subsequent changes as a result of events in the Soviet Union and abroad were beginning to be more explicitly expressed in an unofficial exchange of opinions and ideas. The direction of the discussion provoked by Solzhenitsyn's letter became an avenue for further clarifying and distinguishing these dissidents' views on a number of important questions.

[The full English text of Andrei Sakharov's "In Answer to Solzhenitsyn" appeared in the *New York Review of Books*, June 13, 1974.

[We print below the response of Roy Medvedev, which only recently became available to us.

[The translation was done for *Intercontinental Press* by Marilyn Vogt.]

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The "Letter to the Leaders of the Soviet Union" published by A. Solzhenitsyn is a disappointing document. Moreover, it is not difficult to argue against Solzhenitsyn in this instance, for there is no apparent correspondence between his many proposals and the real world.

In spite of this, no matter how great one's initial feeling of disagreement and disappointment regarding Solzhenitsyn's utopian and impractical proposals, it is impossible not to see that his letter reflects—even if in an extremely distorted form—many real and critical problems of our society and state. Not everything in Solzhenitsyn's new document is as simple as it might appear at first glance, and it cannot be dismissed as merely the naive and smug arguments of a "reactionary romantic and nationalist." The view of the world that was expressed in the most emphatic and

1. For the revolutionary Marxist critique of Solzhenitsyn's proposals and the views he presented, see "Solzhenitsyn's Letter to Kremlin Bureaucrats" by Allen Myers in *Intercontinental Press*, March 18, 1974, p. 297, and the expanded version of this article, the pamphlet *Solzhenitsyn in Exile* by Allen Myers, Pathfinder Press, 410 West Street, New York, New York 10014, 15 pp., 35 cents.

even grotesque form in Solzhenitsyn's letter is shared by many people in our country, and this factor above all compels us to dwell on several genuinely serious problems of the present situation and of the immediate future.

### On the National Life of the Russian People

A.D. Sakharov has already justly criticized Solzhenitsyn's nationalism and isolationism. The latter writes only about "Russia's hope for winning time and winning salvation," stating: "after all we have endured, it is enough for the time being for us to worry about how to save *our own* people."<sup>2</sup> The fate of other nations of the Soviet Union little disturbs Solzhenitsyn. As can be judged by one of his comments, he would consider desirable the separation of the "peripheral nations" from the USSR with the possible exception of the Ukraine and Byelorussia.

I cannot share either these views or these attitudes. But they are not accidental. Many Russian people express them, although not in such a strongly worded way.

Of course, it is well known to us that the Russian language is quickly spreading throughout the territory of the USSR. The Russian people are still called "elder brother" in today's press. Nevertheless, it is a fact that the Russian people's own national life has been hampered to a much greater degree than has that of, say, the Armenian, Georgian, or Uzbek peoples.

Thus, for example, the villages and countryside of the principal Russian regions are in an incomparably more neglected state than the villages of the Ukraine, Moldavia, Transcaucasia, or the Baltic regions. In addition, the Russian people have actually been deprived of their own capital. Being the capital of a multinational union, Moscow has nearly lost its features as a Russian city, the capital of Russia proper, as the capital was before the revolution (the more Europeanized bureaucratic and industrial center St. Petersburg was the capital of the empire). This transformation of Moscow into an international center, deprived of its distinct national features, by no means has positive consequences for the entire Russian nation.

Such a weakening of the national foundations of Russian life at the present time is neither natural nor progressive. Of course, throughout the present-day world a partial merging of all nations is taking place. Certain small nations that do not have an old and developed culture are gradually being assimilated while being amalgamated with the larger nations. But in the majority of the other cases, the national culture, self-awareness, and customs are a tremendous asset which should be developed and fostered, in no way to the detriment of international economic, scientific, and technical integration. Even before the revolution, Lenin wrote that "the aim of socialism is not only to bring nations closer together but to integrate them." (*Collected Works*, vol. 22, p. 146.) Perhaps this was an overly hasty judgment. All the principal nationalities of the USSR have not yet exhausted the possibilities for development of their national culture and national life, and it is difficult to say whether this will take place on the whole within the next few centuries at the very least.

2. All quotations for Solzhenitsyn's "Letter to Soviet Leaders" are based on the English translation by Hilary Sternberg published in full in the March 3, 1974, London *Sunday Times*.

How would it be possible to promote not only the preservation but also the development of the national originality of the Russian people? This is a question that demands special consideration. We will mention first of all that the proposal advanced some time ago that the capital of the USSR and the capital of the RSFSR [Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic] be made separate—which quite a number of people were denounced for during Stalin's time—is not all that unfounded. It is also necessary to take broad-scale, emergency measures to raise the level of both agriculture and culture in the indigenous Russian areas, particularly in the central and northern regions of the European part of the RSFSR.

