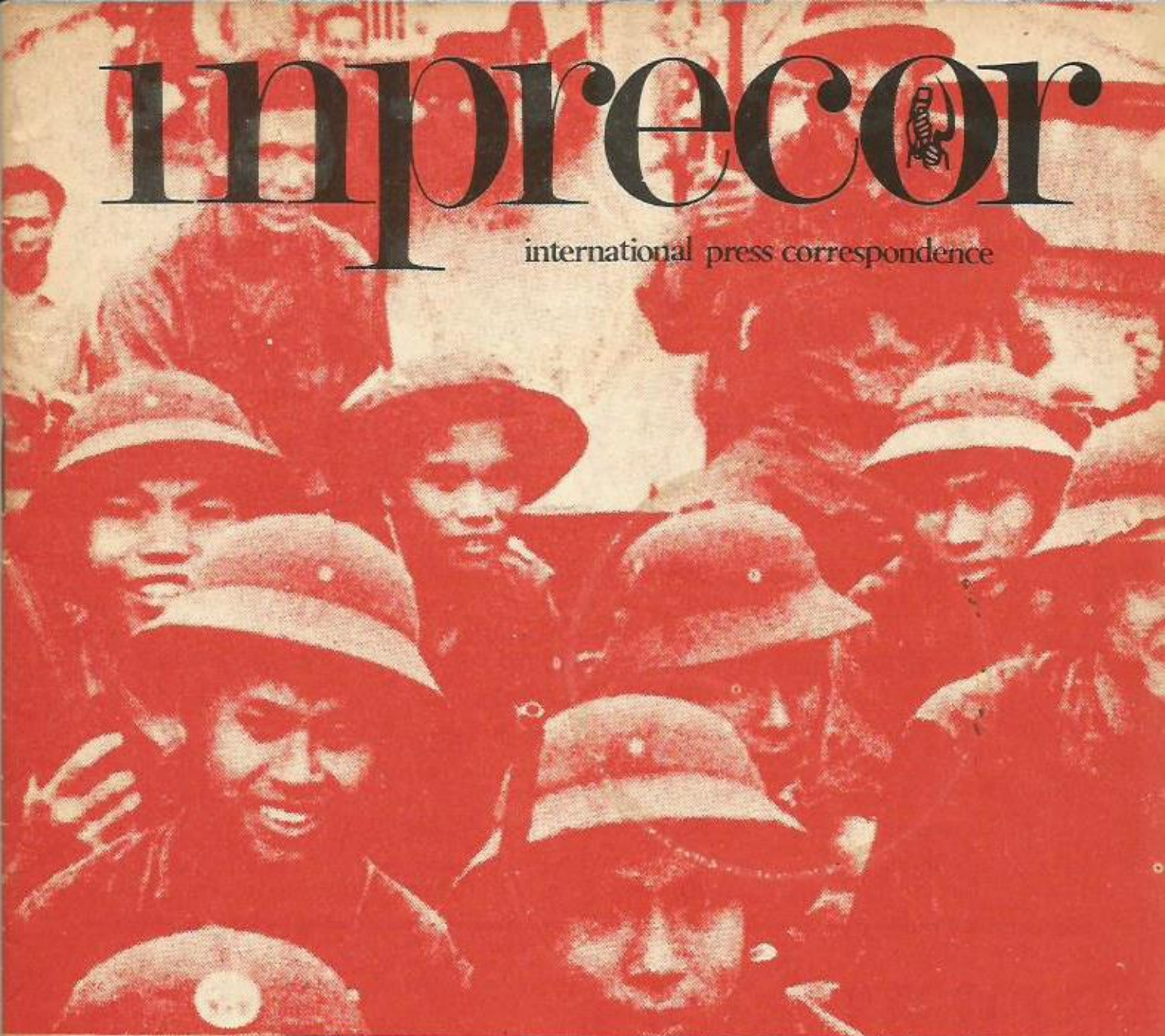


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international press correspondence



*the fourth international hails
the very great victories won
by the peoples of indochina
during the past several months*

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INDOCHINA:



SOLIDARITY UNTIL FINAL VICTORY!

Declaration of the United Secretariat of the Fourth International, April 1975

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 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 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.



U.S. Ambassador John Gunther Dean quits Cambodia.

3The 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 counter-revolutionary 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.



portugal: LCI RESPONSE TO MFA PACT

We are publishing below the response of the Liga Comunista Internacionalista (Internationalist Communist League), sympathizing organization of the Fourth International in Portugal, to the platform proposed by the Movimento das Forças Armadas (MFA — Armed Forces Movement). This document has been published in Portugal as a brochure, thousands of copies of which have been distributed. The next issue of INPRECOR will examine the results of the elections (scheduled to take place April 25) and the economic measures taken by the Council of the Revolution.

Following the contacts made by the MFA with the various legal parties, we were asked our opinion on the pact proposed to the political parties. Because we believe that the questions involved are of concern to all the workers, and because we believe that the workers movement as a whole must debate all these problems, we cannot keep our position and response secret.

The workers and revolutionary organizations cannot discuss these questions behind the back of the workers. That would amount to renouncing the defense of the workers' interests and to abandoning the struggle to strengthen the offensive capacity of the toiling masses and to break down all the reformist illusions that prevail today. For this reason, we appeal to all workers to demand that the workers organizations make public both their positions and all the compromises that they may have made.

As for us, we have long since chosen our path. We will never renounce pushing forward the mobilization of the workers, which is the only way to make sure that the workers response to the crisis of capitalism will prevail against the attacks of the bourgeois-

ie and the only way to prepare the road for the socialist revolution.

The Liga Comunista Internacionalista was contacted by the Council of the Revolution and asked to state its position on a "public platform" that was to establish an agreement between the MFA and the "parties committed to the application of the principles of the program of the MFA and to the deepening and consolidation of the democratic conquests that have already been won."

In the proposal of the MFA it was stressed that "account must be taken of the situation resulting from the crushing of the counterrevolutionary coup of March 11," that this platform "must make possible the continuation of the economic and social revolution initiated on April 25 (1974) within a framework respecting a political pluralism compatible with the socialist road," and, finally, that "the armed forces are the guarantor and motor force of the revolutionary process leading to the construction of a real economic, political, and social democracy."

1. First, we must make a preliminary observation.

The fact that the LCI, as well as other workers and revolutionary organizations, was contacted by the Council of the Revolution and asked to sign a "pact" is objectively the product both of the relationship of forces unfavorable to capitalist reaction that was created by the anticapitalist mobilizations of the masses and of the strengthening of the revolutionary organizations. That is how the recognition of all these organizations as integral components of the mass movement that routed the reactionary coup of March 11 was imposed.

2. Likewise, another sort of consideration cannot be left aside. The objective function of this "pact" — inasmuch as it is proposed not only to the workers organizations, whose role was fundamental and decisive both in crushing the reactionary attempt and in imposing and defending the measures nationalizing the banks and insurance companies, but also to the parties of the capitalist right, and even to the fascists and reactionaries of the CDS — can only be to seek to conceal through an agreement between bourgeois and workers organizations the contradictions that counterpose the irreconcilable interests of the exploited and the exploiters on the social and political scene.

3. The revolutionary workers organizations — that is, those that always intransigently defend the immediate interests of the workers as well as their historic ones: the elimination of capitalist exploitation and of bourgeois political rule — cannot accept historic compromises or pacts with the forces of capitalist reaction. On the contrary, they must fight for the independence and unity of the movement of workers struggles and for strengthening the united front of the working class as the only means of rallying to the camp of the workers the social forces that can identify with the workers objective of liberation from the domination of the exploiting bourgeoisie. Only the unification of the ranks of the working class and its trade-union and political organizations can make possible the defense, consolidation, and extension of the economic, political, and social rights and conquests of the working masses and at the same time can prevent the "middle layers" from becoming an object manipulated by the reactionary forces of capital. In addition, only this unification enables all the progressive forces inclined to struggle for the liquidation of capitalism and the building of socialism to be gathered around a consistent program of emancipation.

4. All that we have said so far suffices to explain why the LCI refused to sign the "pact" proposed by the Council of the Revolution. In fact, the implications of this pact — perpetuation of a policy of class collaboration between the reformist workers parties and the bourgeois parties — in themselves prove that such a path is incompatible with the defense of the

rights and conquests of the working masses (as is shown by the heavy balance-sheet constituted by the aggravation of the living and employment conditions of the toiling masses, the limitations on their social and political conquests, the maneuvers of economic sabotage, and the reactionary attempts).

The lessons of March 11, the participation of big capital and of sectors of the army in the reactionary attempt, the nature and extension of the response of the workers in and out of uniform, the powerful mass demonstrations demanding the ouster of the capitalist ministers from the government, and the nationalization measures imposed by the mobilization all prove:

a) that big capital, capitalist reaction, is not disarming, that the big capitalists are ready to launch new attacks against the rights and conquests of the workers, and that they will take advantage of any truce and any pact with the reformist workers parties to prepare new reactionary attempts;

b) that it must be recognized that the secret of the rout of reaction lies in the close alliance of the struggle of the workers in the factories and the streets and the struggle of the soldiers in the barracks, who refused to be enlisted in the putschist operations and managed to isolate the reactionary officers;

c) that all the measures limiting the economic and political power of big capital and "leading to the construction of a real economic, political, and social democracy" can be imposed (and have been already!) only by the pressure of the working masses, by their independent organization and combativity, and by the raising of their class consciousness;

d) that these measures can be the fruit only of a deepening of the anticapitalist battle of the masses and that the workers, their struggles and their independent mobilization, will be the sole true "guarantor and motor force of the revolutionary process";

e) that, in conclusion, it will not be possible to take new measures against the economic power of the capitalists through collaboration with the bourgeoisie and its parties that objectively and subjectively prepared the economic and political ground for the March 11 coup (the PPD and CDS being examples); rather, this goal will be attained by measures that the workers will demand: nationalization of the big industrial and agricultural enterprises, nationalization of foreign and wholesale trade, agrarian reform (giving the product of the land to those that till it), establishment of workers control over production and capitalist commerce.

