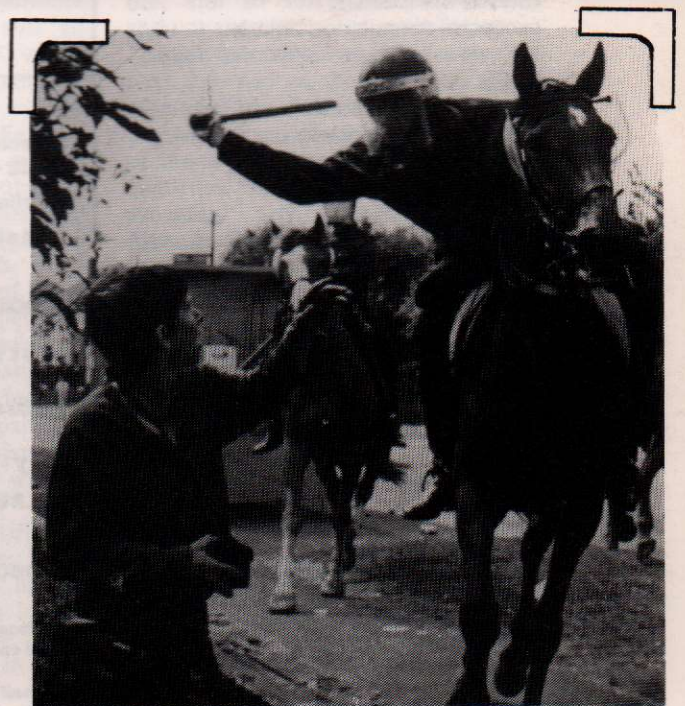


# International VIEWPOINT

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**British miners : fighting in retreat**  
**Philippine revolutionaries reassess their tactics**  
**An example of Ukrainian national honour**

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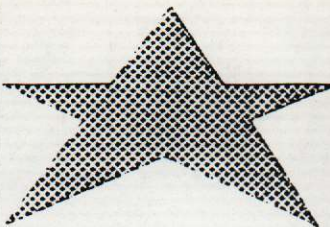
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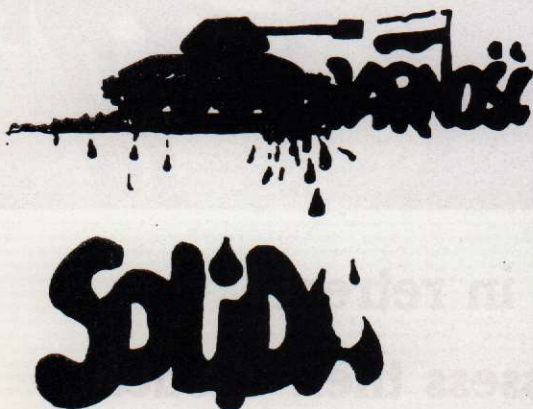
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# Editorial

**THIS IS** our 100th issue since *International Viewpoint* was founded. Our first numbers were published in the midst of mass demonstrations in Paris in support of Solidarnosc. And the pace of international politics has quickened since then.

## GERRY FOLEY

In the last few months, two long-standing dictatorships have fallen, the Marcos regime in the Philippines and the Duvalier dynasty in Haiti. In both countries, tumultuous political developments are underway that could generate a dynamic of socialist revolution.

The mutiny of the military police in Egypt was a further sign of the growing explosiveness of this decisive Arab country, the tinderbox of the Middle East.

A movement has developed in Pakistan against the military dictatorship, with mobilizations of hundreds of thousands of people, that could lead very quickly to the fall of yet another dictatorship, on this occasion not in an isolated country but one whose frontiers are focuses of crisis.

After the fall of the Marcos regime, the mass movement against the dictatorship in South Korea, a still more strategically sensitive country, is again on the rise.

Even in the developed countries, where the workers' movement has been suffering setbacks for some time, we have seen a number of important struggles, such as the British printworkers' strike, the Hormel strike in the United States and another Belgian general strike, along with recent general strikes in Norway and Finland.

There is also movement in the Soviet Union, where the bureaucratic regime is being put into a tighter and tighter corner by its inability to develop the collectivized economy.

In Poland, a mass antibureaucratic movement persists, and political discussion is deepening among forces that could lead a revolution to establish genuine workers' democracy.

The fight against the new Danube dam project in Austria, the protests against nuclear pollution in Britain and the response to the recent Soviet nuclear disaster exemplify the widespread rise in the movement in defence of the environment.

The women's movement is changing, with its emphasis shifting to defence of women workers against the capitalist offensive and the spread of movements of women among the poor and dispossessed peoples of Latin America.

The revolutionary nationalist movements that have been a major force for radicalization in West Europe over the past decades, Irish republicanism and Basque separatism, are facing new challenges.

In a number of areas also, sections of the Fourth International are having new experiences. An example is the section in Mexico, which has organized oppressed Indian villagers to take control of their town governments, played a major role in peasant organization and been involved in work in mass organizations of the young urban poor.

All these developments point to some of the more obvious reasons why we need a larger *International Viewpoint*. We need to be able to offer a rounded picture of world politics and the development of revolution around the globe — that is our fundamental purpose. We have only 26 pages every two weeks, while in the 1970s the equivalent journals of the Fourth International had 48 pages weekly to report a narrower range of developments.

But unfortunately, instead of being able to expand as we had hoped, we are now obliged to cut back the magazine, eliminating two issues a year. We had in fact been looking forward to some modest expansion. That is why we launched an expansion fund a few issues ago. There was an encouraging response.

We hope those who contributed will not be disappointed now. Their support was not in vain. It helped us make some improvements in the presentation of the magazine, such as the recent improvements in the cover.

Most of all, these contributions gave an indication that it may be possible to get the sort of support needed to maintain the magazine and expand it in the near future.

We believe that there is sufficient demand and support for *IV* now to enable it to grow. We feel that one

of the fundamental problems until now has been the lack of tradition in building a genuinely international revolutionary socialist magazine. There has not been enough experience in using the international press to complement national publications. In many countries it still tends to be a thing apart.

In particular, there has been no tradition of fund-raising for an international magazine located in a country other than the ones it serves. That is a big problem when every national revolutionary and radical publication depends on fund-raising to survive.

We think that it is essential for an international journal to be published under the auspices of an international organization. But that does not mean that there is some invisible shadow establishment that pays the bills. Quite the contrary. We need every penny, pinginn, ceiniog, yen, pfennig, ore, and so forth that our readers and our supporters can spare for us.

Such contributions, moreover, are not just for us, but for the many revolutionists who need *IV* but are deprived of resources by their struggles or the imperialist exploitation of their countries. We are already, for example, providing free subscriptions for a number of political prisoners, thanks to a very successful prisoners' fund that we launched over a year ago.

In this issue of *IV*, our 100th, we want to initiate both systematic fund-raising for the magazine and a special subscription campaign, with the very modest goal of 100 new subscriptions by the end of this year.

We appeal to our readers to begin sending contributions to the magazine — however small. In particular, we offer membership in a society of friends of *IV* for contributions equalling the cost of a six-month or year subscription. (We will send them bulletins on the progress of the magazine.)

If all of our subscribers could get at least one friend or fellow fighter to subscribe before the end of the year, that alone would open up the way for the magazine to expand.

Send money, subscribe, and help to win us more readers. The world won't wait! □

International VIEWPOINT

100

# "History advances over scepticism"

International VIEWPOINT

1000

IN RESPONSE to moods of discouragement in the West European left, the following editorial was written for the May Day issue of *Was Tun*, the paper of the German section of the Fourth International. It has been somewhat shortened for space reasons.

## ERNEST MANDEL

The social effects of the long economic depression continue to dominate the world situation. They can be summed up in a single phrase: A worldwide offensive by capital against the working class, against all the oppressed, and against their historic gains. This involves mass unemployment, an accelerated arms race, attacks on the democratic rights of the workers' movement — especially the right to strike and organize — local attacks against the colonial revolution and stepped-up pressure on the Soviet Union. We are only seeing the beginning of this offensive.

To draw a rough historical parallel, we are still in 1926-28 and not in 1932 or 1938. If the depression goes on for a lot longer, without a historic victory of the working class, without a breakthrough for socialism in decisive countries, then there is a danger of the crisis being "resolved" in a similar way to that of the 1930s, that is, first a terrorist dictatorship of capital and then a war.

At first glance, one might suppose that a grave crisis of the capitalist system could facilitate the struggle for the historic alternative solution, the fight for socialism worldwide. That should be all the more true today because in our time the great soothing illusions that were articulated in the classic forms by social democracy and liberal intellectuals have far less credibility than either before World War I or in the 1920s.

Today, far broader circles than socialists are worried by the great dangers that threaten human civili-

zation and even the basic physical survival of humanity. Today, millions of people know that if things go on this way, humanity will be poisoned by the pollution it produces and millions more could be plunged into poverty and hunger, not only in the Third World but also in the West. They also know that nuclear death could finish all of us. Many millions more who do not comprehend this rationally, feel it instinctively, and they are as anxious as those who are better informed.

How is it then that despite the deepgoing doubts about the vitality and legitimacy of the bourgeois order, the fight for the socialist alternative is bringing fewer people into motion with less enthusiasm than in the 1920s and 1930s?

There are many aspects to this problem, and some important exceptions, first of all Nicaragua and probably also South Africa.

But fundamentally, the great historical lag between the world crisis of capital and the fight for socialism is explained by the lack of a credible overall social alternative.

The socialist October revolution of 1917 in Russia represented such an alternative, and it was perceived as such, among other things, because the pre-1914 socialist movement had prepared major sections of the world working class to see such a revolution as the inevitable outcome of the contradictions of bourgeois society.

In the 1920s and 1930s, and even at the beginning of the 1940s, a large part of the international working class was convinced that the historical answer to the crisis of capital could be summed up in the demand for a "socialist planned economy." Today, the confidence in this answer has been deeply shaken.

This is not primarily because of anti-socialist and anti-Communist propaganda, because of the ideological offensive of capital, which has succeeded in having an effect. Such propaganda has always been present and was more rampant in the 1920s and in the 1930s than it is today.

The primary reason for the doubts that exist about the socialist answer is the lamentable practical failure of

social democracy and Stalinism, shown by the *real* relationships that exist in social democratic and Stalinist-ruled countries.

In neither has the social question been resolved. In neither has exploitation, oppression, social inequality, alienation of labor, human isolation, discrimination against women, or destruction of the environment been radically reduced. The gains remain very limited and insecure.

## Alternative solutions

It is true that there is a Marxist, that is, scientific explanation for this failure of the traditional workers' organizations. It is no less true that there are alternative solutions to reformism and Stalinism — the democratic power of workers' councils based on genuine socialist democracy, with a legal opposition, with a multiparty system, free trade unions, free access to the media, with public democratic inspection and with control by the working people over the goods they produce.

However, this alternative remains on paper, in the socialist program, in socialist literature, in socialist movements that represent only a small minority in the workers' movement.

In view of the many failures there have been, the program alone is not enough to overcome the scepticism. Therefore, while millions of people go onto the streets to fight for immediate demands, they are not consciously mobilizing for a socialist goal.

However, history advances over disillusion, scepticism and partial defeats just as it did in the past over partial successes. The fundamental tendencies of our century are the crisis of bourgeois society and the rise of the working class. They are stronger in the long run than disillusion and scepticism. There are today a billion wage workers in the world, incomparably more numerous and better educated than their predecessors 80, 50 or even 30 years ago.

We are fighting against austerity

and the threat of war, against dictatorship and oppression, against women's oppression and racism, against pollution, against inhuman conditions throughout the world. Partial struggles will increasingly bring success. Out of these partial struggles, a new consciousness is growing and a new workers' vanguard emerging.

Like our brothers and sisters in Nicaragua, in Brazil, in Poland and in South Africa, in the near future we will also go onto the

streets again in our hundreds of thousands to fight for self-managed socialism. We will have learned from the mistakes of our fathers and mothers and our grandfathers and grandmothers. We will have learned what is to be done and what is to be avoided.

We will win this fight in order to assure a future for humanity, a breakthrough to democratic, self-managed power exercised by workers' councils, to a socialist federation of the world. □

## After the election: reassessment in the revolutionary left

THE OVERTHROW of the Marcos dictatorship in February was a development of the greatest importance and merits the attention of every anti-imperialist and revolutionary activist. The Philippines is one of those countries in the world where mass struggles have advanced in a spectacular way, coming after Nicaragua and El Salvador and at the same time as South Africa.

This island chain inhabited by 54 million people has a key strategic importance. The United States' main overseas bases are located there, facing Vietnam and at the juncture between the Indian Ocean and the Pacific. It is therefore urgent to step up active internationalist solidarity with the Philippines. (1)

There is another reason for interest in the country. The conditions in which the dictatorship was overthrown and the situation prevailing in the Philippines now pose many questions of analysis and orientation. A study of these problems can, accordingly, clarify various aspects of revolutionary work today.

PAUL PETITJEAN

The debates among the various components of the anti-imperialist left in the Philippines touch on questions that are being discussed in many countries. They include the evaluation of the "February Revolution"; the assessment of positions advanced before the presidential election and Cory Aquino's campaign, which detonated the crisis; and the analysis of the present regime and the tasks of the revolutionary left.

These debates deserve attention. The lessons of the revolutionary struggles in the Philippines can help activists in other countries and promote political reflection based on international experience.

The overthrow of the dictatorship has created a very new situation.

The features of the post-Marcos period are still not well defined. The developments under way are far from completed. That goes for both the Aquino regime and the Filipino left. Therefore, it is far too soon to draw a real balance sheet of the consequences of the "February revolution." In every area — economic, social and political — those outcomes remain to be determined by an often complex struggle. What is more, it is hard today to find all the documentation.

Nonetheless, it is possible to present some of the debates underway in the revolutionary left in the islands, although we will have to come back to this later when the documentation is more complete and the dis-

cussions in progress have been clarified.

To start with, it is necessary to review the situation in which the revolutionary left found itself on the eve of the presidential campaign, and the political choices it confronted.

From the standpoint of the growth of the revolutionary forces, the picture of the year 1985 had contradictory aspects. The New People's Army (NPA) continued to gain strength. The mass base of the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) continued to widen both in the countryside and in the cities.

Although it had to work underground, the National Democratic Front (NDF) was preparing for the first time to intervene in a rather systematic way in all the electoral contests originally scheduled for 1986 — the local and regional elections.

This group of organizations is led by the CPP, which was founded in 1968. It represents the overwhelmingly dominant current on the revolutionary left. After difficult beginnings the CPP began to gain strength rapidly at the end of the 1970s. It has considerably widened its national base and its mass work.

Having set out on a course of prolonged guerrilla war in 1969, the CPP believes that it has entered the final phase of the first stage of people's war, the "advanced substage of the strategic defensive." It expects within a few years to reach a situation of an "equilibrium of forces" that will permit it to prepare the way for the "strategic offensive," the final stage of the struggle for power. The year 1985 marked a new advance on this road.