Solzhenitsyn has a different proposal. "There is one way out for us," he writes, this is "for the state to switch its attention away from distant continents—and even away from Europe and the south of our country and make the North-East (the north-east of the European part and the north of the Asian part and the main Siberian massif) the centre of national activity and settlement and a focus for the aspirations of young people." "The construction of more than half our state in a fresh new place," Solzhenitsyn writes, continuing his thought, "will enable us to avoid repeating the disastrous errors of the twentieth century—industry, roads and cities, for example." In the vast expanses of the Northeast, Solzhenitsyn proposes to establish small enterprises based on "small-scale though highly-developed technology" and on "the principles of a stable, non-progressive economy." But the main task of those who migrate from European Russia would be to "set up in the wide open space of our North-East (at great expense, of course) the kind of agricultural system that will feed us at a natural economic tempo. . . ."

I had the occasion to live and be a teacher for several years in a small settlement in the Northeast. It was a wealthy settlement inhabited mainly by those who worked in a nearby mine. Virgin forests stretched around it for hundreds of miles. The majority of the families had small kitchen gardens and livestock. However, a great share of the food was shipped in from the south, because our entire zone was little suited for agriculture: the late frosts occurred in June and the first frosts as early as August. But, in fact, this is typical of the entire Northeast. This region is the least suited for farming, much less for farming "at a natural economic tempo." It is true that Solzhenitsyn proposes to "thaw out" the Russian Northeast, using part of the military budget and all of the space budget for this purpose. But even if this were possible, what intelligent political figure would agree to expend tens of billions of public money for the agricultural development of the virgin lands of the Northeast when agriculture in the Smolensk, Pskov, Vologda, Novgorod, Kirov, Kaluga, and Ryazan regions is so neglected; when dozens of old Russian cities—Tula, Kaluga, Kalinin, Vologda, Smolensk, and Astrakhan—still need so much work, where entire districts are made up of ramshackle wooden homes built as far back as the beginning of the century. So long as we do not have a flourishing and progressive economy in the European part of the USSR and have not established a reasonably comfortable life here for the entire population, we have no right to go about setting up a new civilization of any kind in the Northeast.

Of course, the gradual development of the Northeast is necessary, and a great deal is being done in this direction. But it cannot be an end in itself. The natural wealth of this huge region must be used principally to improve life in the European part of Russia, in the Ukraine, the Baltic regions, Byelorussia, Central Asia, and Transcaucasia. All the republics of the USSR must participate in developing the resources of Siberia and make good use of them to advance their own economies.

It is not likely that anyone will voluntarily consent to leave Moscow (Solzhenitsyn clearly exaggerates the burdens of life there) to reside permanently in the Northern Urals or in Yakutia—perhaps only one Muscovite in a hundred. The large

cities continue to attract people from the countryside, and not just because of the higher wages and the theaters. We have in large cities incomparably greater opportunities for contact with people of kindred spirit and with similar attitudes. This yearning for people is not the least important factor standing in the way of preserving the miniscule villages "of three cabins" whose fate Solzhenitsyn is so distressed about.

#### On the Position of the Orthodox Church

I do not share Solzhenitsyn's views on the Orthodox Church. But his anxiety in connection with the position of the church in the USSR is not unfounded.

It is an indisputable fact that the Orthodox Church was an important element of Russian national life for a thousand years. Even today in our country there are tens of millions of believers for whom religion is the main component of their spiritual world. For them it continues to fulfill—speaking scientifically—regulative and communicative functions and the function of consolation.

We know also that the fate of the Orthodox Church after the revolution was very dramatic. Of course, the church was not neutral in the bitter struggle that had unfolded then. Nevertheless, the bulk of the persecution that fell its way was unjustified and excessive. Even more regrettable was the repression the church was subjected to in the late 1920s and in 1937-38 after which there remained in the USSR no more than a few hundred places of worship still functioning. The position of the Russian Orthodox Church decisively changed for the better only during the war years and in the first decade after the war. But by the early 1960s the church was once more being subjected to illegal persecution, resulting in thousands of church buildings being closed and many hundreds simply destroyed. Fortunately, such flagrant acts of tyranny ceased after 1964. But various forms of oppression of the Orthodox Church and of other religions and sects are still going on and this causes suffering and pain for many millions of believers.