Hence, only a government of the workers — a government of the workers parties and organizations,

resting on the mobilization and permanent organization of the working masses — will be able to effectively combat capitalist reaction and prepare the conditions for the abolition of capitalist exploitation and for the building of socialism.

The experience of March 11 and what followed demonstrates to the workers and the revolutionary forces that it is not possible to bequeath the title of "guarantor and motor force of the revolutionary process" to the armed forces and the MFA (as the MFA demands in its pact); it also demonstrates that the "consolidation and extension of the democratic conquests already won" must not be sought through concluding such agreements. Finally, it proves that the parties that are really interested in such "consolidation and extension" are those that rest on the ground of the unity and independence of the struggle of the workers for the socialist revolution and do not pursue the policy of class collaboration.

6. Finally, it is more important for us to offer our principled position against a compromise of principle that is demanded of us than it is to discuss the internal logic of the constitutional platform proposed by the MFA. But there is one concrete point we would not like to ignore: the predominant role as center of political decision-making in the constitutional structure of the country that is to be played by the MFA and the Council of the Revolution, at least according to the MFA's draft agreement.

Whatever may be the intentions of the authors of the project of institutionalization and whatever significance progressive elements of the MFA may at-

tribute to the institutionalization, sooner or later there can be but one result of such a process (inasmuch as it presupposes the absence or elimination of the contradictions between the irreconcilable interests of the bourgeoisie and the proletariat and envisages the conquests of the working class and its organizations as occurring through collaboration with the bourgeoisie, under the tutelage of the MFA): the MFA's de facto acquiescence in the regrouping and recomposition of capitalist reaction; hence, the institutional strengthening of the right within the government apparatus can enable the right to use this situation increasingly to limit the conquests of the workers and to block the revolutionary process.

7. Thus, at the same time as we refuse to sign such a pact with the capitalist political parties, we also address an appeal to the progressive elements of the MFA: Let them strengthen their adherence to the anticapitalist movement of the workers, pass to the camp formed by the alliance of workers and soldiers, and, in this way, not oppose themselves to the independent organizations of the soldiers in the barracks, to the soldiers' democratic right to hold meetings, discuss, and organize trade unions; let them refuse to repress the struggles of the workers in the factories and in the streets; let them combat any new attempt by reaction to launch an attack on the rights and conquests of the toiling masses, whether it comes from inside or outside the armed forces.

Liga Comunista Internacionalista (sympathizing organization of the Fourth International)
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ANGOLA: *toward what independence?*



A long road has been traveled since last June, when António Spínola was still able to assert: "We are doing everything so that peace may return to overseas Portugal." Since then, the mobilization of the laboring masses of Angola and Mozambique has swept away Spínola's plan for a neocolonial federation.

In Angola, where the "process of decolonization" appeared to be blocked by the extent of imperialist interests at stake, by the division among the nationalist movements, and by the putschist attempts of the white colons, we quickly saw a spectacular "reconciliation" of the liberation movements, the

by F. CAZALS

signing of the Alvor accords with the Portuguese government, and the establishment of a quadripartite government (composed of representatives of the three nationalist movements and of the Portuguese regime) charged with administering the country until independence, planned for November 1975.

But above and beyond the "publicity" statements of the Portuguese leaders about their "genuine will to decolonize," factors are building up to enable imperialism to maintain its hold over all southern Africa. For the import of the struggles in Angola extends well beyond the borders of the country itself. And it is clearly the defense of the general interests of imperialism in the region that are at issue when the "social-realist" Mario Soares indicates his desire to establish "friendly and normal relations between Lisbon and Kinshasa," for "there is a 1,250-mile common border between Zaire and Angola." That is known as "extending a hand" — in order to assure the best conditions for carrying out the neocolonial program. And the foreign policy of China,

which in the name of the "struggle against the two superpowers" has made the Soviet Union the main enemy and supports the sinister game of Mobutu by sending military advisers to train the FNLA (Frente Nacional de Libertação de Angola — National Liberation Front of Angola), contributes to this equally as much as the complicity of silence of the Portuguese reformists about the future of Portuguese and imperialist investments in Angola.

Imperialism's «great maneuvers» in southern Africa

The recent acceleration of the "process of decolonization" in Angola and Mozambique has given an impetus to the turn of imperialist policy throughout the region. For example, South Africa, the bastion of capitalism, is now adopting a "benevolent" attitude toward its new "neighbor" Mozambique, while in Rhodesia discussions have begun between Ian Smith and the nationalists, unified in the African National Congress (ANC).

To believe the commentators of the bourgeois press, the hour of "peace" and "détente" has sounded in southern Africa. The African neocolonial puppets are rejoicing to see dialogue (finally!) take the place of armed struggle in "settling the colonial question," while the American secretary of state for "African affairs," who is somewhat more adroit, recognizes that the interest of South Africa (and the U.S. capital invested there) lies in "encouraging a rapid and ordered move toward achieving settlements in both Rhodesia and Namibia."

In effect, the impossibility of indefinitely perpetuating the current conditions of capitalist exploitation in face of the rise of the liberation struggles,

the dangers of the conflict spreading throughout the region, and the progressive deterioration of the economic and political situation in Rhodesia have compelled the imperialists to seek solutions that would permit the beginning of a process of political stabilization throughout the region effected on the basis of diverting the struggles of the African masses in the bastions of neocolonialism. This is an objective to which the neocolonial African states fully subscribe, for they are all interested in containing the revolutionary dynamic of the mobilization of the masses of the region.

This, then, is the twofold objective of imperialism's political reorientation in southern Africa: to limit the dynamic of the struggles and to reorganize the process of imperialist exploitation by assuring the transition to a new regional economic and political integration.

Such a recasting of the economic and political physiognomy of the region is, however, heavy with social implications and with contradictions that herald social confrontations of great scope.

In Angola, given the radicalization of the struggles of the workers in face of the racist barbarism of the white colons, a rapid solution had become necessary. Thus, under the aegis of Mobutu (deputy policeman of the region) and with the aid of the Portuguese government, an attempt was made to effect a rapprochement between Zaire and Angola (including, of course, the Angolan enclave of Cabinda with its oil) in the form of an economic and political bloc (and why not a federation?) that would be both the embryo and mediator of a future central African economic community that would guarantee sufficient political stability to permit a simultaneous reconversion of the regimes in Rhodesia, Namibia, and, to a lesser extent, South Africa.

A potential neocolony?

The features most often mystified by the analyses of Portuguese reformists and by smug apologists for the "process of decolonization" — Angola's strategic position at the crossroads between central Africa and the southern subcontinent, the importance of its economic wealth and exploitable potential, and the massive presence of imperialist investment — are nevertheless the fundamental premises for a neocolonial option. For in spite of the existence of an agricultural sector having a precapitalist economy, and above and beyond the presence of significant colonial interests, Angola is a capitalist country largely dominated by imperialist capital.

The imperialist presence in Angola dates back, partially at least, to the granting of the first prospecting concessions to the Portuguese in the nineteenth

century. The Anglo-South African company Diamang, for example, was able to prospect for diamonds throughout three-fourths of the territory of Angola beginning in 1920. But the systematic opening of the country to foreign capital, which followed the launching of the armed struggle by the MPLA (Movimento Popular de Libertação de Angola — People's Liberation Movement of Angola) in 1961, entailed the preponderant installation of American interests in the petroleum, mining, and banking sectors. At the present time, the United States is the largest customer and third-largest supplier of Angola, buying in particular 54.9% of Angola's coffee and 40.9% of its oil. This U.S. interest weighs heavily on the economic and political future of the future independent state, as has already been seen in the support extended by the Gulf Oil Corporation to the so-called Cabinda Liberation Front (the FLEC). In 1971 Gulf Oil, one of the most powerful of American trusts, took in the equivalent of \$70 million by exploiting Cabinda's oil. This little trifle constitutes a serious "motivation" for maintaining the American economic grip!

All the imperialist countries have "interests" in one or another sector of the Angolan economy, from the Belgian diamond companies to the French and South African oil companies (ELF-ERAP), not to mention English, German, and Japanese capital. The economic map of Angola today is a veritable checkerboard of multiple imperialist concessions.

Portuguese capital still holds an important position in this race for profits. In fact, through association with foreign capital and through the colonial trade monopoly, a Portuguese finance capital has developed in symbiosis with the imperialist investments. These are the "grand families" like Melo (of the CUF — Companhia União Fabril), Champalimaud, Espírito Santo, Borgês and Irmão, the recent nationalization of whose interests make the Portuguese government a "direct shareholder" in the imperialist exploitation of Angola.

Moreover, the expansion of the white colon population (which stood at 600,000 in 1973) and the swelling of profits drawn from the coffee plantations have stimulated the emergence of a small local manufacturing industry linked to satisfaction of the needs of the colonial market; this provides the basis of accumulation by the colonial bourgeoisie through the superexploitation of the Angolan proletariat.

This process has led to a social differentiation within the colonial bourgeoisie itself, the linchpin of the ruling class in Angola and the major base of support for any reactionary project. The differentiation is threefold:

*A big industrial, commercial, and landed bourgeois-

sie (owners of small industries, large-scale traders, plantation owners, etc.), which controls the secondary economic sectors and is grouped around the Commercial and Industrial Association of Angola. Structurally tied to the Portuguese bourgeoisie, this layer commands only a weak degree of political independence and has rallied to the neocolonial project with the perspective of extending its field of activity (through expanding the internal market among the black population and through investment projects in the neighboring neocolonial countries) and of thus entering into close relations with Zaire and the right-wing nationalist movements, the FNLA and UNITA (União Nacional para Independência Total de Angola — National Union for the Total Independence of Angola). Thus, Mobutu made an overture to the owners of the coffee plantations, promising them guaranteed profits in Zaire if they would agree to support the FNLA.

*A middle bourgeoisie linked to the colonial administration (top managers and liberal professionals).

*A commercial and administrative petty bourgeoisie. It is especially among this layer of "small whites" that the most reactionary elements are found.

With the aid of the Portuguese bourgeoisie and the racist regimes of South Africa and Rhodesia, these social forces have formed a number of reactionary organizations:

*The FUA (Angolan United Front), led by the engineer Fernando Falcão, president of the Commercial and Industrial Association of Lobito, who protested against his exclusion from the Alvor negotiations.