However, also in 1985, very sharp contradictions appeared in the CPP's united-front work. The launching of a new coalition, the Bayan (Bagong Alyansang Makabayan, New Patriotic Alliance) illustrates the contradictory character of the developments in progress.

Originally, Bayan was intended to become the broadest coalition of mass organizations (unions, peasants' and people's associations), as well as of political groups (extending from the forces led by the underground CPP to a small bourgeois modernist formation, Manindigan).

As far as the mass movements went, Bayan unquestionably shaped up as a broader "alliance" than its predecessors. For the first time, it included a national organized grouping of peasant associations and agricultural workers' unions, the KMP

1. On this subject, see the solidarity resolution adopted by the International Executive Committee of the Fourth International, published in 'International Viewpoint,' No. 94, March 10, 1986.

(Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas, Peasant Movement of the Philippines).

Before the founding of the KMP in 1985, the Nationalist Alliance for Justice, Freedom and Democracy (NAJFD), a predecessor and today a component of Bayan, brought together local and regional peasant associations but not national ones. In February-March 1986, the KMP claimed 500,000 members and Bayan, 2.5 million.

However, as a united front of political organizations and personalities Bayan was a failure. The new allies included in this coalition broke with it at the May congress. Still worse, formations and political figures that were among the CPP's traditional allies and were in the Nationalist Alliance (such as the Kaakbay movement and the lawyer Jose Diokno) also left Bayan in May-June. (2)

### Unity dynamic breaks down

On the political level, the new coalition marked a step backward from the previous experiences. More generally, the unity dynamic set in motion in the wake of the assassination in August 1983 of Benigno Aquino, husband of the present president, seemed to break down.

Moreover, activists associated with the National Democratic Front have been losing various elections, starting with those at the University of the Philippines.

There are several reasons for Bayan's failure as a broad front of political organizations. Some people at least saw it as a very ambitious project, perhaps overly so. It tried to offer a united framework all at once for the mass movements and the whole spectrum of progressive and revolutionary political formations, as well as for more problematic allies, such as the small bourgeois formations.

Only the strength of the CPP, by far the predominant force, could assure a temporary success for this operation, which was supported on the basis of the feeling that the crisis of the Marcos regime was worsening rapidly and that it was necessary to prepare to intervene rapidly on all levels, including the national political scene.

In fact, differences seem to have arisen within the CPP itself over the very objectives for which Bayan was launched, and to have had repercussions on the unity negotiations. Finding themselves suddenly on the sidelines, the groups less committed to a unity policy with the CPP broke



Early in 1986 the Bayan coalition claimed 2.5 million members (DR)

away first. It was then that the so-called social democratic current launched the Bandila (Flag) coalition. (3) In turn, other forces that were convinced of the need for a united front with the CPP also broke away seeing themselves as "used" and manipulated. They remained outside the two coalitions, Bayan and Bandila.

The failure of Bayan as a coalition of political organizations opened up a very important debate in the Philippine left on the conception and practice of the united front. This debate in fact had been brewing for a long time. But at the end of 1985 it assumed a new scope.

Various left groups took opposing positions, but it is likely that the debate is also going on in the major revolutionary formations, the CPP and the NDF.

This debate is a comprehensive one, touching on a series of very

important questions, as attested by an issue of the bulletin *The Longer View* (published by an independent Marxist group) devoted to it.

Among the questions taken up are the following: notions of the "united front from below" (considered sectarian, a legacy of the ultra-left period of the Communist International that ended in 1935) and the "united front from above" (considered correct, a legacy of the Seventh Congress of the Communist International in 1935); the nature of social and political alliances that can be made in Third World countries with a very complex social structure; the existence of conflicting objectives

2. See Paul Petitjean, "Elections will not solve the crisis of the dictatorship," *IV*, No. 92, February 10, 1982.

3. On the "social democratic current", see Paul Petitjean, "After the fall of Marcos," *IV*, No. 95, March 24, 1986.

(building yourself and building the united front) that every party has to know how to balance in order to maintain unity; the importance given to political democracy in the revolutionary scheme for society and the attitude to be taken toward currents such as the so-called social democrats; and the Muslim question in the southern Philippines. (4)

In my opinion, the person interviewed in *The Longer View* counterposes the "united front from below" and the "united front from above" in too mechanical a way. This statement gives a highly idealized view of the policy followed in the World War II period by the Communist International and later by the Soviet bloc. (5) But it certainly touches on a central question when it points up the danger that sectarianism poses for the revolutionary movement.

The danger of sectarianism is all the greater when one current, the one led by the CPP, generally enjoys an absolute majority in the united bodies (a majority won, it should be noted, thanks to the quality of its activist work).

After the assassination of Benigno Aquino, "one could not have looked for a more ideal situation for united front building. . . . For a brief moment, it seemed as if the ghosts of past mistakes which have been haunting the movement for years would finally be laid to rest. In the end, however, sectarianism and distrust prevailed and minor points became major bones of contention. The dominant groups used their mechanical majority to resolve issues that came up. When this happened, the united front was doomed to suffer the same fate as its predecessors." (6)

It was in this context that the person interviewed pointed to the importance of the Salvadoran and Nicaraguan experiences.

Under the theme of the united front, two big problems reappear — the problem of social alliances, the foundation of which is the alliance of the workers, peasants and urban poor, which should also incorporate key sections of the urban petty-bourgeois layers; and the problem of political alliances with groups of differing orientation and program.

The CPP has at times recognized the importance of the latter aspect. In a statement adopted on the twelfth anniversary of the founding of the party, the Central Committee took note of the "development of other progressive organizations."

While maintaining that "from the beginning, the party has advocated and exerted efforts to achieve closer unity among all revolutionary and progressive forces in the country,"

the Central Committee acknowledged that "our links with other independent organizations were limited until recently."

The conditions for achieving unity were now better (more experience, more forces in the CPP, the appearance of new activist groups).

"Overall, there is now a broader base and better conditions for extending and strengthening ties and forms of cooperation among the revolutionary forces in the countries. Actual and definite advances have been made in this respect." (7)

### A sectarian and dogmatic retreat

The resolution speaks in this context of the MNLFBMA (Moro National Liberation Front — Bangsa Moro Army), the organization of the Muslim resistance in the south of the archipelago. It also addresses a range of "progressive independent organizations based in the cities, few of which have forces and activity in the countryside," in the Christian part of the archipelago. This includes the left "social democratic" current, left splits from the "old" Communist Party (the pro-Soviet PKP), such as the Marxist-Leninist Group that broke with the PKP in 1973 in protest against the leadership's capitulation to the Marcos regime, groups led by religious figures and other groups active in the liberal professions, the human rights movement, etc. [The quotations here are retranslated from French].

It was precisely with the bulk of these groups that breaks occurred in 1985-86.

In fact, the CPP's general line, which underwent an initial enrichment in the pivotal years of 1974-

76 (8) was again enriched in the last years of the 1970s and the first years of the 1980s. It seems, however, that during 1982-84, there was a sectarian and dogmatic retreat in the following areas: international work in the solidarity movement, ideological references, trade-union work, the role of the party in intimate relationships among party members (9) and finally on the question of unity among revolutionary and progressive political forces.

In a general way, therefore, with regard to the united front the CPP focused on centralizing and coordinating its most cross-sectorial mass work and on forming a "democratic shield."

The image of a party that in one hand waved the sword of the armed forces (the NPA) and in the other held up the shield of the united front (the NDF) prevailed. But in its sectarian version, this image leaves little place for unity with other organized political forces.

The present debate on the united front, therefore, involved both practices (manipulative or not) and long-term conceptions (the role of unity among political forces).

When Marcos suddenly decided to move up the date for the presidential elections, the opposition forces were more politically fragmented than they had been at any time since August 1983. This is probably what convinced the dictator to play his electoral card immediately. In fact, both Marcos and Washington saw the presidential elections as an opportunity to give a new legitimacy to a regime that had been isolated up till then even with respect to bourgeois public opinion.

The announcement of an early election caught the Filipino left short. Already divided, it was to respond to this unexpected test in a ragged way. (10).

4. *'The Longer View,'* Vol 2, No. 2, October 1985.

5. It was in the name of an anti-fascist bloc that the Stalinist leadership sought — sometimes succeeding — to isolate and break the revolutionary struggles in the World War II period, in Spain, Greece, Yugoslavia, Vietnam and China.

6. *'The Longer View,'* op. cit., p. 5.

7. The statement of the Executive Committee of the Central Committee on the occasion of the twelfth anniversary of the Communist Party of the Philippines. *'Ang Bayan'* (published by the Central Committee), special issue dated December 26, 1980, pp. 5-6. [These quotations have been retranslated from French.]

8. In 1974, Amado Guerrero published *'Specific Characteristics of Our People's War,'* which analyzed the specific conditions of a people's war in the archipelago. In 1976, the Central Committee adopted a major resolution, *'Our Urgent Tasks,'* which drew a series of lessons from the difficulties with which the movement was confronted, of errors of orientation and internal debates. [Citations retranslated from French.]

9. In 1983, we find in *'Ang Bayan'*

an article entitled *'Proletarian Principles Govern Party Marriages,'* which announced, *'The Central Committee recently issued a set of guidelines concerning party marriages, the final version of which was approved after a review of the original 1977 draft. The guidelines comprise definite policies that implement proletarian principles on marriage; the rights and duties of comrades during courtship, engagement and marriage, as well as those of the collective, are set down and explained in the guidelines and the accompanying primer.'*

This document reaffirms a basic conception that was challenged in particular in the capital: "Now a single set of policies will be implemented" in all regions. I will come back later to this question, because it touches on very important matters, such as the conception of "proletarian morality" and the role of the party, which here "represents society." See *'Ang Bayan,'* Vol 15, No. 4, June 1983, pp. 9-11.

10. Here I will take up only the debate that unfolded in the Marxist and nationalist-progressive left. I will come back to the policy of the Catholic hierarchy in a later article.

The CPP leadership decided rapidly on a boycott policy, based on the following argument: These elections are a maneuver by the US-Marcos dictatorship. They will be neither free nor democratic and cannot lead to an overthrow of the dictatorship. The opposition candidates (the Cory-Laurel tandem) are not putting forward a consistent national democratic program. They retain a reactionary character. Participating in these elections, therefore, means creating illusions, pulling the mass movement backward, providing cover for the operation to "rehabilitate" the regime.

### Change would not come from elections

Of course some things were granted: "Mrs. Corazon Aquino has been carrying on a vigorous antifascist campaign, thus making valuable contributions to the people's overall antifascist struggles. . . . However, her campaign against the fascist puppet Marcos is flawed on several counts. . . . She has abandoned her previous progressive stand on a number of vital issues. . . . All this indicates that well-meaning though she may be, either she is politically naive or she has not transcended her own comprador-landlord class background."

In any case, Marcos, with the support of the United States, would maintain control of the situation. Change would not come from elections organized by the dictatorship:

"The party has taken the position that boycott is the correct response to frustrate the antinational and antipeople objectives of the US-Marcos dictatorship in this ruthless political swindle. . . . For all its meanness as a means of overthrowing the hated US-Marcos dictatorship, the snap election will teach many more among our people a most valuable political lesson: that revolution, not a rigged election, is the correct path to change." (11)

Following the CPP, the NDF (12) and the mass organizations influenced by the party called for a boycott. In the case of Bayan, its coming out for a boycott provoked the departure of national and regional leaders (temporary in the case of former senator Lorenzo Tanada; definitive in the case of Ambrosio Padilla).

More generally, the CPP leadership's analysis was subjected to a series of criticisms in which the common point was the charge of abstractness and formalism.

In fact, there was a long debate in 1975-78 between the Manila-Rizal region and the national leadership precisely on this question of

participation in the elections. The regional leadership proposed waging a common campaign with Benigno Aquino's new party (Laban). The national leadership defended the principle of the boycott.

After the failure of the 1978 election campaign, the national leadership strongly reaffirmed its position, which was maintained in 1981 and 1984. So, the supporters of de facto participation were to stress the changes in the situation between 1981 and 1984, pointing to the importance of a "concrete analysis of the concrete situation" in the definition of any electoral tactic.

The converging criticisms came from Filipino activists overseas, from nationalist and progressive figures who had participated in the boycott campaign for the 1984 parliamentary elections, from independent Marxist groups and from the CPP itself.

The early existence of an opposition to the "hard boycott" policy in CPP circles themselves is strikingly attested by the position of Jose Maria Sison. Called familiarly "Joma," Sison is the CPP's "historic figure." Chair of the Central Committee, he was the party's ideologue. Under the name "Amado Guerrero," he drafted the Filipino Maoist movement's main programmatic documents, including *Philippine Society and Revolution*.

Arrested in 1977 and subsequently jailed, he lost any official position in the party. But he has remained a very influential person, and, starting from before the elections, he declared that in his opinion it was necessary to combine a principled position of "minimum boycott" with practical work involving critical participation in Cory's campaign.

Since his release, he has returned to this debate and to the failure of the boycott policy advocated by Bayan. For example, he said the following in a very interesting interview giving to the Australian weekly *Direct Action*: "I took a minimum boycott stand together with a critical participation stand, which I think were complimentary with each other. They placed Marcos in a no-win situation. I was actually proposing a boycott; although it seemed there was a decision to have a maximum boycott. . . . People were allowed [by the New People's Army] to vote in peace. Of course, Aquino was able to reach out to millions of people at Luneta Park, whereas Bayan could get a few thousand, but that is very small. Really there was some basis for the criticism that the left sort of cut itself off from the masses. The flexibility I wanted with the minimum boycott included sharing the same platform

as Aquino forces.

"When it comes to the hard revolutionary organizations like the CPP or the NDF, they could never endorse any election staged by the United States and Marcos. But they could have adopted more flexibility in the case of the 1986 election because all the opposition parties and the electorate were enthusiastically for participation in favor of the Aquino/Laurel candidature. . . .

"The problem with playing with terms [like 'minimum boycott'] is that it can obfuscate the necessity of critical analysis of concrete conditions. Revolutionaries should always be guided by how we can get the people to a certain level and raise them up to higher levels of consciousness and action. . . . The more important thing is to look forward or decide what are the present tasks to take advantage of the new situation. I like to make use of this analogy: We planted a seed in 1968, to refer to the party. The tree grew from year to year and each year bore fruit. Came 1986, there was a bumper crop. What was a very sorry result for us — other people got most of the fruit.