As a Marxist, I consider the church a vestige of past eras. I am convinced that Christianity will not constitute the basis of the moral and spiritual rebirth and development of the Russian people. My hopes are linked with the development of political freedoms, of freedom of speech and information, i.e., with the development of socialist democracy. However, genuine freedom of conscience is also included in my concept of democracy. As long as we have believers in our country, they must have the opportunity to carry out all their prescribed religious rites unimpeded. Oppression of the church is also a form of violating democracy. Overt and covert violations of freedom of conscience in the USSR are all the more inexcusable because all the religious organizations in the country long ago rejected the practice of meddling in the political life of our society. Marxism should not, in this respect, follow the example set by the church itself, which in previous centuries persistently and viciously persecuted all forms of thought that differed from its own.

It is possible that the influence of the church will grow in the years ahead. Many people are turning toward religion again in an effort to fill the spiritual vacuum that has been formed in them. For many intellectuals, turning to the church represents a legal form of protest against the intensification of political and ideological pressure. For an atheistic state, this is a serious problem. But it is impossible to solve it by intensifying persecution of the church. The separation of church and state, stipulated in the constitution, also means that the state must not interfere in church affairs. Wherever believers request it, the places of worship that have been taken from a church should be returned to it. It is necessary to permit the construction of new church buildings, especially in newly industrialized regions where there are quite a few believers but often neither places of worship nor clergy. The

state must refrain from interfering in the procedures of appointment, selection, and ordaining of clergy. The reestablished church communities must by themselves manage church revenue, which must not be liable to taxation, just as the donations to the Red Cross are not taxable. It is necessary to make it easier for religious literature to be published and sold. Believers who are parents must have the opportunity to organize groups for their children to study their religion. It can be said beforehand that if they have a good education in school few of these children will follow their parents' example.

But this must be the result of free choice and not of coercion from either side. Freedom for all sects must be guaranteed, excluding, of course, bigoted fanatics.

I am sure that the Orthodox Church has no future in our country. But it may still continue to exist in Russia for hundreds of years. And if it is condemned to die, let it be a natural death.

### **The Military-Industrial Complex and the Threat of War**

I agree that the threat of war with the West has almost disappeared, although I cannot agree with Solzhenitsyn that the Western world as a single weighty power has ceased being an opponent of the USSR. However, it was not so very long ago that the cold war, fraught with the threat of a thermonuclear war, was a reality that could not be ignored. Many politicians and citizens of Western countries could then have sincerely believed that the main threat came from the totalitarian Stalinist regime. Many Soviet politicians and ordinary citizens could be sincerely convinced that the main threat comes from Western imperialism. With parity of strategic nuclear potential all these dangers have clearly been diminished, paving the way for détente and the economic collaboration and exchange strengthening this détente. These positive processes had been developing, although very unevenly, since as far back as 1955. However, the decisive turn toward better relations really began to become apparent only after 1970.

Of course, the process of détente could have been quicker and been accompanied by a more appreciable reduction of armed forces and strategic arsenals. This was hampered not only by the various prejudices and distrusts that had accumulated but also by the emergence (not without the intervention of great powers) of dangerous crises in the Near East, Southeast Asia, and Central Europe. Also clearly hampering détente is the pressure from the military-industrial complexes in the USA as well as in the USSR. The influence of the Soviet military and military-industrial circles on the adoption of fundamental political decisions has grown since Stalin's death, but it would not do either to underestimate or to exaggerate this factor. I believe the pressure of the individual conservative military leaders will not prevent the continuation of détente, including the vitally important problem of reducing military budgets and strategic nuclear potentials. Even today the bulk of Soviet divisions stationed to the west of our borders serve not so much to shield us from possible aggression from Western countries as to guarantee that Soviet influence will be maintained in the East European countries. The expansion of socialist democracy in the USSR and in these countries would serve as a more stable, less expensive, and more effective guarantee of the unity and of the economic and political collaboration and alliance of all socialist countries.

More serious at the present time is the threat of a Sino-Soviet war. But this threat too should not be exaggerated. The USSR's military-technological superiority is still so great that a war would be disastrous most of all for China. Therefore, one can only hope that neither the present Chinese leaders nor those who are soon to replace them will decide to provoke war with the USSR. China still has a great deal of uncleared land, so that it need not have dreams of solving its demographic problems at the expense of Siberia. It is even less likely that this war can erupt because of

some kind of ideological differences. Of course, in the USSR military necessity should spur more energetic efforts to populate all areas adjacent to the borders with China. These regions are, in fact, better suited for human life and for agriculture. But it would be an absurd extravagance to throw huge amounts of resources into the "thawing out" of the Russian Northeast with reference to the Chinese threat.

I am not a professional military man. But it is clear to me that in the event of war with China the Soviet forces could not for long conduct military activity within the territory of the densely populated regions of China. Even given a successful breakthrough toward the principal population centers of that country, our military forces would soon be forced to withdraw again to Soviet territory.