*The PCDA (Christian Democratic party of Angola), whose chief, Garcia Dongala, sees the FNLA and UNITA as "the real material and political strength of the country" and considers strikes to be "prejudicial" both to the workers and to the "national economy"!

The FRA (Resistance Front of Angola), a paramilitary formation of reactionary colons whose representatives openly compare it to the OAS (Organisation de l'Armée Secrète — Secret Army Organization, the reactionary terrorist organization of French colons in Algeria).

The opportunism of these parties, and their lack of political independence as well, has been revealed by their adoption of each of the various proposals successively advanced by the representatives of the Portuguese bourgeoisie to settle the colonial problem. After first advocating the neocolonial federation and then "self-determination," they now proclaim their support for independence and are ori-

entering toward a rapprochement with the FNLA, under the aegis of Mobutu. They thus indicate their progressive integration into the neocolonial plan to "destabilize" the transition government by strengthening the reactionary axis formed by the right-wing nationalist movements, Zaire, and the reactionary colonial parties.

The rapprochement is being effected on the field of struggle, by means of denouncing strikes, exacerbating racism, and utilizing the sadly famous strategy of tension.

Thus, Angola nearly experienced a "truckers' strike." At the end of November the truck owners announced their desire to go on strike against the "lack of security on the roads." Not satisfied with being granted escorts, they demanded the resignation of Rosa Coutinho (head of the government junta), who was called a "communist" and nicknamed "the red admiral" just at the time that the FNLA was denouncing him as being pro-MPLA. The maneuver was crude, and the strike did not take place (because of its unpopularity and because of the defection of the small-scale truckers); but imperialism and its agents were already trying to create a Chilean-type situation.

In face of the existence of such social and economic forces, it is necessary to analyze both the MPLA's dangerous illusions about "the unity of the Angolan nation" and the criminal silence of the reformists about the role of the colonial bourgeoisie in Angola. This also means that the debate on the obtaining of Angolan nationality is not a simple matter of "style" when approached in class terms and that it is urgent to offer clearly anticapitalist perspectives to the growing mobilization of the Angolan toilers.

The stakes in the struggle

During the past several years the center of gravity of the struggle of the Angolan masses has shifted from the rural regions (within which the armed struggle and liberated zones of the MPLA had been confined) to the urban centers, where workers combativity has asserted itself, particularly during the Luanda strike of September 1973. Even though the MPLA was experiencing serious difficulties (internal divisions, military problems, etc.), there appeared in the urban centers a young, heavily concentrated, and combative proletariat, the direct product of capitalist exploitation. This proletariat, while lacking organizational links to the armed struggle, was strongly affected by the prestige of the MPLA and entered the political scene by combining economic demands and an advanced anticolonial consciousness in its struggles, in spite of the colonial repression. But the principal victory of the Angolan proletariat over the shilly-shallying of the Portuguese govern-

ment was the virtually spontaneous reaction of the laboring masses to the racist crimes committed by the colons. As was noted in *Revolução Socialista*, organ of the revolutionary Marxist militants of Luanda: "The struggle that was developed in the *musseque* (slums) of Luanda by the laboring masses, who burned out and expelled the merchants in response to the massacres committed by the most reactionary forces of the bourgeoisie — even though it was ill-organized and spontaneous (which resulted in the products of the pillage not being fairly redistributed to the most needy) — compelled the Portuguese bourgeoisie, which had wanted to end the colonial war while maintaining its colonialism by means of a federation after a referendum, to recognize the right of the peoples of the colonies to independence."

To the reformists who deny the social role of the "small whites" of Angola and confine themselves to denouncing the "racism" of the black urban masses, we answer that the struggle of the urban masses against those who symbolize capitalist exploitation most directly in their eyes (small merchants, loan sharks) represents the first stage of a class reflex; further, whether these "emotional" reactions will avoid being wrecked on the reef of racism and instead take on their full anticapitalist significance will depend on the emergence and organization of a revolutionary vanguard. Already, some advanced experiences in self-organization by the workers (the establishment of rank-and-file committees in the neighborhoods and factories) testify to the radicalization of the movement. At the very moment of the inauguration of the transition government, for example, the coordinating committee of these rank-and-file bodies in Luanda announced a "national week of action for people's power," calling on "the progressive student organizations and the workers' commissions and associations" to solidarize with the initiative and to discuss the slogan of "people's power" in general assemblies in the factories and neighborhoods. Vigorously denounced by the FNLA and UNITA, both of which saw this "pseudo people's power" as an incursion upon the competences of the coalition government and as "the germ of the break-up of Angolan society," this week of action was concluded with a combative popular assembly of more than 100,000 people (chanting "Poder popular!") and by a meeting of a national assembly of the rank-and-file committees.

Thus, the question of the seizure of power by the toilers as the outlet for the current struggles has been posed by the development of the outlines of a situation of dual power. But the MPLA, which holds hegemony over the workers of the urban centers, fundamentally bases its policy on a strategy of making agreements at the top, of holding a "dialogue" with "all the parties," and of placing all its bets on the future of the "democratic process"

in Portugal; the role assigned to the mobilization of the masses is that of "exerting pressure to influence the relationship of forces within the government." In face of the breadth and the dynamic of the mobilization, the MPLA has been constrained to adopt an ambiguous attitude. For example, Neto himself (the president of the MPLA) — who at Benguela supported the principle of "people's power" and in a popular meeting in Luanda denounced the "lackeys of imperialism" who want to prevent the "people from assuming power" — sanctioned the inclusion of the FNLA and UNITA in the transition government, stating that he desired the closest collaboration with them in the name of "the unity of the Angolan nation," just at the moment when the provocations committed by the armed bands of the FNLA were the most violent.

In this situation, the political response of the MPLA has been very insufficient. In its desire to be "realistic" so as to block the path of the ultras, the MPLA is preaching an alliance with the democratic sectors (an alliance that it already maintains with the MDA, the Angolan Democratic Movement), refusing to take up the tasks of preparing the masses for the inevitable confrontation with reaction, and thus tracing out a path of development leading toward the ebb of the mass mobilization under the blows of counterrevolutionary attacks. Mere tactical reference to "people's power" is not sufficient to open the road to the seizure of power by the laboring masses. Central anticapitalist perspectives are necessary in order to avoid the struggle's being eroded by localist retreats. This is all the more true in that the neocolonialist framework set by the Alvor accords is beginning to suffer the initial attacks of the masses, as is indicated by the demonstration of several tens of thousands of workers in Luanda against the government's decision to "militarize" labor in the port of the capital and by the proliferation of strikes affirming the workers' will to get rid of racist employers and managers.

Since it has placed itself within the strict framework of the "agreements that have been reached," the MPLA is finding itself torn between its link at the top with the reactionary forces within the government and the participation of its rank and file in the mobilization of the Angolan toilers.

Transition government — toward what independence?

The Alvor accords with the Portuguese government, while silent on the future of imperialist capital, are quite explicit about the need to "respect the links and legitimate interests of Portuguese living in Angola." The transition government thus finds itself being the privileged instrument of a neocolo-

nial solution that is henceforth implicit in the facts of the situation. The exclusion from the government of direct representatives of the colonial bourgeoisie, of the Chipenda faction of the MPLA, and of the FLEC of Cabinda appears to be a provisional measure aimed at staggering over time the implementation of the various elements of the neocolonial plan. In fact, Chipenda has now joined the FNLA and it is envisaged that he will participate in the coalition government; meanwhile Neto (of the MPLA) is proposing to "discuss with those who want Cabinda to separate (from Angola)" and to "find the best solution" (perhaps an Angola-Zaire-Cabinda "oil" federation?). For his part, Roberto Holden (president of the FNLA) is proposing a "nonexclusive dialogue" in the name of the "higher interests of the Angolan nation" (including all classes and all capital, of course).

Thus, all the mediators of the neocolonial project were present at the negotiating table in Alvor; behind them lurked the shadow of the capitalist interests in Angola.

The role of the Portuguese government in all this is limited to that of intermediary defending the interests of the colons and of capitalist investment in Angola. For, as has been noted by Almeida Santos, the minister of "decolonization": "Portugal is not rich enough to nurture the slightest neocolonial inclination" (on its own, obviously!). The recent nationalization of the banks in Portugal nevertheless directly implicates the Portuguese government in the economic exploitation of Angola.

The surest pawn in the imperialist strategy is the FNLA, whose links with imperialism through the aid it receives from Mobutu's Zaire (bastion of capitalist investment in central Africa) are obvious. Fundamentally, regionally based (in the Bakongo stronghold in the North) and rightist in character, this organization has created a veritable border army that today occupies the rich agricultural region of Uige in northern Angola, in close collaboration with the colonial planters. In Dalatando, capital of the Cuaza Norte district, the FNLA recently opened a "house of the people" and a hospital located in the very offices of the Santos Dinis coffee company, which amicably donated the facilities. The return the firm receives in the form of the "moderating" role played by the FNLA in the struggles of the agricultural workers on the colonial plantations is easily imagined.

Through the CAAT (African-American Labor Center), which includes the trade unions of Zaire, the FNLA is linked to the proimperialist trade-union outfit, the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions. As long ago as 1973 a seminar on trade-union training was held in Zaire organized by the CGTA (Gen-



eral Conference of Angolan Workers), the General League of Angolan Workers, and the FNLA, in collaboration with the CAAT. It is not surprising that the FNLA is now denouncing the "campaign for people's power" on the grounds that it is leading the country "to a people's dictatorship" and is claiming that "the people, who are believers, energetically reject atheistic communism," and is opposing any unification of the trade unions.

In face of the development of struggles, the FNLA is issuing manifold appeals for the "unity, respon-



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sibility, and discipline of all Angolans" and is denouncing "the campaigns of agitation, subversion, and ideological aggression being waged among the people." The FNLA is thus putting itself forward as the motor force of repression, resorting to the most violent provocations against the radicalized militants of the MPLA, as in Luanda, where about fifty militants were assassinated. At the same time, the FNLA's border army increasingly appears as the central pillar of the reactionary military potential. Last month, for example, an armed FNLA commando sacked the installations of the Luanda radio station,

maltreating the workers and torturing an announcer close to the MPLA who was accused of giving too much play to the "campaign for people's power." Similarly, a motorized column of 500 FNLA troops has just set itself up in the capital, thus overturning the military relationship of forces with the MPLA in preparation for very violent social conflicts as independence approaches.