"It is not true to say we got nothing. We got more civil liberties. I got released, but we got little compared to those who are now in the Cory Aquino government. In the future years, we should make sure we get more of the fruit." (13)

In 1985, a certain number of independent Marxist groups (often underground organizations), belonging neither to the CPP nor to the old Pro-Moscow PKP came together. They formed the Coalition of Marxist and Democratic Organizations. The first issue of the bulletin *New Direction* contains a resolution adopted by their organizing committee, entitled "Participation Without Illusions." The quotation from Lenin used as an epigraph indicates this document's angle of attack:

"The task of a truly revolutionary party is not to declare an impossible renunciation of all compromise, but to be able while making compromises when they are unavoidable, to remain true to its principles, to its class, to its revolutionary purposes, to its task of paving the way for revolution and educating the mass of the people for victory in the revolution." [Translated from the French.] (14)

11. "Boycott the Snap Election, Advance the Revolution," 'Ang Bayan' editorial statement, special release, January 15, 1986.

12. See Paul Petitjean, "After the fall of Marcos," 'IV' No. 75, March 24, 1986.

13. 'Jose Maria Sison Speaks,' 'Direct Action,' No. 561, April 2, 1986.

14. Lenin, 'Collected Works,' Moscow, Progress Publishers, Vol. 25, p. 309, "On compromises."





The US military passes unobtrusively through a small Filipino village (DR)

The resolution notes: "Marxism, unlike pragmatism, firmly adheres to revolutionary principles. But it also takes issue with dogmatism when it comes to putting principles into practice. Principles are important in defining our line of march, in helping us distinguish friends from foes and when weighing short-term gains against their long-term costs. But we do not look at principles as recipes for all occasions. Their rigid and uncritical application can only end in disastrous results. Revolutionary struggles would be a thousand times simpler if each strategic and tactical problem could be resolved according to a set of ready-made doctrines. With the doctrinaire's all-consuming faith in 'universal truth,' there would be no need for a 'concrete analysis of a concrete situation,' no need to reckon the probable consequences of alternative policies. Marxism itself would be rendered superfluous for it would then lose its primary function as a method of analysis." (15)

In the recent past, the resolution points out, the boycott position was justified in 1981. It could still be considered correct in 1984 after Benigno Aquino's murder, when numerous opposition forces agreed on a boycott. However, now the massive participation of the population in the vote, even where the left had its greatest influence, has "proved us wrong."

The resolution does not question

the intrinsic validity of the arguments put forward by proponents of the boycott: The elections were rigged; they would not make it possible to dismantle the dictatorial system and carry out structural changes; Cory and Laurel's program and its class character "separate them from the cause-oriented groups"; even the former senator Jovito Salonga demonstrated his opportunism by opening the door to Salvador Laurel; the United States continued to exercise a predominant weight. But all these arguments remained too general to be useful in determining an electoral tactic. If the opportunist politicians can hold the high ground, part of the blame fell on the left:

"The progressive movement shares part of the blame for this unhappy state of affairs. Had all the cause-oriented groups been unified and together worked out a common strategic perspective, we could have intervened early enough to make sure that anti-imperialist issues would occupy center stage in the campaign."

But, "if the boycott flopped in 1984, it is certain to be a dismal failure in 1986. . . . Wrongly perhaps, people see in Ninoy's widow the best hope for immediate relief from material difficulties. In this highly charged atmosphere a unilateral call for boycott by the left is a formula for isolation from the very people we seek to mobilize for many battles ahead. It is a suicidal march into a trap laid out by Marcos and US

imperialism."

Electoralist illusions did indeed exist among the masses. The only way to fight them was to go through the experience with the masses and rely on experience for "banishing illusions."

### How to banish electoralist illusions

The resolution concluded with a five-point decision: to support the candidacy of Corazon Aquino; to center the campaign on anti-imperialist and antifascist objectives; to make an explicit dissociation from the "minimum program" signed by UNIDO [United Nationalist Democratic Organisation] and Laban ng Bayan, as well as from Mrs. Aquino's reactionary and anti-Communist statements; to warn the people of the dangers to come; and the decision summed up in the following phrase: "We shall convey this message — the force that will oust Ferdinand Marcos is going to destroy Cory Aquino when she turns deaf to the pleas of the people and, like her predecessors, sells the country to US imperialism."

The supporters of the boycott, including the Bayan leadership, knew that the movement could find itself temporarily isolated, given the popu-

15. 'New Direction,' No. 1, January 17, 1986.

larity of Corazon Aquino's candidacy. But they were convinced that Marcos could keep control of the events.

In an issue of *Sunday* entirely devoted to the debate on the boycott, J. Virgilio Bautista, the director for the electoral struggles, acknowledged: "We know that boycott is very unpopular. But what may be popular may not be always right. We are not against elections per se. What we reject are electoral exercises that serve no end but further put a stamp of legitimacy on the dictatorship. We must first recall that it was Marcos who called for this election and has made sure that all the cards are in his favor. We have nothing against Mrs. Aquino. Definitely, she is a better alternative to Marcos, but sadly she has no fair chance of beating the dictator."

Bautista concluded: "Bayan is willing to risk temporary isolation." He pointed to the postwar nationalist figure, Don Claro M. Rector, whom history had finally "vindicated," noting: "We feel that we are in the same situation. Future events will prove us right." (16)

To this, Lorenzo Tanada, a highly respected left nationalist figure, the chair of Bayan on leave to campaign for Cory, replied: "The issue in 1984 and the issue in the coming elections are different. Even if the opposition is able to elect a majority in the Batasan [the National Assembly, which has now been dissolved], Marcos could repeal any law they pass or even dissolve the Batasan itself. If we win the elections on February 7, we can terminate the Marcos dictatorship." (17)

The Filipino left community in the United States was also caught up in the debate over "boycott or participation." In particular Walden Bello, codirector of the Philippine Support Committee, defended the boycott position. And E. San Juan Jr., of the Philippine Research Center, supported the position of Jose Maria Sison. (18) As for the KDP, in its publication, *Ang Patipunan*, it called for voting for Cory on an independent and revolutionary basis.

The elections took place. They were not sufficient to oust Marcos. But by crystallizing the popular discontent, arousing hopes and indignation and revealing the nationwide scope of the opposition to the dictatorship, they gave impetus to one of the most powerful mass movements the Philippines has ever seen.

In turn, the mass movement brought considerable pressure to bear on Cory, obliging her to reject compromises, as well as on the church. At the same time, it pressed hard on the pro-Marcos forces, exacerbating the regime's internal divisions and tip-

ping the scales in the top circles of the US administration.

It was the power of this mass mobilization, which was concentrated in Manila but which could have extended to the provinces at any moment, that explains the strange coalition of forces that finally put an end to Marcos' 20-year reign.

### An initial assessment of the left

Thus, it is possible to make an initial assessment of the debate in the Filipino left on the eve of the electoral test. It should, however, be stressed that judgements cannot be made from afar on exact tactics. To attempt that, one would have to have a very precise knowledge of the state of the organizations concerned, since, among other things, the choice of tactics depends on that factor. But the following four points can be noted:

1. The boycott policy as it was defined and defended by the CPP leadership in fact led the movement into political paralysis. The current that had probably done the most — through its educational, organizational and politicalizing work — over 20 years to prepare the way objectively for the "February Revolution" found itself relegated to the sidelines when the struggle spontaneously took an unexpected turn.

The movement [CPP-NDF] that paid dearly for its early involvement in the fight against the dictatorship is now often being denigrated. This is a bitter experience for those who have gone through it. But it can also be rich in lessons, if the causes of this error in orientation are really studied. (19)

The lessons of this experience are all the more important and interesting because they concern the policies of a party, the CPP, which is a genuine revolutionary party and which throughout its history has demonstrated very great capacities in political and practical work.

2. It was necessary to be with the masses in this election campaign in order to organize them from within and, in so doing, assure their independence from the parties that were officially conducting Corazon Aquino's campaign. This was necessary also to assure the independence of the masses later from an Aquino government, if Marcos were definitively ousted. That is, it was necessary to participate in the electoral mobilization on the basis of political independence, to promote the development of structures, of committees representing the mobilization itself.

3. The division of the forces

of the anti-imperialist left before and during the election campaign was very costly. The party that led the main activist forces of the anti-imperialist left found itself politically paralyzed. On the other hand, the components of the left that were able to take political initiatives, the independent Marxists, had little organizational strength.

This division continues to undermine considerably the capacity of the people's forces for independent action, even if they are proving capable of pursuing activity. Some time may be necessary to overcome the divisions of 1985. But the question of unity of the anti-imperialist left forces will certainly remain a key one for the future. Here again the lessons drawn from the recent setbacks may be very valuable.

4. The events of February 1986 raised some general questions. They include the following: the evolution of the imperialist policy and its contradictions; the role of the governmental armed forces in periods of transition between dictatorships and bourgeois semi-democracy, or new coups d'etat; the role of the fight for political democracy in revolutionary struggle; and similar problems.

However, the February 1986 events also present a number of original features. They have to be analyzed in their specificity as a basis for discussing the orientations that were tested. But this is also necessary to understand the features of the new regime, the conflicts within it and the present tasks of the Filipino revolutionary and progressive forces.

In fact, there is no simple answer to these questions, if only because the situation varies greatly between the capital of Manila-Quezon City and the provinces and between the individual provinces. (20) Here again, the debates underway in the Filipino left illustrate the scope of the problems and the stakes. □

16. 'Sunday,' weekly magazine of the daily, 'Malaya,' Vol. 2, No. 33, February 2, 1986, pp. 4-5. Senator Claro Mayo Recto (1890-1960), a member of the Spanish speaking elite, and anti-Communist, throughout the 1950s conducted a solitary crusade against US interference in the Philippines. He became an ardent advocate of national independence (political and economic) and of democracy. After his sudden death in Rome in 1960, the name "Recto the Nationalist" became the rallying cry of the radical student youth of which Jose Maria Sison himself was a part. A selection of his writings was reissued after his death: 'Recto Reader,' edited by Reato Constantino, Recto Memorial Foundation, Manila, 1965.

17. *Ibid.*, p. 3

18. See the February 5 and 19 issues of 'The Guardian,' published in New York.

19. This is one of the aspects of the debate that is in progress now and to which I will return in another article.

20. See Paul Petitjean, "The decisive tests facing the Aquino government," 'IV,' No. 97, April 21, 1986.

# Severe electoral defeats for the Thatcher government

THE LOCAL government elections and two parliamentary by-elections held in Britain on May 8 were a kick in the teeth for the Tory government. The results were the biggest electoral setback suffered by Thatcher's government since 1981 when the split from the Labour Party to form the Social Democratic Party (SDP) took place.

This article presents the facts and figures of the election results, and how they affect each of the main parties. In the next issue of *International Viewpoint* a second article will look at the wider implications of the elections for the political scene in Britain.

PETER GREEN

Opposition to the Thatcher government was shown throughout the country. The Labour Party advanced strongly compared to its electoral defeat at the last general election of 1983. But the SDP/Liberal Alliance retained its support at a level still sufficient to head off the formation of a majority Labour government.

The single most striking feature of the election for the Labour Party, and the most important for the future, was the strong consolidation of Labour's support in the big cities against both the Tories and the challenge of the Alliance. Equally in the rural areas the Alliance smashed into the Tory vote — this being shown particularly dramatically in the two parliamentary by-elections.

Taken overall the Tories lost 705 seats in the local government elections — a disastrous result. Labour gained 484 seats and the Alliance 270.

Labour gained control of 17 local councils. The Tories lost 29, although in some cases they will be able to put together administrations supported by the Alliance or independents. The SDP/Liberal Alliance gained control of three councils.

If the results are looked at in detail they show that the situation in local government in Britain is becoming almost catastrophic for the Conservative Party, confirming the long term decline of its support. The Tories now control only half as many local councils as Labour — 91 for Labour and 46 for the Tories. There are almost as many councils with no overall majority as there are Tory controlled ones — 42 councils

with no overall majority compared to 46 controlled by the Tories.

Of the 36 metropolitan (urban) districts in England the Tories now only control one — Solihull in the West Midlands. In terms of local government the Tories are rapidly becoming a secondary, or even fringe, party.

The process has gone even further in certain areas of the country, where

## Black councillors

A MAJOR feature of the election results was the powerful advance of Black Labour Party (LP) candidates — in general supporters of the LP's Black Section. In London, over 200 Black Labour councillors were elected — tripling the previous total. Ten out of 45 members of the Labour Group on the Inner London Education Authority are now Black.

In Brent, north-west London, there are 19 Black councillors making up a third of the Labour Group. Birmingham in the Midlands has five new Black councillors, all supporters of the Black Section.

Three Black council leaders were elected in London constituencies: Merle Amory in Brent, Linda Bellos in Lambeth and Bernie Grant in Haringey. The re-election of Bernie Grant with an increased majority was a particular success. The Tories had mounted a vicious racist campaign against him following his defence of the local Black community after an uprising against police harassment last autumn.

the Tories are already literally a fringe party in local politics. In Scotland the Conservatives received only 16 per cent of the vote, compared to 44 per cent for Labour and 18 per cent for the Scottish National Party (SNP). The Tories now hold only 64 council seats in Scotland compared to 227 for Labour, 41 for the Alliance and 37 for the SNP.

In Liverpool the Tories gained only 13 per cent of the vote. In the north west of England only a single town, Macclesfield, is controlled by the Tories.

These are literally catastrophic collapses of support for the Tories in local politics. The Conservative Party at one time, in 1955, reached a post-war peak of 50 per cent of the vote in Scotland and 53 per cent of the vote in Liverpool. In Scotland and the big cities the Tory vote is now literally disintegrating: the Tory vote is down 34 per cent in Scotland, 40 per cent in Liverpool, 17 per cent in Leeds, and 16 per cent in Birmingham. In the Strathclyde area of Scotland, containing Glasgow, the Tories gained less than 10 per cent of the vote.

## Alliance cuts into Tory vote

If Labour advanced strongly in the big cities, however, the Alliance cut drastically into the Tory vote in the suburbs and the rural areas.

In the by-election in West Derbyshire the Tory vote fell from 56 per cent in the general election to 40 per cent and they held the seat by less than 100 votes from the Alliance. In Ryedale the Tory vote fell from 59 per cent to 41 per cent, and a 16,000 Tory majority in the general election was turned into an Alliance majority of 5,000. These disastrous Tory results in rural constituencies confirmed the same trend seen in last years' country district elections.

The Alliance has now gained 652 council seats in the last four years. As the Alliance were in second place in 265 Tory parliamentary seats at the last general election, there is no doubt that the Liberals and SDP are poised to make major inroads into Conservative support at the next general election, which has to be held before June 1988.

It is difficult to project the local government results into the vote at a general election. But all the differing calculations roughly project Labour with 38 per cent of the vote, the Tories 34 per cent, and the Alliance with 26 per cent. Given the British electoral system, such a vote would leave Labour just short of an overall majority in parliament. □

## What next for the NUM?

**IT'S OVER** a year since the end of the British miners' strike. During that time, 25 pits have been closed resulting in the loss of over 8,000 jobs. In total, nearly 33,000 jobs have been lost in the coal industry — mainly through voluntary redundancies.