Nor could the Chinese army conduct a prolonged military campaign in the sparsely populated and vast expanses of Siberia, Kazakhstan, and the Far East. Its army, even if it met with success at first, would soon have to retreat to China. Therefore, a Sino-Soviet war, if, unfortunately, it were to erupt, would resemble the Vietnam War very little. This war will by no means develop along the lines that [Andrei] Amalrik or Solzhenitsyn have described.

However, I am in full agreement with Solzhenitsyn that every effort must be made on our part to avoid such a war. I agree also that in view of the present relations with China, we have an adequate reserve of forces so that we need not fear a significant cutback in military expenditures. It is necessary to bear in mind that a détente on our Western front serves to lessen the threat of a war on our Eastern front.

### **The Development of Socialism and the Development of Democracy**

Solzhenitsyn proposes to maintain in Russia in the future a "calm and stable" authoritarian regime, since "even the will of the majority is not immune to misdirection." While speaking out for freedom of art, literature, and philosophy, Solzhenitsyn does not want, however, the freedom of publication of political literature, free elections, and other political freedoms the Russian people are allegedly not ready for. In essence, Solzhenitsyn rejects for the USSR not just a socialist perspective but even democracy. But in fact, this is the only reasonable alternative and the only possible course for real progress for all the nations of our country.

Of course, one cannot but recognize that the economic and social system existing in our country differs substantially from the ideals that inspired all the Russian revolutionary parties, including the Bolsheviks. But is it not a fact that the bourgeois society of the nineteenth century departed substantially from the ideals of the Enlightenment and of the revolutionists of the eighteenth century?

And it is nonetheless impracticable, in the conditions that have developed in our country, to seek a way out by transposing to Soviet soil the economic and social structures that exist today in the capitalist countries or by returning to the national and religious values of seventeenth-century Russia. We can proceed only from the possibilities of the society that exists in the USSR and that is neither a state-capitalist society as some maintain nor a "developed" or "mature" socialist society as others claim. We can proceed only from the social consciousness that our people have already formed and that will not return either to ancient Orthodoxy or to capitalism. The overwhelming majority of Soviet citizens unconditionally endorse only a socialist road for the development of our society, although the conceptions of socialism many people have are still different. Therefore, the Soviet Union has no practical road for development other than the consummation in theory and in practice of a socialist society and transition from the primitive bureaucratized variants of socialism and pseudosocialism to socialism with a human face.

Socialism is a social order under which the free development of

each individual is the condition for the full development of the entire society. This is an elementary truth of scientific socialism. A socialist society sets as its task the maximum possible satisfaction not only of the material but of the spiritual needs of the people. This means that in socialist countries all the economic and social rights of the working people must be guaranteed (in this respect the progress in the socialist countries is obvious) as well as all their political and civil rights.

For me, as for any thinking Marxist, socialist democracy means not only a guarantee of the rights of the majority, but also of the rights of the minority, including the right of the minority to formulate and uphold its views and convictions. Socialist democracy means a guarantee of freedom of conscience, speech, and the press, freedom to receive and distribute information, and freedom of scientific investigation and artistic creation. In a socialist society, dissident thinking and opposition views must not be persecuted, because without the right to dissent no democracy can exist. In socialist countries, citizens must be granted freedom of assembly and freedom to hold demonstrations and the opportunity to unite in various kinds of associations and organizations, including political organizations. A one-party system can be only a temporary episode in the development of socialist society. All fundamental political and social posts should be filled only on the basis of free elections in which a variety of candidates take part. A public hearing of judicial proceedings and the right to defense at all stages of trial and investigation must be guaranteed. Citizens of socialist countries must be free to travel inside their country and to choose their place of residence. They must have the right to emigrate and return to their country.

Of course, no freedoms can be absolute and unconditional. Each of the freedoms enumerated above has to have certain limits linked with the security and rights of other citizens, with social ethics, and with the need to guarantee national security and public order. However, these limits must be reasonable. They cannot be too far-reaching; otherwise, all the real rights and freedoms will become meaningless and the constitution guaranteeing them will be turned into a paper declaration.

It is also important to note that in different periods in the life of a society certain freedoms and rights of the individual acquire special significance. There was a time when the primary focus of attention had to be securing the right to work and to a fair compensation, to social security, and to the elimination of social and national inequities. This period in our country has not yet come to an end. However, at the present time a guarantee of such rights and freedoms as freedom of speech and press, freedom to receive and distribute information, freedom of opposition, and the guarantee of the rights of political minorities is becoming ever more important.