The UNITA group, led by Jonas Savimbi (who came out of the FNLA), has long collaborated with Portuguese troops against the MPLA. Despite the support it received until 1970 from Peking (and now seems to be receiving again) and despite the support it has received from Mao-Stalinist groups in Europe (because of its Maoistic verbiage), UNITA appears to be a central piece in the neocolonial strategy. This is attested by the support it gets from certain white colons (especially Falcão's FUA). Its current tactic in deceiving the Angolan masses consists in "playing down" its embarrassing contacts with the white colons and in affirming its will "to construct a socialist society," for the Angolan people are "extremely intransigent" at the present time and are suspicious of organizations subject to "external influences." This organization claims that it is playing a "mediating role in the government alliance," but the natural bent of rightist nationalism is pushing it into close collaboration with the FNLA. UNITA defines itself as a "force for union, peace, and harmony among the races and the various sectors and layers of the population"; it deploys its efforts "in the direction of maintaining order" (capitalist order, that is), as was expressed in Savimbi's behavior when he exhorted striking workers in Luanda to return to work and himself went to work in their place.

In this context, the essential function of the transition government is to prepare the neocolonial juridico-political framework for guaranteeing that when independence comes, there will be a transfer of power without any popular anticapitalist mobilization of any scope. The initial measures taken last February perfectly attest to this concern. For example, after the clashes in Luanda "all popular assemblies" were prohibited, while the council of ministers called on "the workers and the trade-union bodies to suspend all strikes until the transition government takes the measures necessary for arranging to safeguard the rights of the laboring classes."

As for the MPLA, which we do not place in the same category with the FNLA and UNITA, its heterogeneity, political weakness, and bureaucratic deviations are the factors serving to integrate it into the colonial process. Its acceptance of the Alvor "compromise" — an act that falls within the general lines of the opportunist decisions that have been bureaucratically made by the leadership under

the pressure of the neocolonial states — is the direct product of its political weaknesses (and secondarily of Stalinist influence). This iron collar prevents the MPLA as a whole from going beyond its present policy of strictly tactical reliance on the mass movement in the framework of a reformist project with only a narrowly national dimension. This is especially ominous in that a disquieting process of unification is going on among the FNLA, UNITA, and the most rightist elements of the MPLA around the denunciation of "strikes that place the national economy in danger" and around the call for collaboration with "the political formations that were not present at Alvor," thus laying the basis for broadening the transition government to the right.

This policy of the leadership of the MPLA, far from permitting the reduction of the intensity of the inevitable social clashes between the laboring masses and the various representatives of capitalist interests in Angola, instead lays the groundwork for a capitulation to those interests.

For a revolutionary alternative

Nevertheless, the mobilization on which the MPLA has been forced to base itself is engendering a dynamic of struggle that is entering into opposition with the leadership's opportunist policy toward the petty bourgeoisie and the "liberal" fraction of the colonial bourgeoisie, thus accentuating the internal contradictions of the movement. The bureaucratic practice of the leadership and the limits it has set on the mobilization of the workers are factors that permit the radicalization of rank-and-file militants who are in direct contact with the popular mobilization. Further, the MPLA's participation in the state apparatus intensifies the neocolonial pressures on the organization, while at the same time the leadership's political independence of the militant rank and file is growing.

This organization is the object of a twofold evolution today: On the one hand, the Neto current is growing in strength and the other two tendencies that emerged at the last congress have been eliminated; on the other hand, there has begun a radicalization of the rank and file and a fragmenting within the local committees, which are permeated by many political currents. This twofold evolution was expressed in the latest decisions of the MPLA central committee (February 1975). While a reorganization was planned so that the MPLA "would follow a mass line more consistently" and so that "a close link between the rank and file and the top leadership" might be established, the MPLA's support for the transition government and its willingness to "collaborate with it closely" was reaffirmed. This organization, with its multiclassist aspirations,

has always hidden its lack of debate and internal democratic life behind the vague terms "real independence" or "national and democratic government" (and today, "people's power"). This absence of debate and democratic life within the organization is now being expressed in the organization's extreme heterogeneity and in the omnipotence of a political leadership representing a reformist nationalist current.

The strengthening of the Neto current because of its "historic" prestige among the Angolan masses and because of the support it receives from local reformists is permitting the development of collaboration between the MPLA and the MDA (an organization with "liberal" conceptions, composed of lawyers and other members of the liberal professions; it is rather close to the Portuguese Communist party) and a recomposition of the internal political lineup of the MPLA.

Thus, the discussions that have been initiated between the Neto leadership and Mario and Pinto de Andrade and Gentil Viana, representatives of the "active revolt" tendency, seem to be oriented toward an individual reintegration of these elements, as is indicated by the retention of Pinto de Andrade as vice-president of the MPLA. The heterogeneity of the "active revolt" tendency was, it is true, very great. But above and beyond the "family regroupment" around the Andrades, Maoistic elements have organized and have denounced the "penetration (into the MPLA) of social imperialism through Neto." Having only an empirical grasp of the Stalinist pressure being exerted on the Neto leadership, these elements seem to have no future, as they are cut off from the mobilization of the workers and lack alternative perspectives. Moreover, a good number of these militants either have simply "dropped out" or have individually rejoined the MPLA.

The case of Chipenda's "Revolt of the East" tendency is different; here the dispute was settled much more energetically. The MPLA launched a military operation against the representatives of this faction in Angola, who appeared more and more openly as a major element in a reactionary plan for civil war. In any case, this group is reported to have recently received arms and mercenaries trained in Brazil.

But this "military operation," undertaken in the absence of any appeal for the mobilization of the workers, was justified in an MPLA communiqué on the basis of imposing respect for the Alvor accords, which were presented as the "political and constitutional bases . . . of the decolonization of our country"! And today it is through the FNLA (and soon through the government?) that Chipenda can integrate himself into the imperialist strategy, under the "cover" of the Alvor accords.

This policy of bargaining at the top and of constant reference to the Alvor accords (the disguised neo-colonial framework) can only strengthen the aggressiveness of the reactionary forces and the cohesion of the rightist currents within the MPLA itself.

In addition, it is above all outside the MPLA, in the local committees, that we are seeing the emergence in the urban centers of various political currents, among them small revolutionary Marxist nuclei, which still have indistinct outlines but which are trying to work out a strategy of anticapitalist struggle linking the battle of the Angolan masses to the struggle for the socialist revolution internationally:

*The Amílcar Cabral committees, which are publishing a journal called *Revolução Popular* and some supplements under the title *Libertação Nacional*. The twofold title of their press is itself an indication of the stagist and Maoistic conceptions of these groups, which are struggling for "complete independence" and "people's democracy." Their empirical comprehension of the embryonic development of a situation of dual power in Angola (a situation they see as opposing the "bourgeois regime of the palace" to the "popular regime of the country") does not enable them to offer alternative perspectives tracing out the road to the seizure of power by the toilers; they limit themselves to issuing general propaganda in favor of "the consolidation of people's power" and of "people's democracy."

*The Unity committees, a creation of militants of the Portuguese Communist party; they include some members of the MPLA.

*The Henda committees, named for one of the heroes of the armed struggle of the MPLA; they include Maoist militants influenced by the MRPP (a Portuguese Maoist group); these committees appear to have a base in some of the slums of Luanda.

Nevertheless, all of these groups remain within the framework of radical nationalism overlaid with gradualist Maoistic formulations. They restrict themselves to lining up behind the MPLA in a tail-endist manner and combine this with a warped notion of the "maximum program" reflected in propaganda in favor of "people's democracy." In face of the affirmation of the necessity of going beyond the MPLA with the perspective of a resolute struggle for the socialist revolution, these currents make an abstraction of the tasks of developing struggles of the laboring masses with the perspective of a revolutionary seizure of power; they cling to an almost "moral" conception of the unity of the MPLA and thus deny the profound heterogeneity of this organization.

*On the basis of the rapid spread of revolutionary

Marxist ideas in Portugal itself and of the new situation created by the April 25, 1974, coup, a small revolutionary Marxist nucleus has been formed in Luanda around the journal *Revolução Socialista*. In the editorial of its September 1974 issue, the journal explained the reasons for its existence this way:

"Angolan workers and toilers!

"No, it is not yet another party cropping up! It is only a journal, one that owes its allegiance to the workers and is for the workers; it wants to be with them in their struggles and in their daily life, to help them overcome the obstacles on the road to a truly free Angola, to an absolutely complete independence in which any sort of exploitation will once and for all be banished from our territory, to a socialist Angola.

"All power to the toilers! For an independent and socialist Angola!"

The only journal to assert that the battle for the socialist revolution is on the agenda in Angola right now, *Revolução Socialista* supports the MPLA in its mass initiatives, on the basis of an analysis of the internal contradictions of this organization and of its relationship to the mass movement; at the same time, it asserts the maintenance of the political independence of its propaganda.

Thus, the journal calls upon the militants of the MPLA and all the Angolan workers "to go beyond the phase of national democracy and to undertake the building of a revolutionary party, vanguard of the struggle of the toilers for the seizure of power, for the socialist revolution."

In spite of its still limited theoretical and material strength, *Revolução Socialista* is fighting to clarify the stakes of the present struggles of the Angolan workers by carrying on propaganda for self-organization and self-defense, by popularizing exemplary workers strikes, by denouncing the reactionary parties and their collusion with the rightist nationalist movements, and by calling for the formation of class trade unions of the workers, the only social force capable of really carrying out the tasks of national liberation by going beyond them in the struggle for the power of the workers and peasants, by forging the "revolutionary union" of the Angolan proletariat and peasantry, and by ultimately integrating their struggle into the battle of the oppressed masses of the entire African continent for the socialist revolution. ■



THE COMMON MARKET REFERENDUM

by BRIAN HERON

The first referendum in British history is presently scheduled to be held on June 5. The vote will be to decide whether Britain is to remain within the Common Market (EEC) on the renegotiated terms arranged by the Labour government. Both the Labour cabinet (by a 16-7 vote) and the Parliament (by a 396-170 vote) have recommended a Yes vote.