Here, Peter Heathfield, the general secretary of the National Union of Mineworkers [NUM], gives his assessment of the current situation for the union. This is part of an interview given in April 1986 to Finn Jensen, a supporter of the British weekly newspaper, *Socialist Action*.

*Question. What is the situation in the mining industry and in the NUM now?*

*Answer.* Looking first at the state of the industry, it's pretty obvious that the industry is once more under attack. The decline in oil prices have virtually ensured that we return to the situation prevailing in the mid-sixties, when coal lost its traditional markets to fuel oil. At that time, oil was being almost given away by the multinational oil companies. The Central Electricity Generating Board (CEGB, the state-owned electricity producer) is talking about converting to oil and linking this with its intention to import 40 million tons of cheaper coal each year.

So the industry is under considerable pressure, particularly when those in charge of it are prepared to apply a pure "market-force approach" to the situation. Energy can't be treated like manufacturing industry and short-term experiences shouldn't dominate the scene. There are enormous pressures with more threats to employment and talk of further cutbacks. We are still in the middle of a very difficult period.

On the trade union front we are still engaged in a legal confrontation both with the National Coal Board [NCB — the employers of the nationalized industry] and with the receiver who is in charge of our affairs. (1) But I'm not at all pessimistic about the outcome of all this, as it is an attack on well-established conciliation and consultation procedures. Ian MacGregor [the NCB's chairman] is also attacking the miners' pension scheme and the industry's social welfare organization.

*Q. Why are the union's funds still being controlled by the receiver?*

A. Because the receiver was appointed by the courts. When he came to see us in November 1985, he said it would only take a few weeks to sort out. And here we are in April and he is still controlling the union's financial affairs!

This has made life very difficult. We are prevented from functioning like a normal trade union. Our expenditure is restricted by the receiver — he only pays those bills he wants to pay, others he just refuses to pay.

The receiver has also initiated action to charge myself, Arthur Scargill [NUM president] and Mick McGahey [NUM vice-president] with the costs incurred in recovering NUM funds from European banks. It is anticipated that this trial will last from 10 to 12 weeks, and inevitably they will find two or three hours of that time to declare the three of us bankrupt. The consequences of that are pretty well known — individually we face enormous problems.

*Q. Have you resolved your pay claim with the NCB yet?*

A. No, they are being difficult, which rather proves our allegations that their attitude to the NUM's pay claim is determined on the basis of their role as the main recruiting agents for the Union of Democratic Mineworkers [UDM — the scab union set up during the strike]. They have got this queer concept that if miners aren't able to get the wage increase immediately they will flock to join the UDM. That's not the case at all.

*Q. How many members does the NUM have today, and how many miners belong to the UDM? How are you going to fight back against the UDM?*

A. The UDM stated in the autumn

of 1985 that by the end of that year they would have 66,000 members. At the end of 1985 they claimed to have 45,000 members. What is now abundantly clear — we are getting information, details from the receiver — is that it is unlikely that they have more than 21,000-22,000 members. In Nottinghamshire [an area where most of the pits were working throughout the strike], we have 4,500 loyalist NUM members out of a total labour force of 24,500. Miners are rejoining the NUM at a rate of 50 per week which is relatively slow. But if we are able to get NUM recognition in Nottinghamshire (where the NCB will only recognize the UDM at present) we are confident that there will be some impetus to that switchback. Beyond the boundaries of Nottinghamshire UDM influence is minimal. Elsewhere there are less than 1,000 UDM members nationwide.

The NUM has around 135,000-140,000 members. One of the problems that has emerged from the NCB's attempt to fragment the NUM has been the emergence of non-unionism. There are approximately 2,000 non-union members now in the industry.

In the last year approximately 25,000 miners have been made redundant and 25 pits have closed. But we were aware that seven of those pits were going to close in any case through exhaustion and so on. So the coal board has succeeded in taking 18 pits that we felt should have been retained. There are examples where there was militant trade union organization and the pit was losing money, so the NCB chose to close it. Significantly, it planned to close two of the Kent pits for this reason, but it has withdrawn the closure threat because the pits are now making a profit.

*Q. How do you explain that up to 25,000 miners have accepted redundancies instead of fighting to keep their jobs?*

A. Many miners left the industry because they weren't prepared to tolerate the new management regime. Others, with the debts that they incurred during the strike, inevitably saw an opportunity to straighten them out, and took advantage of the offer of voluntary redundancy with a lump sum payment. We think they were rather foolish. It is a short term expediency and will not help them to overcome the difficulties. But nevertheless people chose that as a way out.

1. During the miners' strike a receiver was appointed by the High Court to take charge of the NUM's funds. This was done after a ruling that the strike was illegal because no national ballot had been taken on the strike action.



Peter Heathfield

*Q. How would you sum up the lessons from the miners' strike?*

A. I would say that the principles that motivated us in March 1984 were absolutely right. The strike marked the politicization of a substantial section of the working class in Britain, which was unique in the sense that we were not fighting for more wages or better conditions of employment. We were fighting in defence of jobs and in defence of the mining communities. The British labour-movement scene at the moment is complicated because of our inability to achieve those objectives. My own view is that had the movement in total rallied around the British miners, Rupert Murdoch wouldn't have emerged. (2) The whole pattern of industrial relations would have been advanced rather than retarded as it is at the moment.

You can see attacks on trade unionists, on teachers, on printworkers and on organized labour within the public services — that is continuing. We said during the strike that it wasn't a struggle for the miners. It was a struggle for the face of trade unionism in Britain. And there are a lot of people within the movement that are now acknowledging for the first time that we were right.

The miner's dispute presented a tremendous opportunity for the whole labour movement to fight back against Thatcherism, but it didn't take up the challenge. So we face enormous problems. But it is not a question of being dispirited, downhearted or despondent, because I am absolutely confident that in the course of the next two years the tide will turn and we will reassert our influence and authority on the economic scene.

*Q. How do you think we could ensure that a future Labour government implemented socialist policies, for example, stopping the building of nuclear power stations and increasing coal production?*

A. What is important is that we

get a Labour government that is committed to public enterprise. We are already discussing with the Labour Party around a new plan for the coal industry. So we would anticipate that an incoming Labour government will reverse the present trend and bring to the industry a measure of stability that has been missing since 1979. Sadly, on the question of nuclear energy, most of the nuclear stations that are coming on-stream now were authorized by the former Labour government.

One cannot ignore the military involvement in the development of nuclear energy, because it is common knowledge that plutonium is being exported to America for nuclear warheads. No doubt it is coming back in the form of cruise missiles. We hope to call for a moratorium on the development of nuclear energy, leading to phasing out nuclear power altogether.

*Q. Why is it that Thatcher and the right wing of the labour movement still want to get rid of Arthur Scargill and smash the NUM?*

A. The miners' strike cost the British government around 78,000 million pounds. Obviously their labour strategy is to defuse militant trade unionism. They see the NUM as being in the vanguard of the British labour movement and they continue to attack us for obvious reasons.

The suggestion in Ian MacGregor's book, which is being published in the autumn, that he plotted with Margaret Thatcher to plan a strike is not surprising. What is surprising is that for the first six months of the strike Thatcher said she was having nothing at all to do with it — that it was a matter for the National Coal Board to resolve. We said throughout that period that she was deeply involved. That has now been proven.

I suppose the supplementary question that arises from that response is: why did you come out on strike in the knowledge that it was a Tory plot? Our view and the attitude of the executive is if we had not responded we would have been trampled on. It is better to have fought and not won than not to have fought at all. We resisted the pressures they were seeking to impose on us.

We didn't achieve our objective. But we think the strike had tremendous influence on the rest of the labour movement, with the recognition that sooner or later working people have got to defend their gains of the past, defend their interests — or the capitalists will take them away.

*Q. The National Justice for Mine-workers Campaign (3) seems to be a big*

*success. It appears as though the NUM wants to build alliances with forces both inside and outside the trade unions and the Labour Party. What are your perspectives?*

A. I think it is a question of seeking to extend areas of influence beyond the Labour Party and beyond the Trades Union Congress [TUC — national federation of trade unions]. If we are to make any progress at all there has got to be a lot more political activity in the communities, in the mining communities and elsewhere. We try to build alliances that will protect the interests of working people. As a socialist I would hope that a broad-based socialist alliance will emerge from that kind of development. So we can hopefully develop those kinds of alliances within the trade-union movement and within the broad left.

Both Arthur Scargill and myself said in our election campaigns that we wanted the NUM to be a campaigning organization — obviously campaigning on behalf of the miners, but also on the broader issues: the problems faced by ethnic minorities, old people, the sick and injured. We have a role to play and we feel that other trade unions should be part of that campaign.

You can't look at working people's problems in isolation. You are not going to resolve all the problems of working people in negotiation with the employers. You need to be a pressure group, influencing those in power who are subject predominantly to the pressures imposed by multinational corporations. You have to fight a campaign across the board, not on one sectarian approach, but on a broad-based front to bring about changes in society. I wish some other trade unions saw it in the same way.

*Q. Women Against Pit Closures (WAPC) is the grouping you're working most closely with. There has been a decline in their activities since the strike. Do you think that some of this is due to the fact that WAPC wasn't recognized for affiliation to the NUM?*

A. The emergence of women's organizations within the mining communities is an exciting development. The whole of the movement should

2. Rupert Murdoch, the owner of the News International Group of newspapers, has sacked 5,500 printworkers. See 'International Viewpoint', No. 97, April 21, 1986, for articles on the dispute.

3. The National Justice for Mine-workers Campaign was set up after the strike, with the support of the NUM, to fight for the reinstatement of sacked miners, the reimbursement of sequestered NUM funds and to call for a review of all cases where miners are still serving prison sentences. See 'IV', No. 96, April 7, 1986, for details.

learn that in struggle, if you have got the family, the women behind you, then you can become a formidable force. In many ways the women's action groups added a new dimension to the struggle. In the mining communities they are still meeting regularly; they are involved in some instances in community affairs and are still busy trying to raise money for the sacked miners. And they are a force to be reckoned with.

It was a disappointment for myself and Arthur Scargill that we didn't succeed in the rule-change conference in getting associate membership for WAPC. Since that time the Scotland region has accepted a proposition that members of the Scottish WAPC should be associate members of the union. And I am sure others will follow soon, so all is not lost. Many of the women are now involved in political parties. Many are very eminent public speakers still touring the country campaigning on the miners' behalf. I think that it has been an important development for the broader labour movement. From the national union's point of view we want to promote WAPC and ensure that it continues to prosper.

It is significant also that the miners' support groups that emerged beyond the coal fields throughout the country are in many instances still active and most are now associated with the Justice for Mineworkers Campaign.

*Q. The NUM made a lot of international contacts during the miners' strike. How many of these are you trying to keep up now?*

A. We are trying to administer the union with the impositions of the receiver and difficulties with the NCB. It is therefore very difficult to maintain that sort of relationship with our friends abroad. But obviously the emergence of the new miners' international organization, which we are deeply involved in, will enable us to maintain international relations in that fashion.

There are about 40-43 countries affiliated to the new miners' international and we are hoping for many more in the course of the year. We are planning a major conference on unemployment, in London at the end of 1986. It is an important development for the NUM to be host to such a conference. We will be planning another international conference for 1987 on peace and detente, which is really a follow-up to the initiative taken by the NUM in 1982 and the Soviet miners in 1983, and that's an ongoing thing. So we have a deep international relationship across the political divide, and hopefully we will continue to be involved in that.

*Q. But there have been some discussions inside the NUM around the union's international relations. You broke with the Miners' International Federation (MIF) and formed the International Miners' Organization (IMO). Some have called this an East/West division, is that the case?*

A. Not at all. I don't see it in those terms at all. We left the MIF because of difficulties that were imposed on us within that organization. But it is untrue to say that the emergence of a new miners' international was just because of the difficulties that faced us in the MIF. In reality the new miners' international — to have one miners' international — was a concept of Joe Gormley (former president of the NUM), who felt that the divisions, the political and philosophical divisions that created two miners' internationals were bad. There were those affiliated to the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions and those affiliated to the World Federation of Trade Unions. Gormley was of the opinion that a single new miners' international would be stronger and would have more influence.

There is still a lot to do because there are those who want to maintain the cold-war attitude. But the problems facing miners whether they are American, British, French, Chinese or Australian are precisely the same. So our ability to overcome those difficulties depends on our ability to work together. And I am sure that in the course of the next few years we will be able to do that.

*Q. You spoke recently at a labour movement conference in Manchester on South Africa. How do you see the NUM's role in the international class struggle? For example, what are your relations with the NUM in South Africa?*

A. We have had a relationship with the Black African miners for a pretty long time. Since the emergence of the new miners' international we have been trying to re-establish contact with Cyril Ramaphosa, the general secretary of the NUM in South Africa. It is pretty obvious that our communications to him have been intercepted. We now



'Some day, son, all this will be yours. Closed pits, no work, dying communities, no future.'

know he hasn't received any of the letters we sent him in the course of the past 18 months. However, a representative from the African National Congress (ANC) visited our national office a couple of weeks ago and he was returning to South Africa with duplicates of all the letters we had sent to Cyril. Hopefully we will re-establish contact with him.

Throughout my adult life the NUM has been actively campaigning against apartheid. I can remember in the mid-sixties resolutions being passed at conference for the release of Nelson Mandela. That seems light years away and he is still detained in prison. We have had ANC spokespersons and representatives of the South West African Peoples Organisation at conferences and meetings. So as part of our general strategy, we are helping others that have been deeply involved in the anti-apartheid movement.

*Q. What's happened about the coal imported during the strike, for example from Poland?*

A. We had enormous problems, and we still have a difficult relationship with the Polish miners' organization. They continue to argue that Polish coal imports to Britain were not increased during the strike, and it's a downright lie! One thing about Lloyds shipping agency, it tells the truth because it is interested in money — and they were able to name the boats, the ports and so on. It was all logged. Poland virtually doubled its imports into Britain during the year of the strike.

*Q. But Solidarnosc tried to oppose this. Do you have any contact with Solidarnosc?*

A. No, we have no relationship. . . . no relationship with Solidarnosc. I question whether it is a trade union. It is anti-state. Well, we have problems with them, we had problems with them.

*Q. Do you think that Margaret Thatcher and the NCB would import coal from South Africa, as they have with cheap coal from the USA?*

A. Yes, they'd do it tomorrow. They did it during the strike and they will do it again because of business interests. South African coal was brought into Europe during the strike — there were considerable efforts made to camouflage it. In fact it was sent to Scandinavia, blended with other coals and brought into Britain under a trade name, so it lost its identity. The Danes have taken a very positive attitude on importing South African coal and have completely banned it, which is a very important development. □

# Workers Opposition Alliance Program

## Introduction

ONE OF THE organizations making up the Workers' Opposition Alliance [POR – Porozumienie Opozycji Robotniczej] is the Union of Workers Councils of the Polish Resistance Movement [ZRP PRO – Związek Rad Pracowniczych Polskiego Ruchu Oporu] in Upper Silesia. This organization has existed for four years and is rooted among the workers in big industry. Its local units, which are called "workers' councils," are active in dozens of factories, mines, steel mills, transport enterprises and so forth, in which a total of around 100,000 people work.