Of course, a very important element of democracy is freedom to emigrate. But I fail to understand the logic of those people who today advance this question to the forefront and try to prove that with a guarantee of the freedom to emigrate, the government of the USSR will be forced to raise the living standard of its citizens to European levels and guarantee all the other rights and freedoms. All of this is no more than an illusion. In tsarist Russia at the beginning of the twentieth century the right to emigrate was almost unlimited, and hundreds of thousands of Russians, Jews, and Ukrainians fled their native land each year, going mainly to the USA and Canada.

But did this emigration really promote to even a small degree the improvement of the situation of workers in Russia or Russia's democratization? Portugal has for decades supplied the other countries of Europe with a cheap work force, but this in no way promoted the renovation of Portugal's backward sociopolitical structure. The same can be said about southern Italy, Turkey, and several other countries. For most authoritarian regimes, freedom to emigrate is even desirable and encouraged—it contributes as a rule to a weakening of internal tension and disorder, since it is

usually the least secure and most dissatisfied citizens who leave the country. Freedom to emigrate is a right that is easiest of all to get authoritarian regimes to agree to. This is a fact that even the ruling circles in the USSR are beginning to understand.

Freedom to emigrate is now taking on decisive importance only for the Jews and Volga Germans. These national minorities continue to experience abusive discrimination, but they, as opposed to, for example, the Crimean Tatars, have a second "historical" homeland outside the USSR. As regards other nationalities in the USSR, among them there is no serious movement for emigration. A change in the internal situation in the USSR can take place not as a result of emigration, but as a result of a struggle for democratization inside Soviet society (given the support from outside, which is important for us). Any massive emigration of Russians, Ukrainians, and Byelorussians (if such a movement were to arise) would inevitably create more problems for Western Europe and the USA and for the emigrants themselves than for the present regime in the USSR.

#### **Like Any Science, Marxism Has the Right to Make Mistakes**

Solzhenitsyn rejects Marxism, and there is no need to repeat here all the epithets he bestows upon this doctrine. But one can easily see that Solzhenitsyn knows little about Marxism, for he attributes to it ideas and aims that have nothing in common with Marxism. Marxism, for example, has never maintained that "the proletariat . . . would never achieve anything in a bourgeois democracy." Marxist economic theory never declared that "only the worker creates value, and failed to take into account the contribution of either organizers, engineers, transport or marketing systems." Solzhenitsyn writes that "Marxism orders us to leave the North-East unexploited and to leave our women with their crowbars and shovels, but instead finance and expedite world revolution." All this is too light-minded to need refutation.

It is impermissible to blame Marxism and Leninism for all the shortcomings and defects that still exist in the Soviet Union.

Marxism, for example, never maintained that in a socialist society no individual economic initiative or small private enterprises or artels could be allowed, including in the service sector.

Marxism does not bear responsibility for the unreasonable centralization of our country's cultural life under which the culture of many large cities is becoming impoverished and withering away.

Marxism never maintained that under socialism only one party can exist and that no opposition of any kind can be allowed.

Marxism bears no responsibility for the conflict between the USSR and the CPR [Chinese People's Republic].

Marxist ideology is not responsible for the sacrifice of twenty-five to twenty-six million persons who perished in the USSR during the years of Stalin's repression (Solzhenitsyn writes of sixty-six million, but this is an exaggeration).

I could go on with such examples.

Of course, in the writings of Marx and Engels and in the writings of Lenin there were not a few inaccurate, one-sided, and even mistaken positions, and at the same time positions applicable only to a specific historical period that have lost their significance at the present time. It is precisely for this reason that many Marxist predictions have not come true or have not come true exactly as predicted. It is, however, an established fact that Marxism has exerted a very great influence on enormous public, social, and political movements in the twentieth century. Under the influence of its ideas, the entire face of the planet has been changed. Granted that not everything took place as the Marxists would have wanted. Still, one thing is clear: A dead ideology would not have been able to inspire and spur to action so many people in our turbulent century.

And can there be a science that does not make mistakes,

without premises that are insufficiently precise, without provisional hypotheses, without experimentation?

In the natural sciences no such thing exists, and even less in the social sciences. Therefore, in the furrows of general Marxist concepts, students and followers of Marx have had to advance a number of propositions that are not to be found in his works and that in a number of instances are not even in complete accord with what Marx said a hundred years ago. But this is the usual course for any science; it inevitably goes far beyond the circle of conceptions that were developed at one time by its founders. In the second half of the nineteenth century the terms "Darwinism" and "scientific biology" were almost identical in meaning. They were almost synonymous. Today scientific biology has made far broader and deeper strides than the range of concepts developed at one time by Darwin. But this in no way alters the fact that it was precisely Darwin who was the founder of scientific biology and that his doctrine was the starting point of its development.