The stakes involved in the referendum are of objective importance. Popular rejection of the EEC would have grave consequences for capital. The British bourgeoisie needs the EEC to strengthen its market and to provide stimulation and capital for the rationalization of British industry. But more than that, capital wants to begin to bring to bear a more centralized international array of forces against the immense organizational strength of the working class, and the maintenance of British membership in the EEC constitutes one of the factors that must be brought into play to break down the strength of the British working class. While the present condition of the EEC does not make that project credible in the short run, continued membership may allow the bourgeoisie some breathing space by providing market concessions and more readily available infusions of capital.

The working-class organizations, on the other hand, while deeply suspicious of any form of international organization, are not prepared for the requirements of a new, more international stage in the struggle against capital. The contradictory sentiment with-

in the working class about the Common Market, the unanimous bourgeois commitment to maintaining British membership, and the failure of the Labor left to mount a really serious and internationalist campaign against the EEC make it look more likely that the result of the referendum will be a victory for the Yes position. That would undoubtedly represent a defeat for the working class. The bourgeoisie would have achieved its immediate goal without the workers' utilizing the referendum as an opportunity to mount a political challenge.

But a vote for remaining in the EEC would have a specific meaning beyond simply underlining the political weakness of the workers movement. Although a defeat for the working class on the referendum would not have great immediate effects on the overall relationship of class forces in Britain (precisely because the workers have up to now not linked up their basic trade-union struggles with the issue of the EEC in a direct and central way), a Yes vote would give the bourgeoisie greater maneuvering room on the political front, and this would in turn have consequences for the ruling class's campaign to push the Labour government toward some form of more stringent incomes policy by strengthening the hand of the pro-Market right wing.

At present, it appears likely that continued membership in the EEC will be approved in the referendum. Two of the major reasons for this are the situation prevailing in the working class and, linked to

that, the sort of anti-EEC campaign being waged by the Labour left opponents of Market membership.

Attitude of the working class

Working-class sentiment on the question of British EEC membership is clearly divided. Figures from opinion polls indicate that some 48% of the population would vote for Britain to stay in the EEC and only 34% against. (Opinion Research Centre poll published in March.) Later polls indicate that the trend is toward greater support for the EEC. Even in Scotland, one of the strongest centers of opposition to the Common Market, polls show that 37% want Britain to stay in the EEC (compared with 34% in March and only 29% in February). At the same time, the percentage of "don't knows" has risen from 23% to 27%. A poll of Labour supporters in Scotland indicates a sizable minority (29%) in favor of remaining in the EEC. Further south, the proportion of Labour voters who will cast Yes ballots is larger. While caution is indicated (because of the large number of undecided voters, the number of likely abstentions, the fact that the campaign is still in its early stages, and the general unreliability of opinion polls), certain conclusions can nevertheless be drawn.

Clearly, at this stage a significant section of the working class is not opposed to membership in the EEC. Moreover, the large number of "don't knows" demonstrates that there has not been a deep polarization of society on the issue. Part of the reason for the lack of polarization is the sort of campaign the left, particularly in the Labour party, has been waging. But the nature of the campaign and the attitudes of the masses of workers are mutually reinforcing.

In addition, there are objective factors explaining why the response of the working class and its broad vanguard have been limited so far. The first factor is the development of the struggle to maintain living standards in face of rising unemployment and spiraling inflation. The rate of inflation is about 20%, while wage increases are running at just under 30%. The situation looks relatively calm in comparison with the peak periods of struggle around the last miners strike, for example. (In reality, figures show that more working days were lost in strikes last year than in any other year except 1926 and 1972.) But the strikes have been relatively fragmented, a result of the remarkable fact that working-class living standards have risen even faster than inflation, in spite of the rise of unemployment. That is the price the bourgeoisie has had to pay for its lack of any effective political instrument with which to confront the unions.

But this situation has a paradoxical effect on the EEC issue. One of the major arguments of those who oppose the EEC has been that the higher prices prevailing in the Common Market (especially for food products), compared with the prices Britain would have to pay in trade outside the Market, would have drastic effects for workers. But with the rise of world food prices and with EEC subsidies to Britain for some items, for example sugar, that argument does not hold any longer. This fact, in combination with the workers' ability so far to maintain and even increase their living standards, has knocked the bottom out of the argument that the EEC represents an attack on British pocketbooks. To take up the more long-term implications of the EEC on the workers' standard of living the left Labourites would have to wage a fight against the more general moves (of which EEC membership is but a part) toward strengthening the British capitalist class politically and organizationally. That would in turn pose the problem of a political strategy to strengthen the working class — and this is a problem the major organizations of the working class are unwilling or unable to take up.

And there are other factors working in the same direction. The fragmented character of the working-class struggle during the present period has meant that the political issues involved in the EEC debate do not coincide with centralized national trade-union struggles against the bourgeoisie. The intermeshing of the struggles on the wages front and on the political issues involved in the EEC referendum could have produced a situation of deep class polarization. The working class would then have seen ruling class promotion of the EEC as but another aspect of the general attack on living standards to which the workers have already had to respond. The referendum would then have become a manifestation of the general class battle.

Instead, the EEC has emerged as a "separate" political issue in its own right. This sort of "separation" of political issues from "economic" ones is a general historical feature of the British working-class movement, an aspect of the division between politics and trade unionism. But the historical legacy is exacerbated by the left Social Democracy, which is conducting its campaign against the EEC around themes that are defined as being "above" the class struggle (the defense of sovereignty, for example). Even though the actions of the trade-union leadership in opposing the orientation of the 1964-70 Labour government, and the current actions and statements of some elements in the left Social Democracy have begun to move away from this historical division, it is a division that is not very easily overcome. Even those sections of the working class that do see the EEC as a political debate regard it as something that must be carried on by those parties

that hold the traditional monopoly of "politics" in bourgeois society. And here again, the weakness of the arguments advanced by most of the opponents of the EEC create confusion at best; at worst, they reinforce the view that the EEC debate does not matter anyway.

The result of all this is that the EEC referendum is not taking place under political conditions of the sort that characterized the referendum on divorce in Italy in May 1974: a strict lineup of the whole of society and its political parties and organizations in accordance with the position of these forces in the general class struggle.

Campaign of the Labour left

Clearly, the "militancy" of the campaign of the Labour lefts will be tempered by the prevailing moods of the working class and its bureaucracy. There would be little point, for instance, in the Labour left walking out of the government if the overwhelming majority of the working class was not in support of its position. However, an examination of the campaign the left Labourites have been waging illustrates the manner in which this campaign influences the attitudes prevailing in the working class, strengthening their most negative aspects. The main themes of the left Labour campaign have been insistence on the threat to national sovereignty allegedly represented by the "faceless bureaucracy" in Brussels (it should be noted in passing that there are more bureaucrats attached to the Ministry of Health in Britain than to the Brussels offices of the EEC) and an abstract and fraudulent "internationalism" that argues that the EEC is a "closed, inward-looking community." Apparently, the defense of national sovereignty goes hand in hand with true internationalism.

The cornerstone of the campaign of the lefts is the defense of Parliament, which is presented in classic Social Democratic fashion as a body standing above the sordid, narrow outlook of business interests. And the role of the working class is said to be that of the most consistent defenders of the present "neutral" state. In addition, the Labour lefts have been unable to break the idea that the result of disengagement from the EEC would be a retreat into a "siege" economy, which would involve drastic measures to cut imports, total rationalization of the economy (with a big increase in unemployment), and an overall restructuring of the British economy. The absence of a credible alternative economic model counterposed to EEC membership is a result of the Social Democratic left's well-known ability to avoid the obvious: The only alternative both to the EEC and to a "siege" economy is to challenge the capitalist nature of the British economy and society.

But the logic of the campaign of the Labour lefts, in both form and content, rules out this approach. In form, the campaign has been compromised from the start. The Labour lefts (with some notable exceptions, like Wedgwood-Benn) have aligned themselves with the petty bourgeoisie and with reactionary forces, sharing public platforms with them and allowing these reactionaries to gain credibility among the working class. (Such operations are essential to the Bonapartist projects of Powell and his followers.) For instance, Clive Jenkins, the leader of the Association of Scientific, Technical, and Managerial Staff (who is on the left of the trade-union bureaucracy) spoke in Folkstone on the same platform with Powell. In Bristol left MP Ron Thomas spoke from the same platform with MP Richard Body, an extreme rightist and member of the right-wing Tory Monday Club. It was only in February that the Get Britain Out Campaign considered excluding the fascist National Front, after the Cooperative Society, a wholesale and retail organization linked to the Labour party and controlled in some areas by the Communist party, made a large donation. The IMG has led a partially successful campaign against class collaboration, supported by both left Labourites and the CP, particularly in Scotland. Nevertheless, the form of the Labour left campaign flows logically from the issues around which its campaign has been organized.

The halfhearted character of the Labour left campaign is also reflected within the Labour party itself in the fight against the Labour right. Since the present government took office, the Labour left has backed down from any important fight with the right. During last winter's Labour party congress the left avoided the emerging confrontation over whether the Labour party conference was to control the conduct and policy of the party members in Parliament. Today, after a lot of noise, the left appears to be retreating again, this time on the issue that six months ago appeared to involve the threat of splitting the party: the EEC.

The National Executive Committee of the Labour party (the national leadership elected by the conference) passed a resolution against continued British membership in the Market but refused to mobilize the whole party machine behind the anti-EEC campaign. The Trade Union Congress will not hold a special conference to discuss the renegotiated terms of EEC membership, ostensibly on the grounds that some of the big unions might support the majority line of the Labour cabinet in favor of membership. When the renegotiated terms were put to a vote in Parliament, the results were more favorable to the left than had been expected (144 Labour MPs, a majority of those present, voted against their cabinet's recommendation). But during the debate in Parliament only Eric Heffer, minister of state for

industry under Anthony Wedgewood-Benn, spoke against the cabinet's line. The agreement that had been reached in the cabinet allowing a free vote in Parliament and freedom to publicly disagree with the government for those who oppose remaining in the EEC (not such a big concession when it is remembered that the majority of the Labour party, including the leadership, oppose membership) evidently does not fully extend to Parliament. Heffer is to be dismissed.