The great majority of the activists in the ZRP PRO are young workers. Some 75 per cent of them are manual workers, and 85 per cent are under 30.

The ZRP PRO has headed up various mass actions in the enterprises in which it is rooted, such as struggles for higher wages and better working conditions. It has organized "strikes for healthy conditions and safety on the job." It has given an energetic lead to the boycott of the "new unions" and has forced the dissolution of several official workers' councils subservient to the plant managements.

The underground workers' councils of the ZRP PRO, which today are organs of working-class resistance, are preparing at the same time to lead a general strike with factory occupations, when the right moment comes, to establish a self-managing workers' power in the enterprises. The general-strike strategy defended by the ZRP PRO is intended to lead to the establishment of "workers' ownership of the factories," assuring the workers democratic and collective control of the basic means of production. Likewise, it is intended to lead to the overthrow of the political regime of "actually existing socialism" and the establishment of a self-managed republic.

An organization of activists, but not a political party, the ZRP PRO is one of the highest expressions of the political consciousness of Polish workers today. Below is its ideological-political statement, followed by an interview with a member of the executive commission of the POR.

The Związek Rad Pracowniczych Polskiego Rucho Oporu of Upper Silesia:

- Is not and does not pretend to be a political party. It is a workers' movement and relies on the allied liberating forces of the progressive intelligentsia and the society in general, which are in solidarity with the workers' struggle. It is a movement that arose on the basis of the ideology

and programmatic achievements of the independent self-managed union Solidarnosc.

- Today, it is preparing the working class for self-organization and self-management, for an organized national general strike, under whose pressure workers' ownership of the enterprises could be established.

- It is preparing the working-class cadres to lead the independent in-

stitutions of workers' self-management that would represent workers' ownership in the enterprises.

- It is working through its provisional organs – the workers' councils in the plants and the unions of workers' councils – which are the embryos of the future independent institutions of workers' self-management.

The totalitarian regime, based on a bureaucratic-police apparatus and working through an antiworking-class and antinational party, the PZPR [Polska Zjednoczona Partia Robotnicza – Polish United Workers' Party, the Communist Party], has seized the three pillars of domination in the state – the ownership that should belong to the workers, the power that should belong to a self-managed society, and the science that should be associated with free thought.

The Związek Rad Pracowniczych Polskiego Ruchu Oporu:

- Recognizes the struggle by the society for a self-managed system, for a full democratization of the state and for the right to independent creative activity.

- In the fight for ownership, power and science, the ZRP PRO sees inseparable links to the people's fight for peace and national independence.

- It considers that the working class is the only class that can assure victory in the struggle and the building of a self-managed society, as well as the development of free thought and of national dignity. The basis of these revolutionary changes will be the right of the workers to ownership of the enterprises. The workers must be not only producers, transformers and extractors, but also owners.

- The ZRP PRO adheres to the following five points: the factories to the workers, the land to the peasants, power to the self-managed society, science to free thinkers, the state for an independent nation. To achieve these objectives, it is essential that the society organize itself and assure freedom of action for political parties, that trade-union pluralism be established, that a free parliament be elected through free elections and that it exercise control over the state apparatus.

- It recognizes all the organizations, structures and associations existing in the country whose programs or platforms include support for at least one of the five points enumerated above.

- It does not seek to change the existing social system but to remove from the road of progress the obstacles erected by the totalitarian bureaucracy and to reestablish the principles on which the present system is based by ousting the anti-social, antiworking-class, antinational and antisocialist rulers of so-called

actually existing socialism, which is a version of the Stalinist system.

- In its work, it takes inspiration from the best traditions of the workers' struggle and their revolutionary assaults on power.

- It supports the struggle for social identity and national independence of the countries under the domination of the totalitarian bureaucracy, in particular the sister peoples of the German Democratic Republic, Czechoslovakia and Ukraine.

- It supports the struggle of the working class to win social identity and national independence in the countries under the domination of the totalitarian bureaucracy, especially the working class of the sister peoples of the German Democratic Republic, Czechoslovakia and Ukraine.

- It upholds proletarian internationalism in all its dimensions.

- It recognizes all international alliances contracted on a basis of sovereignty and calls for international cooperation based on the principles of equality, as well as of respect for security and national identity.

- It collaborates with all organizations, groups, structures and associations whose programs, platforms and activity do not conflict with the right of the working class to ownership of the enterprises.

- It regards as enemies and hostile to the interests of the working class any organization that opposes the right of the working class to ownership of the enterprises and will treat them in the same way that it treats the totalitarian bureaucracy.

- It rejects any agreement with the government of the bureaucracy, except one based on a full implementation of the demands included in the five principles.

- It will not recognize any organization or social movement that wants to negotiate with the bureaucratic government on a basis of giving up any of the five demands of the working class, and it will consider any attempt of this sort as a betrayal of the interests of the working class.

- It will disseminate the principles contained in this declaration and spread its organizations in other regions of the country in order to build a national organization of the ZRP PRO.

- Since the ZRP PRO is a workers' organization, it does not consider itself a representative of all of society or of other social groups and classes. It recognizes the social sovereignty of these groups or classes and their right to represent their own interests. It does not recognize the right of non-working-class organizations of a general social character to represent the interests of the working class.

- It supports the struggle of the union Solidarnosc to regain legality and recognizes the underground Solidarnosc as a union and as a social movement.

- It recognizes the right of all churches and religious institutions to work, in separation from the state, to offer spiritual services to the people.

- It does not accept the dictatorship

of the proletariat in any form or the power exercised in the name of the working class.

- The ZRP PRO considers that the working class, as a component of society and of the nation, has the right, together with other components, on a basis of equality, to exercise the state power through its delegates elected to a free parliament. □

## Interview with POR executive commission member

*Question. What is the Alliance of the Workers' Opposition [POR] and why was it set up?*

*Answer.* The POR is an alliance of various groupings within the Polish opposition movement. These vary in both size and form — some are large; some are small; several represent the editorial boards of underground bulletins (it was four of these bulletins that originally launched the POR); while others are opposition groups organized at the level of plants, towns or regions.

The POR was set up with one simple aim in mind: to co-ordinate the activities of those in the opposition who believe we have to base ourselves firmly on the working class, both in our current struggles and in our strategy, in the political perspective we present. Generally speaking, this means a strategy of developing the self-organization of the working class.

I think the POR could be best described as that current in the opposition which sees the independent self-organization of the working class as the key to success in our coming struggles, and at the same time the key to solving Poland's political and economic crises.

*Q. How does the POR relate to Solidarnosc?*

*A.* We are all, as individuals, members of Solidarnosc, and all the component parts of the POR either developed out of old Solidarnosc structures or contacts, or were organized by Solidarnosc activists. On the other hand, neither the POR itself, nor any of its constituent parts, are controlled by or responsible to the regional and national leadership bodies of Solidarnosc that still exist. Some of the groups in the POR formally

function as Solidarnosc structures, while others don't.

To understand the situation properly, you have to understand what Solidarnosc is today. I think the easiest way to explain that would be to say that Solidarnosc is simply the sum of the whole Polish opposition. With a very few minor exceptions, all groups in the opposition regard themselves as being part of Solidarnosc, that is they identify themselves with the legal mass movement that existed in 1980-81. But Solidarnosc is a very heterogeneous movement. It includes the old leadership bodies, workplace groups in the factories and mines, new inter-factory organizations that have sprung up since martial law, groups of people organized on a neighbourhood basis, and — perhaps most importantly — a whole host of underground bulletins. I've no idea how many of these there are at present — the last figure I heard quoted was around 600 coming out regularly.

It's these bulletins that are the lifeblood of the opposition. Yet they represent widely differing political positions, which reflects the growing politicization of the movement. Nevertheless, the essential unity of the movement, expressed in the general identification with Solidarnosc, indeed in the very name 'Solidarnosc', has been maintained. And of course the POR, as a current within the opposition and Solidarnosc represents no threat to that unity. On the contrary, one of our basic aims is to strengthen the unity of the independent workers' movement.

*Q. What do you mean by the "politicization" of the movement?*

*A.* The term "politicization" is generally used in the Polish under-



ground press to refer to the emergence of groups and currents on the basis of distinct political programs or positions. In other words, it refers to a process of growing political differences within the movement. This process is of course only natural; it would be absurd to think of Solidarnosc and the whole opposition as some sort of political monolith.

To a large extent, this process was already under way before martial law, but martial law speeded it up, because the independent press became the most important element in the opposition, and since the various bulletins basically had to fend for themselves in very difficult conditions, they inevitably began to develop their political positions independently. As a result, while some bulletins, particularly the factory ones, remained essentially informational in content, others began to represent distinct political lines. This whole process has again picked up speed recently with many people in the opposition calling for a more clearcut reflection of political differences within the movement and for the establishment of political parties.

For our part, we think this process is generally positive, since a healthy political pluralism can only strengthen Solidarnosc and the opposition. Such a pluralism should have a clear programmatic basis, with different groups and currents clearly explaining the tactics and strategy they are proposing for the movement as a whole.

In addition, the fact that many factory activists are calling for the increased politicization of the movement reflects their rejection of any concept of forcing the authorities into a dialogue that would result in some sort of "historic compromise", most probably involving a return to the status quo prior to December 13, 1981. In other words, they recognize Solidarnosc can never be forced back into a purely trade-unionist role, and that its legalization cannot be won by simply putting pressure on the state power or negotiating with it.

The calls for politicization also reflect dissatisfaction with the tactics currently being pursued by the Solidarnosc leadership, and its failure to put forward a coherent strategy. There is one danger here, however. Certain sections of the opposition — the nationalistic wing and large parts of the intelligentsia — see the idea of "politicizing the movement" as something counterposed to the idea of mass struggle. They have no perspective to offer the working class today. In fact, they are increasingly isolated from it, so they put forward the idea of politicization as an alternative.

What they are actually saying is: there's nothing we can do now, so let's start organizing political discussion clubs and our own little political parties. Then at some point in the future, when the workers revolt again, we can force the state power into giving us political pluralism, and then our parties can really start functioning.

That concept is in our opinion totally ridiculous, a recipe for disaster. It also reflects the instrumental way in which the nationalistic and intellectual opposition groups view the working class — as the "muscle" that is needed to bring the state power to its knees, after which the workers should go home and leave the politics to the intellectuals. The POR sees politicization in a completely different way. What we have to do is to combine day-to-day struggles with a developed political perspective. This means making the link between today's struggles and the strategy we need for the working class to achieve direct democratic control of and power over the economy and the state.

*Q. That all sounds very good, but what does it mean in practice? Your founding document, the Draft Platform of the Workers' Opposition is very general. There's a lot about strategy in it and a number of praiseworthy political principles, but there's not much about the day-to-day struggles you're talking about.*

*A. That's true, but then that was precisely the purpose of the document you're referring to — to serve as a declaration of principles. At that time, when the POR was being launched, the point was to present an overall outline of the strategy and positions that differentiate us from other currents in the*

opposition. But that doesn't mean we are not involved in concrete practical struggle.

As I've said, all the structures in the POR developed out of Solidarnosc structures or were organized by Solidarnosc activists, mostly in the factories. And it's in the factories that the vast majority of our work takes place. In contrast to many other currents in Solidarnosc — and that includes a significant section of the old leadership — we believe that struggle in the factories, mines and shipyards is not something for the future, even the very near future, but something for today.

This is in fact borne out by what is happening in Poland. Despite the experience of martial law, despite the repression and intimidation, despite the fact that many leading activists in the factories have been sacked, can't get new jobs, and are seeing their families face severe hardship, scarcely a week goes by without some form of struggle or protest action in at least one major factory, often in several.

In our opinion, this is what we have to build up, and all our efforts are directed towards developing and supporting these struggles, and in particular developing the forms of workers' self-organization that they immediately produce.

*Q. Most of the struggles you've mentioned don't get reported in the West. The media is much more interested in the latest statements of Lech Walesa or Cardinal Glemp. Could you tell me some more about what is going on in the factories and particularly what the POR is doing?*

*A. The struggles in the factories are mostly economic ones. Pay and conditions are the basic questions, although protests over the victimization of people because of political activity are not uncommon.*

The form these struggles take, and their duration, vary greatly. The most frequent are probably short, spontaneous strikes, lasting from half an hour to three or four hours. Longer strikes also occur, but they aren't typical, since the management usually gives in at once, or calls in some local Party official, in which case he gives in. The biggest problems normally come afterwards, since the factory involved automatically receives special attention from the security police, and anyone identified as playing a leading role in the strike is likely to be harassed.

If there's no well-organized clandestine organization in the factory, it's hard for the workers to defend themselves, since spontaneous action now becomes much more difficult.



Nevertheless, the vast majority of protest actions end in success. Apart from anything else the management is often reluctant to provoke any new conflict as their superiors would conclude they aren't in control of the situation. The workers themselves come out of these struggles with greater confidence in their own strength.

Please don't think on the basis of what I've said that the workers are striking all over Poland today. The strikes I'm referring to have involved a relatively small percentage of Polish industry. Still, they have to be placed in the context of the defeat the workers' movement suffered with the imposition of martial law. What we are now seeing is a revival of the combativity of the working class, although this process is only just beginning.

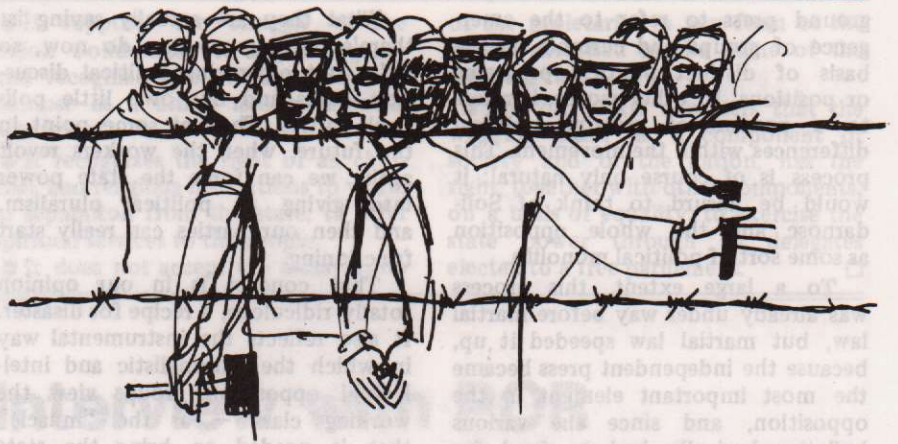
Another element in the situation that should be mentioned here is the activity of the workers' councils that enjoy the confidence of their workforce, that is the ones in the factories where the Party executive didn't manage to rig the elections. These councils have often become the forms for opposition within the factory, and many have taken a firm stand in defence of the workers' interests. Unfortunately, some sections of Solidarnosc still hesitate about taking advantage of the opportunities these councils present, although this attitude seems to be disappearing.