Marx and Engels were the founders of scientific socialism, and Marxism remains the starting point of the development of scientific socialism and scientific communism. But their followers cannot and must not remain only within the sphere of concepts and theories that were worked out in the nineteenth century by these great thinkers. The same can be said about Lenin and Leninism.

Solzhenitsyn refers to Marxism as a dogma, assuming that he has only to point to its inaccuracies, mistakes, and incorrect predictions and its followers will turn away from it. During our student years—Solzhenitsyn's and mine—Marxism-Leninism was, in fact, presented to all of us as a dogma. But Marxism-Leninism—scientific socialism—is not a dogma. It is a science that must be developed like any science and that has the right to be inaccurate and to make mistakes.

#### Technological and Economic Progress and the Resources of the Planet

In his letter Solzhenitsyn calls for a halt to the industrial and economic progress of humanity. The doctrine of the "dreamers of the Enlightenment" on unending progress was, in Solzhenitsyn's opinion, false and destructive. The technical, scientific and economic progress of humanity in the nineteenth and particularly in the twentieth centuries, unprecedented in comparison with previous centuries, which revealed the tremendous potential of human intelligence, was for Solzhenitsyn only "an insane, ill-considered, furious dash into a blind alley." And the civilization created by this progress—this was merely "a greedy civilization" that "has now choked and is on its last legs." Solzhenitsyn writes in capital letters: "ECONOMIC GROWTH IS NOT ONLY UNNECESSARY BUT RUINOUS." He warns us that between 2020 and 2070, inevitable destruction awaits humanity "IF IT (does) NOT RELINQUISH ECONOMIC PROGRESS." To agree with such views (which were expressed, word for word, by various thinkers as far back as the eighteenth century) is impermissible.

Of course, the dangers confronting humanity in its hasty and until now poorly managed movement forward are extraordinarily great, and much is being written about this in the international press. But it will not at all be possible to overcome these dangers by renouncing economic progress, but rather by the intelligent regulation of this progress.

Solzhenitsyn is right when he says that economic progress based on an increasing use of the *unrenewable* resources of the planet cannot continue for long. But even if the present level of the extraction of oil and gas and of copper and mercury were to be cut several times over, these "useful minerals" would be used up all the same if not in twenty to thirty years then in a hundred to two hundred years.

However, humanity's situation is by no means as hopeless and desperate as Solzhenitsyn thinks.

This is not the place to write in detail about all the proposals being advanced in the press for the more rational utilization of natural resources. Of course, humanity must as soon as possible curtail the use of the *unrenewable* resources of the planet and also implement firmer controls over population growth. In line with this, an extremely important direction for technical and scientific progress must be the reorganization of the principal energy sources, toward not so much use of coal and uranium ore (the supplies of which are also limited) but rather toward the utilization of *renewable* and in practice unlimited sources of energy (first of all, solar heat, subterranean heat, the energy of rivers, the wind, sea currents, and so on). The second no less important direction of technical economic progress must be to devise methods for the complete utilization of all industrial wastes and all wastes from everyday life (that, by the way, will be paramount in allowing us to resolve the problem of environmental pollution). Finally, the third most important direction of technical, scientific, and economic progress must be to devise and utilize *substitutes*, i.e., to bring into production those types of raw materials and other materials that are, for all practical purposes, unlimited in quantity as replacements for scarce and precious kinds of raw and other materials. Of course, it is possible to specify still other directions for technical, scientific, and economic progress that also could facilitate an improvement of people's well-being without drastically upsetting nature's balance (for example, reducing the weight and size of machines, machinery, and appliances without reducing their efficiency; replacing some books and journals with microfilms, and so forth).

Renouncing the voracious exploitation of natural resources ought not to mean renouncing economic progress. Progress in agriculture, given reasonable controls, can take place not by exhausting the soil or by ploughing up new lands, but on the contrary can accompany an increase in the fertility of the soil. It is possible to organize an efficient fish industry not by destroying the fish supply but by constantly increasing it. Humanity must, thus, become a part of the well-regulated rotation of the resources and forces of nature, instead of constantly destroying it.

Our Earth is not yet a worm-eaten apple, as Solzhenitsyn thinks. Only a small part of the apple's peel has yet been touched; only a very thin layer of the Earth's surface. It is true that, with inept and predatory management, even this is enough to give rise to irreversible and disastrous changes in the Earth's biosphere and lead humanity to a catastrophe. However, it is possible to avert this catastrophe and find a way to a judicious utilization of the natural resources not by halting economic progress but rather through the scientific regulation of this progress, which has unlimited possibilities from a practical point of view.

The various space programs, so disturbing to Solzhenitsyn, can and necessarily must also serve this end. Space experiments can be a senseless waste when they are implemented only as an avenue of "competition" between two systems and when they serve mainly the aims of national prestige, or military purposes. But they are useful and necessary when they are put into practice in a cooperative way with the aim of improving the life of the Earth's people.