Indeed, the right wing is on the offensive, despite their minority position. Jenkins, Home Secretary and leading pro-Market in the cabinet, has been fighting against the free vote in Parliament on the grounds that the Labour party was required to vote against the EEC on the terms worked out by the Tory government that was in power when Britain first joined the Market. Finally, even in Scotland, the organization called Scottish Labour Against the Market, which was set up after the Scottish Labour party conference, and which at least partially breaks from the notion of a multiclass campaign, has decided not to use the full machinery of the party and has rejected door-to-door canvassing.

For the left Labourites, the key link into the working class is the trade-union bureaucracy. Decisive attitudes in the rank and file of the workers movement are more readily reflected in shifts in the bureaucracy's position than in shifts in the position of the Labour party apparatus. And the trade-union bureaucracy has likewise defaulted in the EEC campaign. While the two main unions (the Transport and General Workers Union and the Amalgamated Union of Engineering Workers) can be expected to play a vigorous role in the coming Labour party conference, no independent move has been made to rally the trade unions as such against the EEC. Indeed, despite its unlikelihood, some bourgeois journals are hoping that the AUEW might be split down the middle at the Labour party conference or might even vote for the position of the cabinet. The April 13 Sunday Times wrote: "In spite of their reputation for militancy under Mr. Hugh Scanlon's leadership, the Engineers have kept a low profile on the Market question. . . . In these circumstances, a vote for the Market remains possible."

According to trade-union sources, at the beginning of April the unions were prepared to spend a maximum of £10,000 on the anti-EEC campaign. The bourgeois magazine *The Economist* claimed this decision was part of a plot to "portray themselves as underdogs." This interpretation seems rather unlikely. A more likely one is that the bureaucracy is aware of the confusion in the working class on the EEC issue and has decided that a vigorous anti-EEC campaign could end up being too damaging to the bureaucracy's political control over the rank and file.

In sum, the tensions within the Labour party over the question of the EEC have not spilled over into the open warfare, wholesale cabinet resignations, and rank-and-file mobilizations that had been expected. Although the EEC campaign will likely be stormy, it is unlikely to develop into a real battering for the Labour leadership in the cabinet. The primary reason for this is the retreat of the Labour lefts. Ultimately, this specific retreat is based on the conjunctural and historical political weaknesses of the workers movement as a whole, which any brand of reformism currently developed cannot rectify, but only reinforce, and which is thrown into relief by broad political issues like the EEC.

Possible consequences

The defaults of the Labour lefts in the campaign against the EEC and the currently growing likelihood of a victory for the Yes vote in the referendum will have potentially important repercussions in the political arena. When the miners strike and the unbroken solidarity of the working class in face of the three-day week forced Heath to call the election that resulted in the failure of any party to win a majority in Parliament, the bourgeois political order was destabilized. The trade-union and organizational strength of the working class had spilled over into the bourgeois political arena, triggering a fundamental crisis. The social base of the Tory party was fractured; parliamentary government was rendered extremely difficult. Some of the basic problems resulting from that period have yet to be resolved by the bourgeoisie, nor is it possible to solve them in the immediate future.

But a successful outcome for the bourgeoisie in the referendum would break down the partial paralysis of the bourgeoisie and grant it some room to take political initiatives again. The EEC campaign is thus a test of whether a working-class upsurge on all fronts is to be expected. The ruling class is using the opportunity to push the basic trade-union strength of the working class back into its "rightful" place — out of the political arena. If the bourgeoisie is successful in this campaign, it hopes to begin to prepare to isolate the militants of the working class on a whole series of political issues. This process can in no way substitute for the bourgeoisie's absolute need to move to a head-on confrontation with the organized working class, but it does offer the ruling class the possibility of taking some cautious steps toward partial recovery from its previous defeats.

The lessons of the EEC campaign so far show that when the issue is posed of what alternative society and economy can be counterposed to present-day British capitalism, the working class as a whole,

however militant it might be, offers a confused response. The revolutionary left today is too fractured and sectarian to pool its resources and present a united series of proposals. In any case, the relationship of forces is such that the revolutionary left lacks the strength to pose that alternative within the mass movement in a credible way. The left Social Democracy is basing its campaign on the weakness and hesitancy of the leadership of the working class, which serves to intensify that weakness and

hesitancy. In the short run, the workers movement can use its trade-union militancy and organizational strength to impose an unfavorable relationship of forces on the ruling class. In the long run, however, the vacillations and retreats of the left Labourites, however crucial they believe it is to maintain Labour's electoral base in the working class, prepare a possible avenue for the defeat of the workers. In this way they also ensure their own defeat at the hands of the right wing.

intervention of the IMG

The International Marxist Group (IMG), British section of the Fourth International, is intervening in the EEC campaign under the general slogan: For a United Socialist States of Europe! The main axis of the IMG campaign is to stress the principled grounds for opposing British membership in the EEC. Essentially, this means attempting to build the broadest front of all those in the working class who oppose remaining in the EEC — on the basis of no collaboration with bourgeois forces. Within that front, the IMG puts forward an internationalist, working-class response to the strengthening of the international organization of capital. In practice, this means participating in the initiatives taken by the left Social Democrats and putting forward an alternative political line within those initiatives.

The IMG campaign can be divided into several parts:

1. Actions that challenge the collaborationist strategy of the campaign being conducted by the traditional organizations of the working class. A letter has been widely circulated projecting the socialist and working-class content the Labour party's campaign should have; it has been signed by some leading trade unionists and Labour party members. In several areas, Newcastle and Edinburgh for example, IMG comrades and supporters have raised within the local Trades Councils the issue of the type of campaign that should be waged and have successfully isolated those forces (particularly the Communist party) that want to conduct a multiclass campaign. Important victories against the line of the CP have been won in the National Union of Students (CP-led) in Edinburgh and Birmingham.



2. Actions stressing the internationalist focus the campaign must have. Ernest Mandel will be touring the major cities of the country, speaking along with a comrade of the Liga Comunista Internacionalista (Internationalist Communist League), sympathizing organization of the Fourth International in Portugal. During the tour Mandel will debate Ernie Roberts (secretary of the Amalgamated Union of Engineering Workers) and Evan Luard, Labour Member of Parliament from Oxford.

3. Actions that prepare the extension of the anti-EEC fight to the struggle against the Labour leadership's introduction of forms of incomes policies and of cuts in social spending. A letter has been issued calling on Eric Heffer to speak at the Labour party youth rally against the EEC scheduled for May 31. The letter serves as the basis for mobilizing opinion around the need for the Labour left to wage a fight that continues after the referendum — not only against the EEC but also against any attempt by the right to move toward adopting measures that attack the living standards of the workers. ■



news of the workers movement and the fourth international

ITALY **ACTIONS AGAINST FASCIST VIOLENCE**



On the evening of April 16 a young student was shot dead by a fascist in Milan. Immediately after the killing, massive and determined protest demonstrations began; they continued during successive days in Milan and many other cities. The repressive forces intervened very strongly in these demonstrations; one young worker was killed when he was run over by a carabinieri truck; many others were wounded by gunshots.

The tragedy of April 16 began almost casually. Groups of youth belonging to the Movimento Studentesco (Student Movement, a far-left organization) were returning home after a demonstration. Suddenly, one group of students was approached by a small car, the passengers of which began to insult and provoke the demonstrators. Some of the demonstrators reacted by breaking one of the car's windows. Three persons then got out of the car, all of them known as fascist

thugs. While two of them moved away rapidly, the third drew a pistol and shot Caludio Varalli, a student at the institute of tourism, in cold blood.

Within several minutes, the square in which the murder had occurred was filled with hundreds, and then thousands, of people. When the news spread that a rightist daily newspaper had published a distorted account of the events, groups of demonstrators attacked the offices of the paper, blocking the exit of distribution trucks. The workers of the newspaper themselves intervened, forcing the managers to publish a new edition in which a statement by the typographers appeared giving a version of the events that agreed with that of the demonstrators.

The following day the schools were closed in many cities; many factories were shut down, and there were very combative demonstrations. About 50,000

Italian section of the Fourth International), who have been the targets of fascist violence in various cases (in Rome, Naples, and Florence during the past few months, for example) and participated in the front ranks of the mobilizations after the murder in Milan, have not adopted the slogan of the centrists. Instead, they are developing their interven-

tion on the basis of two central points: the workers united front (as opposed to the "democratic" anti-fascist front) and self-defense of the workers and students, as opposed to refusing to respond adequately to fascist violence, as the CP continues to do in each attempt to hold back the response to the actions of the fascist commandos. ■

SRI LANKA

A NEW STAGE IN WORKERS STRUGGLES?

by BALA TAMPOE

January 31, 1975, marked an important new stage in the history of the working class movement in this country.

On the last day of 1974, the progovernment trade-union center, known as the Joint Committee of Trade Union Organizations (JCTUO), had announced a token strike of their unions for January 31 in pursuance of the "Twenty-Eight Demands" that they have publicized from time to time since July 1973. (See INPRECOR, Nos. 18 and 21.) They chose to emphasize three demands as "immediate demands":

- * Take-over of the textile industry, company-owned estates and banks;
- * An immediate payment of Rs 75 to all employees who draw a salary of less than Rs 800;
- * Payment of Rs 2.50 for every point increase in the Cost of Living Index.

In a leaflet dated January 20, 1975, the Ceylon Mercantile Union (CMU) expressed the view that the JCTUO could not be expected to launch any genuine struggle on its "demands," since it was controlled by the three parties represented in the government, namely the Sri Lanka Freedom party (SLFP), the Lanka Sama Samaja party (LSSP), and the Communist party (Moscow). The JCTUO, said the CMU, "is essentially a tool of the government." For that reason, the CMU decided to call a token strike on January 31 to focus mass attention not only on the three demands publicized by the JCTUO, but more so on others, namely:

- * For the ending of the Emergency and the restoration of democratic rights and civil liberties, including the right to strike;
- * For the repeal of repressive and reactionary legislation like the Public Security Act and the Criminal Justice Commissions Act;
- * For the unconditional release of all political prisoners;

- * For the reinstatement of all workers dismissed under the Essential Services Order and the restoration of all rights taken away from workers under cover of the Emergency;
- * For compulsory food production on the plantations;
- * For adequate rations of essential foodstuffs at reasonable prices;
- * For the restoration of the eight-hour day as a maximum under the law.