A notable example of what can be done is the struggle waged by two workers' councils — one in Torun and one in Bydgoszcz — at the end of last year. Apart from taking up the questions of pay and conditions, these councils also put forward two more advanced demands.

The first was for workers' councils to have the right to organize themselves in regional federations, and the second was for the establishment of a second chamber in the Sejm [parliament], to be composed of workers' council representatives. The state power was forced to mount a big propaganda campaign against them, even publishing attacks on them in the press, although the usual policy is to maintain a wall of silence on this kind of thing.

As regards what we in the POR are doing, the easiest thing for me to do here is to refer you to a recent document of ours: the POR's *Program of Current Struggle*. We published this as a special edition of our national bulletin *Przelom* [Breakthrough], and we have been distributing it throughout Poland.

It reflects the experience of the POR, and what we are doing, or want to do, in the factories. It also represents the strategy we are proposing for the movement as a whole.



We are campaigning for a united front around the two main slogans of the program: the defence of living standards and the defence of the national economy. The defence of living standards is the basic axis of our work. On pay there are two major problems. The first is inflation, which has hit all working people very hard since martial law. In fact, they are still suffering the consequences of the unprecedented price rises at the beginning of 1982, when many basic necessities went up several hundred per cent. This has been compounded by inflation of 20 per cent to 30 per cent every year since. The concrete effect of all this has been a substantial increase in the number of working-class families living in absolute poverty and a situation where the vast majority of working people get by from month to month, but have no savings whatsoever and no chance of replacing worn-out consumer durables, improving their homes, taking vacations and so on. In other words, the working class is being condemned to a vegetable existence.

The second problem is that of income differentials. The strategy of the ruling bureaucracy since martial law has been to increase these radically, in line with their overall policy of "divide and rule".

Our reply to inflation is to demand automatic cost-of-living adjustments, otherwise known as a sliding scale of wages. In fact our demands are broader, since we are calling for a sliding scale of wages, pensions, social security benefits and students' grants. As to income differentials, we are calling for automatic additional increases for the lower paid in all wage settlements.

The next question is that of working time. Since martial law, the state power has mounted an intensive campaign to increase working hours, involving the introduction of compulsory overtime, a return to the six-day working week, the statutory lengthening of the working week in selected enterprises, the broader intro-

duction of continuous shift systems and so on. The enormous paradox here is that few workers have enough to do within the standard working week, due to the disruption of production caused by bureaucratic mismanagement.

We are demanding a reduction in working hours, particularly for working women and those in the heaviest and most hazardous jobs, who normally also have to work the longest, since they are employed in "key" branches of industry. This reduction of working hours cannot, of course, involve any loss of pay. The state power's present policy amounts to shifting the burden of their own incompetence onto the working class, in a desperate attempt to increase the rate of exploitation.

Another issue we're paying a lot of attention to is housing, which is undoubtedly the number one social problem in Poland. Up to now the opposition has done very little on this, which we think is a big mistake. The POR is involved in organizing struggles around this question, and these have had a big response. We've also managed to draw other sections of Solidarnosc into work on this. The first thing I should explain, however, is the importance of the problem.

Getting a flat is the biggest problem facing young people in Poland. Many young couples, including ones with two or three children, have to share a flat with parents, grand-parents, brothers and sisters or other relatives. And the brothers or sisters are often married, with children of their own. The prospects of getting a flat are very remote. It has been estimated that, in certain cities, if the pace of housing construction stays the same, those at the bottom of the housing list will get a flat in 30 or 35 years time!

On the other hand, the select elite have no problems. Those with money — owners of private businesses, for example — can afford to build their own luxury villas. Those with

contacts — people in the bureaucratic apparatus — are given flats by their place of work or admitted into subsidized small “co-operatives”, building semi-detached houses for the privileged few.

A full solution to this problem is only possible through social control of the management of housing resources and of the construction industry and a workers’ plan for housing construction. For the moment, we are demanding a general freeze on rents, the abolition of rents for those in sub-standard housing (in some cases, the payment of an additional hardship allowance to these people), and a property surtax on the villas and the pent-houses of the private businessmen and party apparatchiks.

We are also involved in more immediate struggles against the latest rent increases, helping to organize rent strikes. This particular form of struggle can be launched easily, involves little risk of victimization and usually proves very effective. What we have also found is that many people who might hold back from other protest actions are willing to get involved in struggles on this question, which simply reflects the scale and depth of the problem.

I’d like to cite one more interesting fact here: a recently published official report on living conditions in 1984 stated that only 69 per cent of working class families had their own flat. The corresponding figure for civil servants was 97 per cent!

I should also mention certain other questions we’re campaigning around, such as the fight for equal opportunities for youth. This involves the question of child benefits and of guaranteed minimum grants for all those over school-leaving age in full-time education. We also demand increased funding for the social services, at the expense of the bureaucratic apparatus, the army, police and security services. Both these questions involve the defence of living standards.

*Q. In talking about the program the POR is putting forward at the moment, you also mentioned a second point: the defence of the national economy. I don’t really understand what you mean by that. In fact, it seems a rather strange slogan, the kind the government might put forward.*

*A. The state power talks of the national economy all the time. It talks of “accelerating the economy’s development”, “carrying out further improvements to the economy”, “consolidating the intensification of the economy” and so on. What we are talking about is defending the*

## Damian Dziubelski

IN ITS ISSUE No. 35, 1986, *Wolny Robotnik*, the organ of the Workers’ Opposition Alliance (POR) reports that in February the political police broke up the print shop in which the paper was put out and, during the operation, identified the main leader of the Union of Workers’ Councils of the Polish Resistance Movement (ZRP PRO) of Upper Silesia, Damian Dziubelski (“Dawid”).

Dziubelski had to go underground. Immediately after that, he was elected chair of the Executive Committee of the POR.

A 27-year-old worker, Dziubelski comes from a working-class family. Before the declaration of the state of war in December 1981, he was chairperson of Solidarnosc in the waterworks in the city of Ruda Slaska, where he worked as a truck driver.

In 1982, as a result of his work in the Committee to Aid the Persecuted, he was interned. In the detention camp he gained the recognition of his comrades by his refusal to submit to the repressive apparatus. Because of his firm attitude, he was subjected to several severe penalties.

After being released from the camp, Dziubelski took part in founding and building the ZRP PRO. He was arrested several times, questioned and fired from his job — “the daily bread of the Polish political reality,” he used to say.

On two occasions Dziubelski managed to escape by jumping out of a window when the police came to his home to arrest him.

*Wolny Robotnik* describes him as a conscious fighter “for the workers’ right to a decent life and socialism.”

national economy — defending it from the state bureaucratic power, defending it from the party bosses and the management in the factories.

Poland’s economic resources — its plant and machinery, its mineral resources, its whole economic infrastructure, the skills of its working class — are being squandered and devastated before our very eyes.

We believe there are three basic reasons for this: first, appalling bureaucratic mismanagement from the Planning Commission and the ministries down to the individual mine or factory; second, the current economic strategy, which amounts to the deliberate application of a “robber economy” in a desperate attempt to increase production and service the foreign debt; and thirdly, the generalized managerial corruption, fraud, theft and criminal incompetence.

These are things every worker sees all around him or her every day. When you add it all up, it looks like a conscious policy of governmental, ministerial and managerial sabotage. A Polish worker puts in an eight- or even ten-hour shift in the mines, factories or shipyards, only to see the work obstructed by organizational chaos, the products of labour wasted, expensive machinery left forgotten and rusting in the yard.

Workers also feel the effects of all this financially, since they lose productivity bonuses because obsolete equipment breaks down, supplies don’t turn up or there’s another power failure. Or simply because management can’t allow production to be

higher that month, as it would set a bad precedent and might mean the factory was given increased norms for the future.

In this situation, our call for the defence of the national economy corresponds to the gut feeling of the working class. For 40 years, the workers have been told that the factories belong to them, that the whole economy, the whole state is theirs. So they are seeing *their* economy being ruined by waste and corruption. They are working longer than they have to, to produce less than they could, and what they produce is of worse quality than it should be. They are seeing Polish industry go into rapid decay, with much of it simply falling apart.

For years now, investment has primarily been channelled into showcase projects, with little basic modernization. As a result, factory buildings are crumbling, production lines are being held together by string, saliva, or the ingenuity of the workers concerned, and the average age of industrial machinery is increasing year by year.

Our strategic objective is for the workers to take control of the means of production. But the way things are going at present, once they do so there could be very little left to control.

What we are proposing is a comprehensive program of action to expose managerial waste and corruption, to fight against it and to lay the basis for the rational use of Poland’s economic resources once these are under the democratic control



Police harass commemorators of Warsaw ghetto uprising (DR)

of the workers themselves. This means campaigning in defence of social property — in defence of the plant, machinery and raw materials the party apparatchiks destroy and sell off “on the side” to the private sector, in defence of the enterprises they ruin and defraud.

It means campaigning for proper quality standards, ones that conform to the expectations of Polish society. At present, the system of generalized piecework and ludicrously high production norms leads to immense waste in the form of useless, sub-standard products, since the only way the workers can gain a decent wage is to ignore all quality standards, which supervisory staff usually encourage them to do.

It also means campaigning for a rational organization of production and a rational use of working time, which is integrally connected with our fight for a reduction of working hours. We have no illusions that these problems can be solved within the present bureaucratic system of planning and management. But the fight has to start now.

One aspect of all this that merits special attention is the question of health and safety, which is both a function of the lack of adequate safeguards in the shape of legal trade unions and of the organization of production itself.

Health and safety standards in Polish industry are disastrous, an absolute parody of the legislation on this question, which is ignored as a matter of course. The POR is

mounting a campaign on this, utilizing the successful experiences of workers who have gone into struggle on this question and popularizing the tactic of the “health and safety strike”. This simply means rigorous observance of the existing regulations, which in virtually all Polish factories — and undoubtedly in all the mines — means bringing production to a standstill.

In addition, we are putting forward the more general yet critically important demand of the complete openness and accessibility of all economic and financial information, from the enterprise to the Government Planning Commission. This includes all foreign trade agreements and the detailed budgets of all Party and other political organizations, surreptitiously financed from the wealth produced by the working people.

Finally, we are promoting the preparation of alternative economic plans at plant level. Experience has shown that the workers are already capable of drawing up plans that both rationalize the production process and improve working conditions. This paves the way for the workers continuing production during factory occupations and lays a solid basis for the future preparation of workers’ plans of production for entire regions, industries and the country as a whole.

*Q. So far, you have been talking about economic questions. What about the strictly political questions the POR is taking up?*

A. There are probably too many of these to go into all of them. The most obvious involve political and democratic freedom, defence against repression and so on. However, the central axis of the demands we raise and the strategy we are fighting for within the movement is undoubtedly *self-organization*.

This is the key to understanding all the demands I’ve already mentioned, which are by no means purely economic, but deeply political. All of them are linked to the establishment of self-organization in the workplace, in the neighbourhoods and at the inter-factory level.

For example, the question of automatic cost-of-living increases and additional “equalizing” adjustments for the lower paid involves the establishment of “statistical commissions” to calculate the effects of inflation on working-class families and analyse wage differentials.

The problem of housing and the tactic of the rent strike poses the question of independent residents’ committees. Preparing for future confrontations with the bureaucratic power involves both commissions to work out alternative economic plans and the establishment of workers’ guards to defend the factories, and so on.

*Q. Finally, how do you see the POR developing?*

A. I don’t want to make any rash predictions, since the basic factor here is the development of the mass struggle. What I can say, though, is that the reception our ideas have been getting indicates that our current should continue to grow within the Polish social movement.

Internally, I know many of the militants and structures participating in the POR will be developing specifically political work, including the creation of revolutionary political organizations and parties.

At this time, a new branch of our current is developing — the political groups of the Alliance of the Workers’ Opposition. They are based on revolutionary democratic socialism and are accumulating political forces of the workers’ revolutionary left. For example, one of our bulletins, *Front Robotniczy* [Workers’ Front] is now the organ of such political groups of the POR in the Warsaw region. However, as I said before, this is seen as an extension of mass work, not a substitute for it.

In general, I think the POR is making steady progress in developing a revolutionary strategy for the whole social movement, and as the effects of the defeat suffered during martial law wear off, that strategy should gain wider acceptance. □

# Ukrainian "capitulates" after 30 years in prison

WE RECEIVED the following article from Zbigniew M Kowalewski. It was also sent to other left publications in Europe and North America. A former leader of Solidarnosc in Lodz, now living in exile in France, Kowalewski is the author of a book on the fight waged by the Polish free trade-union movement for workers' self-management, *Rendez-vous nos usines!* [Return our factories to us], La Breche, Paris, 1985 .

Last summer, the Soviet publication *Visti z Ukrayiny* (*News from the Ukraine*) carried a sensational report. The son of Roman Shukhevych, who was better known under the pseudonym of "Taras Chuprynka", has finally disavowed his father. What the Soviet periodical failed to report was that Yuriy Shukhevych, who is 52 years old, spent almost all his youth and adulthood — a total of 30 years — in prison because of his stubborn refusal to denounce his father. In any event, the message was clear — Great Russian imperialism had won a new victory over its mortal enemy, Ukrainian nationalism. Four months before, the top post in the totalitarian Kremlin bureaucracy was assumed by Mikhail Gorbachev, described from the outset as a "radical reformer" by the press of the "free world".

*Visti z Ukrayiny* is published in Kiev exclusively for export. It is directed to the Ukrainian communities in the capitalist countries and known as one of the "news" organs directly in the service of the KGB. In its July 1985 edition, Oleksander Savchuk proclaimed triumphantly: "I have on my desk a letter written by Yuriy Shukhevych addressed to the editors. In reading it, you sense the tragedy of a man who long followed a road leading to a precipice. He was held back, people tried to convince him, people warned him. And then finally, this man looked at his past, reflected on what he had experienced and became frightened. He felt grief and pain that he had long followed a wrong path."

After this came the following excerpts from this letter: "I, Yuriy Shukhevych-Berezyn'skyi, son of Roman Shukhevych, who was the leader of the bourgeois nationalist underground in Ukraine, announce my definitive break with Ukrainian

nationalism and condemn any kind of nationalist activity regardless of where and by whom it is conducted ... I often think of my father. Now I clearly see that he, as one of the leaders of the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists, carries responsibility for the bloodshed suffered in those years by thousands of innocent people. His death and the death of many others like him were, in essence, in vain. . . . Nationalist terror has totally collapsed in the face of the moral and political unity of the Ukrainian people, who are wholeheartedly devoted to the ideas of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. . . . My break with nationalism has been brought on by a profound evolution of my world view and my convictions, which had its beginnings a long time ago under the influence of Soviet reality and in connection with the failure of nationalist doctrines and the attempts to put them into practice, as well as under the influence of the overall hostility of the Soviet Ukrainian people to the ideas of nationalism." (1)

## Reminiscent of the Moscow trials

A confession reminiscent of the Moscow trials in the 1930s.