Economic progress is not unnecessary or harmful; even less is it ruinous. It is inevitable and necessary for humanity. With it is linked, first of all, our hopes for not only the improvement of the material well-being of all nations, but also the spiritual and moral progress of all humanity.

#### On the Fundamental Contradictions of Soviet Society

Soviet society is not devoid of contradictions, which in fact are the fundamental stimulus for its development. We believe that at the present time the fundamental contradiction is the growing incompatibility between the requirements for speedy technical, scientific, and economic progress and the highly centralized, and

above all bureaucratized, system for governing all aspects of economic and social life. The system of leadership and administration that has taken shape in our country is not in a position to solve, in a timely and proper way, the many problems important to the further development of society. Moreover, the governing apparatus in such a system has a tendency to become isolated from the masses and is frequently inclined to adopt important decisions by starting from the apparatus's own interests and not from the interests of the entire society.

All this slows progress in all spheres of our people's social, economic, and cultural life and establishes the basis for discontent and for the rise and expansion of different social movements.

It is impossible to accelerate our country's development without a reasonable decentralization of government, without transferring decision-making rights on many questions to lower administrative levels, without expanding the rights and responsibilities of all local organs, without broadening of self-management, without the participation of society in hammering out decisions, without free discussion of all questions of social and political life—in a word, without the democratization of society.

On the other hand, in the developed capitalist countries economic, technical, and scientific progress requires not only the resolution of the problems of "participation," but the expansion of governmental control in the economic sector and in many other areas of social life, including the nationalization of the most important branches of the major national industrial enterprises. It is significant that even an economist like [John Kenneth] Galbraith is today talking not only about economic planning and the nationalization of the military industry but about socialism as well, of course with a different understanding of it than we have.

The sharpening contradiction in the USSR between the demands for economic, technical, scientific, and cultural development and the bureaucratized, oligarchic caste system of government creates the objective necessity for reforms directed toward the democratization of social life.

Is the present leadership capable of implementing such reforms? Will they be carried out in the foreseeable future? I continue to hope so. In reality the politics of the "upper strata" is

changing even at the present time, although all this is taking place too slowly and inconsistently.

I am also hoping for a strengthening of the democratic movements of varying hues. At the same time I am not excluding the possibility (still, of course, not very likely) of the appearance in our political arena of a new socialist party, different from present-day Social Democratic parties and from the present-day Communist parties. Such a new socialist party could form a loyal and legal opposition to the existing leadership and facilitate the renewal and revival of the CPSU [Communist party of the Soviet Union]. Not being the successor of the old Russian parties, such a new socialist party could base its ideology only on the positions of Marx, Engels, and Lenin that have stood the test of time, and at the same time, not being linked with the present dogmatism, it would be able to develop scientific socialism and scientific communism in keeping with the demands of the present epoch and take into account the historical path our country has traveled. Free of responsibility for the crimes of the past decades, such a party could more objectively evaluate our society's past as well as its present and at the same time better work out socialist and democratic alternatives for its development. Of course, all this is no more than a hypothesis, a suggestion of one of the possible ways in which public consciousness could develop.

\* \* \*

We have examined above only some of the problems posed by A.I. Solzhenitsyn's recent letter.

Many of the greatest writers in Russia as well as in other countries had difficult personalities and held ideological and political conceptions that were extremely backward for their time. This did not prevent them from leaving a unique mark not only on the history of artistic creation but on the social and political history of humanity. The phenomenon of Solzhenitsyn is in this respect no exception in world literature.

Roy Medvedev  
May 1-20, 1974  
Moscow

# 定期購読で

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# FROM OUR READERS

From H.C. in Denmark, we received the following encouraging note along with some money for a renewal: "It is very important for us to be informed about world affairs. We are refugees since September 1974 and we still cannot learn Danish. You are the only ones that can help us to maintain an adequate political orientation."

L.C., a reader in Antwerp, added a note to his renewal: "The 'I.P.' is really great. It gives a lot of information you cannot get anywhere else. Let's go on until the victory of the Fourth!"

That's the Fourth International, of course.

D.J.C. in Saskatoon, Canada, sent a suggestion which we pass on to our correspondents in India: "I enjoy Intercontinental Press very much. Would like to see more information on India—there is nothing in the bourgeois press on such a huge country and the IP coverage seems sporadic."

Here is a letter that speaks for itself. R.Y. of Vancouver sent it after looking over the first copy of Intercontinental Press to come to his attention: "I received your March 10th issue and am impressed. I'm enclosing \$15 for a year's subscription."