The CMU also called upon other unions not associated with the JCTUO to take part in a token strike on January 31 on the same or similar demands. The CMU thus posed the question of a token general strike of the entire organized working class on January 31 to recover freedoms as well as to protect the living standards of the masses of the people, including the working class.

It was in that situation that, on January 29, the very day on which a general membership meeting of the CMU was held to endorse the token strike decision of the General Council of the union, the JCTUO leadership hastily announced that they had decided "to suspend the token strike scheduled for January 31." They published a statement to the effect that they had met with the prime minister and members of the cabinet on January 28 and that the positions of the government on the three "immediate demands" they had "presented" was as follows:

1. The question of nationalizing essential industries had "engaged the attention of the parties of the United Front and a decision on this" would be communicated to the JCTUO.
2. An additional payment of Rs 25 would be made "to all employees drawing a salary of less than Rs 800 a month in the government, corporation, local government, and cooperative sectors; and

people took part in the Milan demonstration. During and after these demonstrations, there were vigorous attacks against offices of the Movimento Sociale Italiano (MSI — Italian Social Movement) and other fascist organizations, against the editorial offices of a fascist paper, and against various public establishments owned by fascists or frequented by members of fascist goon squads. The most dramatic clashes occurred in the area around the regional headquarters of the MSI, which was defended by the police. Several carabinieri units fired into the crowd, and several trucks drove through the crowds at high speeds. It was one of these trucks that killed the worker Giovanni Zibecchi. Big demonstrations also took place on April 18 in Milan, Rome, and many other cities.

The new incident of violence stirred especially great emotion because in preceding days the fascists had attempted to carry out two other attacks (which just barely failed): one against the Florence-Rome railroad line, and the other against the headquarters of the regional administration of Ancona. Only a short time before, a fascist bomb had destroyed part of the apartment of the editor of *Avanti*, the daily newspaper of the Italian Socialist party; the editor was saved only because he was temporarily out when the bomb went off.

All these incidents clearly indicate that the fascist and parafascist groups that aim at using terrorism and indiscriminate violence to accelerate the crisis of the regime have not at all renounced their plans. Since December 1969 they have struck on many occasions, provoking moments of extreme tension. It is hardly necessary to state that they have been able and are still able to do this because they can count on important aid and complicity. Terrorists and potential putschists have allies and inspirers in certain circles of the military, and even more so in the secret services — not to mention the police, in regard to which the case of Rome is illustrative. The fascist gangs there act with impunity, especially in certain areas of the city, even though the members of these gangs are well known. At the end of last February, after incidents in which a fascist Greek student, a member of the Italian fascist university organization, was killed under circumstances that were far from clear, bands of fascist goons committed repeated acts of violence for several days, without any sort of police intervention. The fascists also find not inconsequential complicity among the magistrates. In fact, the judges often act even more openly than the police. Many of the best-known members of the fascist gangs have been arrested at least once on serious charges, only to be quickly released by sympathetic judges, especially in Rome. Some of these cases have been so serious that even the minister of the interior felt compelled to address some criticism

against certain judges during a parliamentary debate on April 17.

The mass response to the attacks and acts of violence and intimidation has been very strong. This explains why the fascists have been unable to go beyond isolated actions or terrorist attacks. There have still not been actions of the type that were carried out by the fascist gangs at the beginning of the 1920s, when the workers movement and its organizations were directly and openly attacked. This has been made impossible by the current relationship of forces.

The Communist and Socialist parties and the trade-union organizations are talking about the necessity of waging an intense campaign of struggle against the fascists, often taking the initiative in demonstrations. The trade unions in particular called for a one-hour national general strike on April 18. Nevertheless, the axis of their campaign continues to be "democratic" antifascism, that is, the call for a front of all the so-called constitutionalist parties, including the Christian Democracy. A campaign is now being conducted to collect one million signatures on a petition asking the government and the authorities to apply the law against fascism and prevent the activity of the fascist gangs. The Christian Democracy especially is participating in this campaign, seeking to make people forget that it has been part of the government for more than thirty years now. In response to pressure from its rank and file and in order to close off the space on its left, the Communist party has on some occasions not refused to take the initiative in more decisive mobilizations. One example: the March 7 mobilization in Milan to prevent a fascist demonstration, a mobilization that the partisan organizations and trade unions had made a decisive contribution to building (about 25,000 people were mobilized in a short time, a good number of them workers).

The centrist organizations — *Manifesto*, *Lotta Continua*, *Avanguardia Operaia* — are also waging a signature campaign, around the slogan "Outlaw the MSI." Many militants of these groups offer their own particular interpretation of this slogan: They insist that it is necessary to make it impossible for the MSI to function legally (and they are not opposed to carrying out very hard commando actions to attain that goal). But ambiguity remains on the political level. They offer the outlet of a legal solution to the struggle against fascism and defend the illusion that a "constitutional" solution to the problem is possible. They seek to link up with persons and forces that certainly do not give a revolutionary orientation to the antifascist campaign.

For this reason, the militants of the *Gruppi Comunisti Rivoluzionari* (Revolutionary Communist Groups,

"on the question of implementing this decision in respect of private sector employees enjoying the non-recurring gratuity, and plantation employees," the government would summon a conference of the Employers' Federation and the unions for further discussion.

3. A committee was to be appointed to "determine a realistic Cost of Living Index."

When the JCTUO leadership tried to convince their own union representatives at a meeting at Saraswathie Hall, Colombo, that the position set out above was considered sufficient to justify calling off the token strike, they were met with strong protests and even hoots of derision. Thereafter, in many establishments where the CMU token strike took place on January 31, despite the JCTUO calling off their strike, workers belonging to their unions expressed solidarity with the CMU strike and some even resigned from those unions and joined the strike. Furthermore, after January 31, particularly in a number of establishments engaged in the export trade, workers who had belonged to the long entrenched CP-controlled trade unions in that sector broke away from the CP union and applied to join the CMU. In one company they had been in the CP union continuously for over twenty-five years. Similar desertions also took place from LSSP unions. This development threatened the trade-union positions of the LSSP and the CP, particularly among manual workers in the private sector. It became more serious for them when the Employers' Federation categorically rejected the government's request that they should voluntarily make an additional payment of Rs 25 per month to their employees, who are paid cost of living gratuities under collective agreements. In desperation, the JCTUO then appealed to the government to enforce a pay increase in the entire private sector, in order to save their positions among the organized workers in that sector.

After much deliberation, the government has finally, and with obvious reluctance, enacted a new regulation granting a 10 percent increase for workers in the private sector, up to a maximum of Rs 25 a month, but expressly excluding employees covered by the CMU collective agreement with the Employers' Federation. The CMU members covered by the collective agreement for non-manual workers receive bigger cost-of-living gratuities than manual workers in Federation establishments because the CMU won the right to a cost-of-living gratuity after a general strike in Federation establishments under the UNP government in 1966.

Since the overwhelming mass of workers in the private sector receive very low wages, they will receive less than a Rs 25 increase in their monthly wages under the new regulation. On the plantations,

for instance, where the average monthly earnings are Rs 50 to Rs 60, the actual increase will probably be not more than Rs 5. This makes a mockery of the JCTUO demand for an "immediate payment of Rs 75 to all employees who draw a salary of less than Rs 800."

The demand for the payment of Rs 2.50 for every point increase in the cost-of-living index also becomes a mockery in the light of the government's decision to appoint a committee only "to determine a realistic cost-of-living index." The much talked-of "nationalization" demand with respect to plantations, the banks, and the textile industry, meanwhile, still remains "under consideration."

In short, the false "demands" of the JCTUO and its pretences in that connection now stand exposed more clearly than ever before in its short but infamous history.

Thinking workers now realize that the JCTUO leaders cannot serve both the United Front government and the workers in their trade unions. They have now realized or are beginning to understand that no "demands" and no announcements of "token strikes" can possibly be made by the JCTUO leaders without the knowledge and prior consent of their own political leaders in the three government parties. In other words, they now see that the policy of the JCTUO in relation to the working class is to deceive the workers and to keep them passive, in continual expectancy of "favorable consideration" for their "demands" while the government pursues its essentially repressive and reactionary policy toward the working class. To combat this policy, the CMU has correctly stressed the necessity for the mobilization of the forces of the working class "under its own class banner, for effective action against capitalist exploitation and oppression under the present government or any other capitalist government that may replace it."

The token strike of the CMU on January 31, embracing as it did over 25,000 workers in over 250 establishments in the private sector and in state corporations, is an indication of the extent to which vanguard sections of the working class are ready to act today, in accordance with the class struggle line that the CMU has followed consistently for several years despite the grave setbacks suffered by the working class as a result of the treacherous policies of class collaboration that the JCTUO has followed. There is every reason, therefore, to be confident that more and more sections of the organized working class will combine with the CMU or come directly under its banner to go forward in the year 1975 in pursuit of the objectives set before the people by the CMU through its token strike on January 31. ■

FOREST WORKERS

on strike



The biggest strike in Sweden since 1942 is now being waged by the forest workers. Some 15,000 workers are on strike throughout the northern part of the country, an important new step in the class struggle.

The lumber industry represents one of the most important sources of income for Swedish capitalists — 30 percent of the country's exports consist of wood-based commodities (paper, for example). During the past two years this sector of the export industry has experienced an extraordinary boom, with profits higher than ever. This stands in sharp contrast to the conditions of the workers who cut the trees. Their incomes have not gone up significantly and have even declined relative to those of other workers. Wages have varied between 10 and 35 Swedish crowns an hour (1 S. kr. = US\$0.25), a result of the varying pay scales. The piecework system is widespread, and incomes are thus heavily dependent on the weather. This wage system places the workers under great pressure, and that results in the highest accident rate of any Swedish industry. It is the totality of these conditions that has brought all the forest workers together in a strike.