Who was Yuriy Shukhevych's father? General "Taras Chuprynka" died on April 5, 1950, in a battle with the NKVD troops. (The NKVD was the successor of the GPU and the predecessor of the KGB [the Soviet state security forces]). Near the city of Lvov, they had found the hideout of this most wanted man in the USSR. Since 1943, he had been the commander in chief of the Ukrainian Insurgent Army (UPA) and the chair of the Organization of Ukrainian

Nationalists (OUN). The UPA arose as a movement of armed resistance to German imperialism in the western territories of Ukraine, which up until 1939 belonged to the Polish state. At the start it had 40,000 fighters in its ranks. Once the Soviet army had driven out the Nazi occupation troops and the territories were annexed by the USSR, the Ukrainian national liberation movement continued its guerrilla war for an independent Ukraine against "Moscovite Red imperialism" and its "parasitic class of Stalinist magnates", as the UPA commanders called their enemies. Its program provided for establishing a system of political democracy and a genuine socialization of the means of production through the participation of the workers in directing the production processes and in managing the economy.

The last basic document that "Taras Chuprynka" helped in drawing up, entitled *Statements by the OUN Leadership in the Ukrainian Lands on Some Political, Programmatic and Ideological Questions*, states: "We call for genuinely free elections; freedom for political and social organizations; freedom of speech, of the press, of assembly, of religion and opinion; for independent courts and for respect for human rights. We hold that a sound democratic order would assure the conditions for a rounded development of the creative powers of the people and the individual, promote the acquisition by the people of a high political culture, prevent the formation of cliques and antipopular classes. . . . We call for building a classless society, by which we mean a society without exploiters and exploited, composed of free workers and farmers and a working intelligentsia. Experience teaches that exploiting classes can arise both on the basis of private property and on the basis of the collectivization of the instruments and means of production, unless the latter is accompanied by political democracy and power is exercised by the people, not a totalitarian party. For this reason, we are against the restoration of capitalism in Ukraine and for the complete destruction of the system of Bolshevik exploitation." (2) (Ukrainian nationalists did not realize the major differences between Bolshevism and Stalinism).

Major Petro Poltava, one of the closes comrades in arms of "Taras Chuprynka", explained: "We are convinced that our ideology is the one most suitable for an oppressed people fighting for genuine national and

1. 'Visti z Ukrayiny' (Kiev), No. 28, 1985.  
2. 'Ukrayins'kyi Samostiinyk' (Munich), No. 45, 1950.

social liberation in this decisive age of national liberation revolutions and social revolutions, of emancipation of the peoples under the yoke of world imperialism and the liberation of the workers from the chains of capitalist exploitation and oppression." (3)

It was not until 1953 that the troops and secret services of the KGB finally destroyed the UPA's guerrilla base and the OUN's underground networks.

Human beings can be exterminated. Exterminating ideas is a hundred times harder.

Yuriy Shukhevych was arrested in 1948. He was 14 years old. He had not participated in any political activity. He hardly knew his father. But he was his father's son. A secret tribunal of the Ministry of State Security sentenced this boy to ten years in prison! In 1956, a wind of "de-Stalinization" was blowing, encouraged by the "radical reformer" Nikita Khrushchev (who in the late 1930s had been a bloody ruler and Russifier of Ukraine). The tribunal in the city of Vladimir ordered the release of the young Shukhevych on the grounds that he was a minor when sentenced. But the general prosecutor of Ukraine, a Stalinist gangster called Roman Rudenko, protested and ordered his rearrest before he was actually released. "The prosecutor's office justified his protest by accusing me of trying to make contact with OUN centers abroad (without presenting any evidence) and by the fact that my father led the OUN underground (which I cannot deny)." (4)

In August 1958, when the prison doors were opening before him, he was rearrested before he could walk out. "The decision was justified by absolutely false reports that I had conducted anti-Soviet propaganda among my fellow prisoners in the Vladimir prison. The accusation was based on statements of two common-law prisoners who were agents of the KGB. . . . The charge was made against me (this was one of the main points in the indictment) that I had attempted to find out about the circumstances of my father's death." (5) He was sentenced again to ten years in prison.

A few weeks after the sentence was handed down, he was called to the office of the KGB officer Klymentiy Hals'kyi. "In the conversation, he acknowledged in an offhand way that I had been sentenced on the basis of false accusations and that the sentence was totally unjustified, but (and here I quote his words) 'anyone who holds the sort of opinions and convictions you do cannot be allowed to go free'. Hals'kyi told me that I had to prove my loyalty by agreeing to appear at a press con-



Yuriy Shukhevych

ference, write an article or a pamphlet, or go on the radio to condemn the OUN, my father, and so on." (6)

Hals'kyi was not just any cop but one of the KGB's main experts in the fight against Ukrainian nationalism. He had taken part in the hunt for Roman Shukhevych and his comrades since 1944. He gained notoriety by his repressive actions against the peasants who aided the guerrilla forces and by taking part personally in the torture of prisoners. Under the pseudonym of "Klym Dmytryk" he joined the *Visti z Ukrayiny* staff as a specialist in the history of the UPA and the OUN. (7) This is a small world, it seems.

#### From concentration camp to prison

In 1963, Yuriy Shukhevych was transferred from the concentration camp in Mordovia to the KGB prison in Kiev. The "workers" at this sinister institution took him from time to time to the theater, to museums and historical places, as well as to factories. Shukhevych quickly understood what lay behind such favors. "My suppositions were confirmed in June 1964. The KGB functionaries Colonel Kalash, Captain Lytvyn and Captain Merkatanenko demanded that I write a text denouncing nationalist ideas that could be published in the Soviet press. I asked if I could limit myself to giving a pledge to abstain in the future from any form of anti-Soviet activity. They told me that this was not enough, because a statement signed by me had to include a condemnation of nationalism in general and the activity of the OUN in partic-

ular, facts that would discredit the Ukrainian nationalists and a condemnation of my father's activities." (8)

Once again, he said "no". He served his second ten-year sentence to the end. He was freed in August 1968 but forbidden to return to his homeland, Ukraine, for five years. Far from Ukraine, in March 1972, he was arrested on the charge of "anti-Soviet propaganda and agitation". He was sentenced to ten years in a "special-regime camp", as well as to five years of internal exile. In 1979, from prison, he joined the Ukrainian Helsinki Watch Group. Four members of this group died in the concentration camps in 1984 and 1985.

In the prisons, Shukhevych waged an indefatigable political struggle. Some examples of this are the initiatives in which he took part in the Chistopol prison from July 23 to August 1, 1980. In that week, together with some other political prisoners, he organized protests against the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan and against the annexation of the Baltic states, as well as other protests against national discrimination in the prison (in particular the interception of letters written by relatives in non-Russian languages). He tried to send an appeal to the teams participating in the Olympic Games in Moscow

3. 'Vpered' (Munich), No. 4 (13), 1950.

4. I. Koszeliwec, ed., 'Ukraina 1956-1968', Instytut Literacki, Paris, 1969, p. 207.

5. Ibid., p. 207.

6. Ibid., p. 209.

7. 'The Ukrainian Herald Issue 6: Dissent in Ukraine, An Underground Journal from Soviet Ukraine', Smolossky Publishers, Baltimore - Paris - Toronto, 1977, pp. 165-168.

8. Koszeliwec, op. cit., p. 206.

to show solidarity with the oppressed nations of the USSR, and finally, he made a statement demanding that the USSR respect the commitments it made in the Helsinki accords. (9)

Shukhevych suffered from increasingly serious eye problems. A cataract developed in one of his eyes and the retinas in both became detached. At the beginning of 1982, shortly before he left the gulag archipelago for internal exile, he was operated on. It was too late. First he lost the sight in one eye and then in the other as well. He was left totally blind. But as before he remained unbowed.

Thirty-six years after he was first jailed, the KGB members of the *Visti z Ukrayiny* editorial board claim that Yuriy Shukhevych has yielded. If this really had happened, it would in no way diminish the incredible example of human resistance that he had given. But everything indicates that his recantation is another falsification by the KGB, in which this institution — which has changed its name various times in its history without changing its essence — has so specialized. To back up its revelation, the Soviet periodical published a photocopy of excerpts from the letter it claimed to have received from Shukhevych. Under Gorbachev, the bureaucrats remain as incompetent as they were in the days of his teacher, Stalin. They did not know that in the West there was a copy of a real letter from Shukhevych, written by his own hand in April 1984, when he was already blind, to the chairman of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of Ukraine.

The two specimens of handwriting were submitted for analysis to Katharina Stulmann-Kortin, an expert in graphology and the psychology of handwriting in Munich. Her conclusion was the following: "The graphic nature of both handwritings is essentially different. Taking into account, in particular, the sharp difference in the shape of many letters . . . one can conclude with a probability close to 100 per cent that the authors of the two handwritings are not identical." (10)

*Visti y Ukrayiny's* revelations have not been published by the press that circulates in the USSR. Both Shukhevych and his relatives living in the USSR report that they have not the slightest idea of what is contained in the article by Savchuk. Shukhevych is still serving his internal exile (in a home for invalids), while it would be expected that he would be released after recanting.

On two occasions, in July 1984 and in January 1985, the US president, Ronald Reagan, declared his solidarity with Yuriy Shukhevych, describing

him as a Ukrainian patriot and a symbol of the fight for freedom. Reagan and his predecessors have of course been well known as ardent defenders of human rights and freedom, but only as regards "communist" regimes, not in the areas dominated by US imperialism. They have supported even the bloodiest dictatorships, whenever the dictator has been their "son of a bitch", in an expression made famous by one of Reagan's predecessors. They have supported such dictators up to the last minute, up till they threatened to provoke popular revolutions, as in the case of Somoza in Nicaragua and more recently Duvalier in Haiti and Marcos in the Philippines. They have expressed "sympathy" for the Polish Solidarnosc while at the same time supporting the Turkish military dictatorship, which, like the Jaruzelski regime, has suppressed trade-union freedoms, as well as other elementary rights. They have claimed to be "friends" of the Ukrainian revolutionary nationalists, while at the same time being implacable enemies of revolutionary nationalists on their own territory, such as Pedro Albizu Campos, a fighter for Puerto Rican independence, or Malcolm X, a radical leader of the Black liberation movement.

If the rulers in the White House express concern today about the fate of Yuriy Shukhevych, it will be worth asking what their attitude was to the armed struggle of the Ukrainian liberation movement led by Roman Shukhevych.

The US government was well informed about the existence and situation of this movement in post-war years. It had in its possession many reports by the American intelligence services, some of which have been declassified and can be studied today in the US National Archives. One of them, for example, dated

Roman Shukhevych



March 1948, says: "The real significance of the Ukrainian nationalist bands lies . . . in the fact that they have already been able to operate for more than two years against the established governments of both Poland and the USSR. This could have happened only with the support of at least a part of the local population. These bands have had no normal sources of supply and have depended on what they could seize from their adversaries and what was obtained from civilian sympathizers. Their continued survival suggests that the local population furnished them at least with food despite near-famine conditions in 1946, and it is evident that only people who strongly hate the Soviet way of life would have supported what many of them undoubtedly realize is a lost cause." (11) The popular support for the liberation movement was so great that in 1947 the Polish army, in a large-scale operation called Action Vistula, displaced the entire Ukrainian peasantry from Poland's eastern territories in order to exterminate the UPA guerrilla forces.

#### Attempt to break out of isolation

Nonetheless, the US government did not lift a finger to keep this cause from being lost. In an attempt to break out of the isolation of the Ukrainian liberation movement from the outside world and get help from abroad, various units of the UPA came out of Poland through Czechoslovakia to the West. Once their mission of "armed propaganda" was accomplished, they were to return to Ukraine. A former UPA commander who participated in one of these breakouts to the West made the following commentary: "Do you think that they (the Americans) had no intelligence on the scope of our struggle? But they were not interested in the fate of our people. They did not send a single bullet to the UPA. Suddenly, in 1949 and 1950, they declared their readiness to help us. They offered planes and pilots to take our insurgents back to the country, dropping them in the Stryi and Ternopil regions. On that occasion, they did not hesitate to overfly the borders, nor did Moscow raise a protest against these flights. So, our well-known veteran commander Hro-

9. 'Herald of Repression in Ukraine', No. 12, 1980.

10. 'USSR News Brief — Human Rights' (Munich), No. 15/16, 1985.

11. 'Nature and Extent of Disaffection in the Ukraine', Department of State OIR Report No. 4228-R. The National Archives of the United States.



South-eastern Poland 1947: young Ukrainian guerrilla fighters (DR)

menko and many others went back, and immediately fell victim to ambushes. . . . In collaboration . . . with Soviet agents such as (Kim) Philby, the Americans helped Moscow destroy our revolutionary movement. Dozens of our fighters boarded these planes to go to their graves." (12) In the framework of its sharp rivalry with the CIA, the British Intelligence Service organized similar flights, with the same result — the NKVD troops were waiting at the drop points.

These air operations were in progress when (in the spring of 1951) a Ukrainian Marxist living in exile in the United States, Vsevolod Holubnychy, informed his comrades of the Ukrainian revolutionary left in West Europe: "The State Department's policy . . . is quite openly anti-Ukrainian. I have quite precise information on the attitudes in this regard. They see the UPA as a bluff that will lead to nothing. They recognize that the UPA exists, but they think that it has no perspectives, that it is very weak, that it does not have the support of the people and in general that its activities are of a semi-bandit character." These opinions expressed by the US government contradict, as we have already seen, the confidential information it got from its intelligence services. "On the other hand", Holubnychy continued, "they are afraid of the Ukrainian underground. They are treating Poltava's letter to the Voice of America as ultrasecret material and therefore not publishing it anywhere. (But we will 'help' them a bit, because in a coming issue of *Labor Action* (13) more significant excerpts from this letter will be published). The ultra-secrecy they are keeping is owing to

the anticapitalist statements it contains." (14)

In the letter referred to, Commander Poltava, one of the most authoritative spokespersons of the Ukrainian liberation movement, criticized the content of the Voice of America broadcasts directed at listeners in the USSR: "The Soviet masses hate the Bolshevik 'socialism'. But that does not mean that the Soviet peoples are longing for capitalism, which was destroyed on the territory of the present USSR back in 1917-20. They are in their absolute majority clearly against the restoration of capitalism. This is the result of the revolution of 1917-20. . . . We, the participants in the liberation struggle in Ukraine, who are inside the Soviet Union and have connections with the broad masses, know only too well that they have no admiration for capitalism — neither the old European kind nor the modern American kind." (15)

In another document, while analyzing the possibility of the outbreaks of the third world war, Poltava pointed out that the United States and Britain, together with the entire Western bloc, would act in such a war as the enemies of the liberation of the people and the workers. As regards the USSR, they would try to restore private property and rebuild a "White" Great Russian imperialism. "The Ukrainian people, and, we hope, also the other oppressed non-Russian peoples of the USSR will in this situation see such a war as a new war by world imperialism, during which the national and social aspirations of the Soviet peoples can be achieved only if they are won by these peoples themselves, relying on their own strength." (16)

It is clear that the rulers in the White House had no political interest in aiding the UPA. They knew that the interests that they represented were incompatible with the interests expressed by the Ukrainian liberation movement. But something more determined the attitude of the US government. An independent Ukraine that would carry out the political program of the UPA was as terrifying a perspective for the White House as it was for the Kremlin. This was all the more so because the Ukraine, which is the biggest country in Europe in area and one of the largest in population, would inevitably play a great role in the life of the continent and could destabilize all the "geopolitical moulds" and the spheres of domination established in the Yalta accords.