That letter reached us just before the cost of a subscription went up. For the new rates, check the fine print under the table of contents.

And here's another letter that speaks for itself—from T.M. in St. Louis, Missouri: "Enclosed please find my check for a 6 month renewal subscription—this time by airmail. Although I am taking this action in time to qualify for the 1963 rate, I've enclosed \$20 because I.P. should not be forced to pay for inflation."

Another one that just made it in time to take advantage of the old rates: "I would like to order a year's (1) subscription at first class rates. I hope I am not too late for the special rate offer, considering that I am now unemployed."—G.Y., Baltimore.

A prisoner in California sent the following appeal to us: "I'm writing this letter from Soledad State Prison where I have been for almost three years. I receive the Militant socialist newspaper and I see that some of their articles are reprints from Intercontinental Press so that's why I'm writing you—I hope that you can put me on your mailing list. I would like to receive

your paper if you can afford to send it to me. Unity."

Anyone want to send in \$12 to cover that subscription for six months?

Another reader of the Militant, R.S. of River Forest, Illinois, sent in a subscription with the following comment:

"I've found that the 'World Outlook' section of 'The Militant' is the most interesting.

"And the issues that you have sent of I.P. have continued in that respect.

"Also, please send info about 'newsstand' selling of Intercontinental Press. I know a records store which sells similar publications and might be interested in selling I.P."

Sounds like a good lead. Newsstands that display radical literature are generally willing to give Intercontinental Press a try, and they are often pleasantly surprised at the results.

A member of one of the branches of a prominent civil-rights organization in the United States wrote us that they had been following the Militant for quite a while and had found the items published there from Intercontinental Press of interest. The writer continues:

"We had no idea as to the nature of the original source—it is excellent. I don't know whether you or one of your staff took the time to select recent issues with articles on political imprisonment, or whether they were coincidental choices, but in any case we'd very much like to begin an exchange with you."

Right on. We admit, though, that it always surprises us to learn about the surprise people often feel at the excellence of Intercontinental Press when they first run across it. It's made that way by hand—and the hard work of an international team of correspondents.

A Brooklyn reader, B.M., enclosed a suggestion along with a renewal: Many of the articles in Intercontinental Press are not dated, "and this is sometimes confusing." While some dates are "indicated or inferred," others are not. Besides that, some articles "written from abroad that take a long time getting into print, seem more dated than they would if the date they were written on was included in the byline or next to the city that often leads the article."

Generally, we do what we can to include in articles the dates of the events mentioned; but we are not always sure of the exact dates of the articles themselves. Often the postal systems of other countries

collaborate with the U.S. Postal Service in a common effort to slow down delivery of articles, and that makes it worse.

A pleasant note from B.B. of Cleveland in asking us to change his address: "The IP gets better each month it seems. I especially like the articles in Spanish, and Joe Hansen's wrap-up of the Wohlforth series was fantastic."

A reader called our attention to a letter to the editor of *Priorities*, a monthly published by the Standing Committee on Women's Rights of the British Columbia New Democratic Party (3485 West Fifteenth Avenue, Vancouver, B.C.):

"Dear *Priorities*:

"I think that it's great that you are doing articles on capitalism and socialism, a subject which I certainly need to know more about. For other readers who feel the same way, I would like to tell you about a weekly journal which we recently got a subscription to, and which I really enjoy. It's Intercontinental Press (Box 116, Village Station, New York). Unlike some Socialist papers, it's not full of slogans and rah-rah-rah—it's news selected and analysed from a socialist point of view, which is great after having to depend on the daily press, which of course selects and analyses news from a capitalist point of view. I find it very easy to understand—again unlike most leftist literature—so I can sit down and relax with it, the way I do with *Priorities* the first opportunity after it arrives.

"Happy reading!

"Beth Mares,  
"Salmon Arm."

We admit it. We sat down with that letter to the editor of another publication and relaxed, and read it several times.

Rashid Karadaghi of the Kurdish Information Center (Box 14282, Santa Barbara, California 93107) thanked Dave Frankel for his "excellent and very perceptive article on the Kurds in the March 24 issue of the *Intercontinental Press*.

"The Kurdish national liberation movement," he continued, "is not dead and will never die because it is the embodiment of the aspirations of an oppressed people and its heroic struggle for freedom and self-determination. At this critical stage in our history we need the support of friends like yourself. I hope you will continue to write the truth about the Kurdish movement because our enemies have done everything in their power, and will continue to, to distort the reality of the Kurdish movement.

"I am pleased to know that you are optimistic about the future of the Kurds. For my part, I am as confident as ever that, despite the recent setback, freedom is on the horizon.

"Again, my thanks and appreciation." □