The strike had been building up for several months, with the workers holding many meetings and demonstrations, the aim of which was twofold: to pressure

the union leadership to take up the demands of the workers and to mobilize all the workers in the area. The union leaders had tried to split the workers by taking up a few of the workers demands and trying to isolate the militant wing. The tactic has failed completely. On February 22 some 1,500 workers assembled in the most important preparatory meeting, many of those attending traveling more than 300 miles to the small village of Alvsbyn, where the meeting was held. The workers at the meeting adopted the following resolution:

"To the workers of Sweden:

"We forest workers are now facing the biggest conflict we have ever had with our employers. We are determined to fight to the end for our demands, especially the demand for a guaranteed monthly salary without any work evaluation. We have demanded this several times and have used all methods at our disposal, except striking, in an attempt to be heard. Unfortunately, our efforts have produced only a few small steps forward. We now have reason to fear that this year's wage negotiations will also be a big disappointment for us, so there is nothing left to do but go on strike to break the resistance of the employers. We do not do this for the sake of going on strike in itself, nor in desperation, nor because

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of a need to demonstrate our dissatisfaction. When we fight it is to win, and we know what we are doing. Our enemy is strong. Together with his allies he can raise the whole Swedish capitalist system against us. They control big parts of the country's natural resources, almost all the factories, the shipyards, and the companies, and many big banks and multinational capital. Further, they have direct and indirect influence over the mass media. But we are not afraid of this strong enemy, for we have one strength that nothing can crush provided it is mobilized in the biggest possible way: workers solidarity. We believe we have the ability to do this. After all, our struggle is of concern to all the workers in the country. We therefore ask all Swedish workers: Hold meetings in your trade-union and political organizations! Support the forest workers' demand for a monthly salary!

"Greetings in struggle,

"The strike committee of the forest workers."

At the same meeting, the workers confirmed their previous demand: for a monthly salary of 4,000 S.kr., plus 25 S.kr. a day in bonuses. Given the unity that was established, the employers and the union leadership were unable to stop the workers, and the strike began on March 21, when 4,000 workers downed their tools.

Within just a few days 15,000 workers were on strike throughout the northern half of the country. The geographical breadth of the strike creates one big problem, however. Since the workers are spread out over hundreds of towns and small villages, it is very difficult for them to meet. For instance, some of the members of the central strike committee have to travel more than 300 miles to come to the meetings. A second problem is that the workers are employed by several different private companies and by the state. This makes it very difficult to force negotiations with the employers. The strike committee thus sees the strike also as a means of pressuring the union leadership to open negotiations with the employers. Up to now, the employers have refused negotiations, but their position will become weaker as stocks of timber begin to run out. For its part, the union bureaucracy has been compelled to demand negotiations; but at the same time it is making all sorts of maneuvers to break the strike. The Social Democratic newspapers in the region are slandering the workers daily, and Sixten Backstrom, the top union bureaucrat, has made some unbelievable statements. For instance, in reply to a demand from the workers that union strike funds be used to support the workers, he declared that this was "the most insolent thing that has happened so far. Our members should understand that you cannot handle union money in such a manner"!

At the beginning of April the workers took one step backward in an attempt to break the deadlock both with the employers and with the union leadership: They dropped the demand for 4,000 S.kr. a month. But they added a precondition for negotiations: that the employers agree to guarantee that there* will be an established monthly wage, its exact size to be determined in negotiations.

The key requirement for breaking the position of the employers is now workers solidarity. The workers themselves understand this, and their appeal has produced results. Solidarity committees have been set up throughout the country, and in many factories (Volvo, and in the mining areas, for example) funds are being collected for the strikers. Several local unions and party organizations have also supported the strikers — to the great dissatisfaction of the top Social Democratic bureaucracy. The workers have printed 10,000 copies of a "10 S.kr. strike bill," which is now being sold by the forest workers themselves and by the militants of the solidarity movement.

A victory for the forest workers in their fight for a guaranteed monthly wage would be a victory for the whole working class. It would free the forest workers from the enormous stress to which they are presently subjected and would encourage other workers to follow in their footsteps. ■

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

Issue No. 20 of INPRECOR (February 27, 1975) carried an article by Professor Mihailo Markovic entitled "The Contradictions of States with Socialist Constitutions." This article was translated from a German version that appeared in the winter 1975 issue of the Austrian magazine *Europäische Rundschau*. It had escaped the attention of our editorial board that the original, English version of that article had already been published in *The Spokesman*, the journal of the Bertrand Russell Peace Foundation (No. 24-25, winter 1972-73) after having been delivered as a paper at the Bertrand Russell Centenary Symposium on Spheres of Influence in the Age of Imperialism, held at Linz, Austria, in September 1972. This essay was subsequently reprinted in a collection of essays by Professor Markovic entitled *The Contemporary Marx* (Spokesman Books, 1974, £4. This book can be ordered from the Bertrand Russell Peace Foundation, Bertrand Russell House, Gamble Street, Nottingham NG7 4ET, England). We are very sorry about this oversight and apologize to Professor Markovic and the friends of the Bertrand Russell Peace Foundation for our mistake.

KAUNDA BANS ZAPU, ZANU

by JOHN BLAIR



Ndabaningi Sithole, a leader of ZANU, addresses supporters.

On March 28 Zambian Home Affairs Minister Aaron Milner announced the arrest of "a number of Rhodesian nationalist leaders — mostly belonging to the Zimbabwe African National Union" (ZANU). They were said to have been rounded up and detained for questioning in connection with the murder of former ZANU chairman Herbert Chitepo.

The arrests had been made at 7:00 p.m. on March 23, when ZANU members were still mourning Chitepo at his house in Chilenje South in Lusaka. Milner refused to reveal the number arrested, but witnesses at the time said armed police stormed into the house and ordered "at least seventy men" into trucks. Some of the arrested men had come from the rural areas and from overseas to attend the funeral.

At the same time, Milner announced the closing of the Lusaka offices of ZANU, ZAPU (Zimbabwe African People's Union), and Frolizi (Front for the Liberation of Zimbabwe). Only the ANC (African National Council) would be allowed to continue operations in Zambia. The registration of the other three parties would be canceled "until the nationalists honor the Lusaka accord which brought them under the umbrella of the ANC."

The possibly grave effects of this action for the guerrillas of ZANLA (Zimbabwe African National Liberation Army, the military wing of ZANU) operating in northeast Rhodesia were underlined in Salisbury by Robert Mugabe, secretary general of ZANLA. If the detained men were all functioning members of the military wing, it would cause big problems in maintaining supply lines to the freedom fighters. However, Mugabe asserted that "they would cer-

tainly carry on — on the strength of their own supplies and what they could manage to bring in on their own." Underlining ZANU's determination to continue the campaign of *chimurenga* (armed struggle), he said: "This will not mean that the war has come to an end."

This treacherous action by the Zambian government should be condemned by all sections of the international working-class movement, and particularly by the organizations active in solidarity with the struggle in southern Africa. It constitutes an attempt to break the organization that has been the vanguard of the struggle in Rhodesia. Objectively, it stands alongside the Smith regime's arrest of ZANU president Ndabaningi Sithole and the killing of Chitepo itself.

The following statement by Milner at his March 28 press conference is a vile betrayal of the Zimbabwean revolution: Referring to the murder of Chitepo, he said, "One cannot say it wasn't Smith's agents. One cannot say it wasn't ZANU." Thus, he effectively placed the militants of ZANU on an equal footing with the racist Smith regime instead of exposing the fact that the murder of Chitepo was clearly directed by the latter. The murder, along with Smith's re-arrest of Sithole, is part of a sustained offensive against the most militant and effective wing of the Zimbabwean liberation movement. The purpose of this campaign against ZANU is to render inoperative the wing of the movement that has most consistently argued and fought for the principle of immediate majority rule in Zimbabwe. If this goal can be achieved, then perhaps Smith can reach a deal with other sections of the movement, none of

which have adhered consistently to immediate majority rule and none of which command the effective fighting force in the field that ZANU does.

Thus, the Zambian government has played right into Smith's hands by striking yet another blow at ZANU.

Of course, Lusaka's action to cripple ZANU is a logical part of the whole strategy that Kaunda's government has been pursuing for the past six months in its attempts to further "détente" with South Africa. A settlement of the Rhodesia question has been the linchpin of this effort. Without this it would be quite impossible to maintain the myth that Zambia stands in the forefront of the struggle against the racist regimes. The Lusaka talks between Smith and the liberation movements were launched last December with this end in view. At the talks the Rhodesian representatives supposedly made a commitment to hold a constitutional conference with full representation before the end of March 1975. Its function was to lay out the steps towards majority rule. Smith was also supposed to have undertaken to release the approximately 400 political detainees in his prisons. Of course, nothing has been done towards these ends, except the release of about sixty prisoners.

In this situation it was fast becoming clear that the militants of ZANU had been correct when they said that the moves toward "détente" were simply a cover for the indefinite perpetuation of white rule. By making this frontal attack on the organization, Kaunda obviously hopes to persuade Smith that Zambia is carrying out its part of the bargain. In this way Smith can perhaps be persuaded to make some concessions to the "moderate" (that is, "sellout") sections of the ANC; this can then be sold to the world as a victory for "détente."

In face of these maneuvers by one of the cleverest of Africa's neocolonial operators, the task of the international revolutionary movement is clearly to demand:

- * Immediate release of all imprisoned ZANU militants in Zambia;
- * Escalation of support to the ZANLA fighters;
- * Complete end to any contacts and negotiations by any African state with the racist regimes of southern Africa;
- * Recognition that the only authority to negotiate the future of Zimbabwe rests with the representatives of the people of Zimbabwe themselves.

March 29, 1975

UKRAINIAN WOMEN POLITICAL PRISONERS IN SOLIDARITY WITH CHILE

News has recently reached the West that in the spring of 1974 Ukrainian women political prisoners in Mordovian concentration camp no. 19 launched an action in solidarity with Chilean political prisoners. The women — Nadia Svitlychna, Iryna Staciw, Nina Strokata, and Stefania Shabaturo — requested that their meager camp wages be bent to a fund to aid Chilean political prisoners. The camp administration refused this request.

The women were arrested in 1972 and sentenced to prison terms averaging five years each for opposition activity in defense of national and democratic rights in Ukraine.

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