It was one thing to open up the fronts of the "Cold War". It was something else again to permit a "historyless" but powerful people to take advantage of this, to take its destiny in its own hands and, by exercising an attraction on the masses of other countries, begin to dictate its own rules. Poltava wrote, and this was well known in 1950 in US ruling circles: "To achieve our objectives, we have taken the road that involves unleashing a people's revolution for national and social revolution, both in Ukraine and among all the other peoples of the USSR. We call on all the oppressed Soviet peoples and on the toiling masses of all nationalities in the USSR to unite with us in the fight to overthrow the Bolshevik regime." At the same time, Poltava defined the international dimensions of the Ukrainian national revolution as follows: We are fighting "for full realization of the idea of building free national states of all the peoples of the world by overthrowing every kind of imperialism" and "for the victory of the idea of building a classless society among all peoples." (17)

The "Cold War" was combined with a Holy Alliance, at least tacitly. The Kremlin mercilessly exterminated the Ukrainian liberation movement and offered "irrefutable proofs" to the world of its "fascist character". The White House from time to time sang the praises of the Ukrainian freedom

12. Y. Borets'-Chumak, 'Reid bez zbroji', Ukrainian Publishers, London, 1982, p. 213.

13. 'Labor Action' was the weekly newspaper of the Independent Socialist League, a North American left-wing party. Excerpts from Poltava's letter mentioned above were published in its May 21, 1951, issue.

14. V. Holubnychy 'Zvit ch. 2' (April 16, 1951), in his archives held at the University of Alberta, Canada.

15. P. Poltava, 'Zbirnyk pidpilnykh pisan', Ukrayins'kyi Samostiinyk, Munich, 1959, pp. 213-214.

16. *Ibid.*, p. 236.

17. *Ibid.*, pp. 128, 130.



fighters but refused any material aid, while the Voice of America and other stations broadcasting to the Soviet bloc maintained a total silence about their program. One American socialist observed at the time: "Responsible and intelligent capitalist policy, in today's world, finds it dangerous to play with the fire of revolution behind the Iron Curtain" (18).

### Reagan maintains silence on political program

Today, Reagan has protested against the fate reserved for a Ukrainian who is being pressed to deny his father. But the US president is continuing to maintain the silence about the program that the father of this Ukrainian and the movement he led fought for. This suits perfectly the Kremlin rulers who have striven for decades to erase from the people's memory the program of the UPA, which called on the masses to fight to the death to overthrow the power of the capitalists. And the Kremlin

has done this with such perseverance that it cannot even be known if Yuriy Shukhevych at any time in his life ever had the opportunity to get to know this program.

We should not be surprised if some day Reagan, or his successor, declares in front of the TV cameras to the entire "free world" that he swears by the ideas for which Yuriy Shukhevych's father fell. He can afford that luxury. Only a few people still know what these ideas were. I read recently that Reagan has declared himself a supporter of Solidarnosc's program. How could he say that he is a supporter of a program that calls for building a self-governed republic based on social ownership of the means of production and on workers' self-management? Why not? If American workers and unionists do not know much more about it than American Blacks and Chicanos used to know about the program of the Ukrainian Insurgent Army?

We should realize the kind of world we are living in. The Kremlin satraps lay claim to the tradition of the Russian revolution and declare their support for the Third World

liberation movements. The man who led the victorious revolution against American imperialism in Cuba goes to Moscow to proclaim there that "you can't shut out the sun with a finger". The sun in question is the USSR, which other revolutionists, the Ukrainians, have excoriated as a giant prison house of nations. Some leaders of the Polish revolution, crushed by the totalitarian bureaucracy, have sent the chiefs of US imperialism, which exploits the workers and oppresses the peoples of a good part of the planet, expressions of gratitude for the latter's intransigent defence of democracy. We have to recognize the devastating consequences these paradoxes have for the consciousness of the workers and peoples throughout the world, in whatever camp they live, whatever immediate enemy they face. You could get the impression that we have set one foot into the Orwellian world in which "freedom is slavery and ignorance is power". But we should not give way to impressions. We should assume our responsibilities.

In the West, the activists of socialist, radical and alternative currents that oppose both capitalism and bureaucratic despotism — or as some of them prefer to say, private and corporate capitalism on the one hand and state capitalism on the other — have to assume the tasks of building real solidarity with the victims of the Stalinist totalitarian regimes. Only such fighters can really solidarize with the superhuman resistance of a man such as Yuriy Shukhevych, throwing into the faces of his Stalinist torturers and his imperialist "defenders" at the same time the political ideas of Roman Shukhevych and his comrades who fell 35 years ago.

It is only those who are fighting for a democratic and international socialism, who aspire to build a self-managed and classless society, who can win such solidarity from growing sections of the workers' movement, the peace movement and other social movements in the West, as well as from the national liberation movements in the Third World. Only they can sustain a strong ideological struggle against currents such as Yuriy Shukhevych or with social movements such as Solidarnosc as pretexts to turn their backs on these individuals and movements and wash their hands of the crimes of Stalinism.

In the East, forces are beginning to arise ready to take on a similar task where they are and to act in unity with those who are assuming the same task in the West. □

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In this issue you will find articles on:

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18. H. Draper, "Washington and the New Russian Revolution", *Labor Action*, June 11, 1951.

# AROUND THE WORLD



## Netherlands

### Tamil hunger strike

**TAMILS FLEEING** communalist terror in Sri Lanka have not found much hospitality in West Europe. A number have been admitted into the Netherlands. But under the right-wing government of Ruud Lubbers, the Dutch authorities at best prolong their misery. A reporter for *Klassenstrijd*, the paper of the Dutch section of the Fourth International, told the story of Tamils involved in recent protests in the May 7 issue of the paper.

When I arrived in Lochem, the Tamils were in the fourth day of a hunger strike, the ultimate protest. They were lying around hopelessly on mattresses in the common reception rooms. Of the 93 refugees here, 64 have gone on hunger strike. The women and children have not. Two have had to give up the action, one with a stomach illness, the other a diabetic.

"If we had known what the system in the Netherlands held, we would never have come," said one of the hunger strikers.

The Tamils are protesting against the "bed-bath-bread system" [that is, minimal maintenance]. "Tamils are treated in a different way, not like other political refugees. We are not allowed to live on our own. We cannot study or participate in sports. We get no facilities whatsoever."

Since the system was introduced last April, they have protested many times. "We did everything, held demonstrations, went to the parliament but nothing helped."

On April 10, the "Tamil question" was to be discussed in parliament. Then the debate was postponed until April 18, and then again until April 23. "On April 23, we expected a lot. But then in the evening we heard Brinkman say on the TV that there was not going to be any change in our situation. Then, the Tamils became very, very frustrated and emotional. They lost control."

In Lochem 20 windows were broken. A vacuum cleaner suffered a like fate. But when I came, there was nothing more to see. The day after the outbreak, the Tamils, with the help of Dutch friends, had cleaned up everything. "They are still helping us, even after the events on the night of April 23. We have explained how that happened. It was an emotional reaction. Now we are taking no food in protest against the government. We want to protest in a peaceful way..."

One of the helpers took me around. Five toilets and two showers for 93 inhabitants. Between noon and 1:00 in the afternoon — most Tamils try to sleep as long as possible to shorten their endless waiting — long lines form in front of the toilets and showers...

The Tamils get twenty guilders a week [about 10 US dollars]. But that has to pay for everything... razor blades, shampoo, trips to the Hague to protest... one guilder put aside for the committee. And

a letter once a week costs 2.5 guilders. Then most of the refugees have to send some money to their families in Sri Lanka, who went deep into debt to buy the tickets that got them out of the country.

Contact with the families at home is difficult. "For two months we have gotten no letters. We used to get two a month. The problem is in Sri Lanka, where the authorities delay everything."

The situation in Sri Lanka has gotten worse. "They are bombing from helicopters in the north of the island. People are migrating to the coast to get out of these areas."

The letters do not make the conditions any more cheerful. One of the young men did not come out of his bedroom for a week after he heard that a family member's bakery was burned down. . . .

One of the Tamils housed in Lochem saw his mother beaten to death.

In the meantime a lot of Tamils have left the Netherlands. "In the beginning, there were 3,000 Tamils here, now only 1,200 remain."

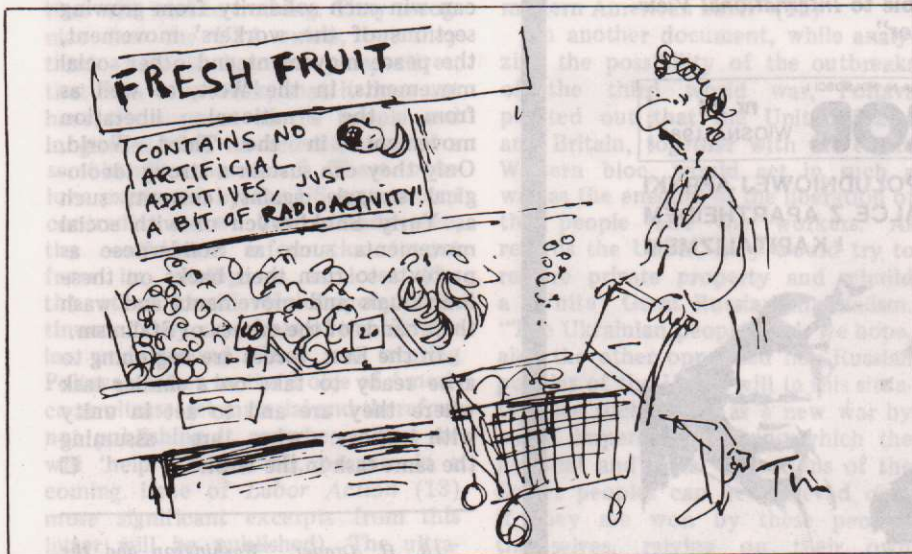
Most of the refugees — 150,000 — have gone to India, where they are better received than in the Netherlands. But because of shooting by the Indian navy, it is hard to get there. "For us, it was not hard to get to East Berlin. From there, everyone went to what countries they could." One per cent of the refugees are in the Netherlands. Some 20,000 are in France and Tamils have also gone to Switzerland, Sweden and Norway.

"We have been told that the special system is only for a short time. But it has already lasted more than a year. We have no future." □

## West Germany

### 'Socialist' nuclear power?

SINCE THE Soviet Union has a major nuclear power program, the Moscow-loyalist Communist parties have had to try to defend nuclear power against the strong opposition to it among the left and in the peace movement. The West German CP is one of the most servile CPs, and it had the additional misfortune of being in a country that got heavy fallout from Chernobyl. The following comment on its evident embarrassment is from the May 15 issue of *Was Tun*, the paper of the German section of the Fourth International.





Anyone who has watched the wiggling of the DKP [German Communist Party] and its paper, *Unsere Zeit*, over the Chernobyl affair has a hard decision to make — whether to laugh or cry. Since the DKP is obliged to defend the interests of the ruling bureaucrats in the USSR and East Germany, it has backed “socialist” nuclear power, which, in contrast to the “capitalist” variety, is supposed to be entirely “safe.” Naturally, it was hard to square this position with the disaster at Chernobyl.

So, the DKP-*Unsere Zeit's* first response was to argue that Western propagandists wanted to exaggerate everything in order to discredit socialism and distract attention from Western nuclear armaments and war mongering.

Nonetheless, both in shouted protests against the relevant passages in the speech of the party chair Mies and in letters from readers to *Unsere Zeit*, some critical voices were raised.

In order to reassure such critics, the May 13 issue of *Unsere Zeit* published a discussion of the editors with “experts,” which minimized the disaster but could not entirely deny it.

Their dubious conclusion was that despite everything, nuclear reactors are necessary in the USSR, just not in West Germany.

In the meantime, the Soviet ambassador in Tripoli has announced

that the USSR plans to deliver a nuclear power plant to Libya. The purpose of this is so that Libya can save on oil (so it can export more to the USSR?).

The ambassador even added: “The accident in Chernobyl is not such an unusual thing.” In other words, “to make an omelet, you have to break some eggs.”

That could make the weather map much more exciting for us in Europe. The wind also often comes from the South. □

### Denmark

#### Another painful bite

IN SCANDINAVIA also the effects of the offensive to roll back social gains are being felt. The May 14 issue of *Klassekampen*, the paper of the Danish section of the Fourth International, reports a blow that could cause a lot of pain.

“We are against an unsound law that will result in unsound teeth.

“The government wants to privatize municipal dental care, despite the fact that we have an outstanding system that has reduced the number of cavities in children’s teeth by half.”

That is the message from the municipal dental clinic assistants, who throughout the country are protesting against the government’s bill on children’s dental care. This bill has gotten its first reading in the parliament and is heading for the second.

The assistants argue that the government’s bill will mean:

— Spoiling all the work that has been done.

— Reducing the age limit for children’s dental care to 16.

— The system of dental care for young people will be abolished.

“The government’s proposal

in our opinion will mean that parents will not be able to get free dental care for their children,” John Lund told *Klassekampen*. He is the chairman of the clinic workers’ [HP] branch in Copenhagen.

“The bill proposes to give ‘free choice’ to parents, so that they can decide whether they want to send their children to the municipal dental clinics or to their own dentist. And with the economic problems the municipalities have, you can expect that they are going to save on the dental services, so that in reality there will be no choice.” □

### France

#### Martine freed

AFTER THREE months in prison, Martine Toulotte was released on May 20. Martine, a member of the LCR (Ligue Communiste Revolutionnaire — French section of the Fourth International), was held without trial after being charged with “harbouring wanted men”. This ridiculous charge arose four years after Martine had put up some Lebanese visitors (see IV, No. 98, May 5, 1986, for a full report).

The campaign launched by the LCR to free Martine undoubtedly secured her release, supported as it was by national personalities, trade unions and political parties of the left. International solidarity was also expressed in the form of messages of support to Martine from many organizations and individuals.

In an interview in the LCR’s newspaper, *Rouge*, shortly after she was released, Martine said: “the solidarity campaign has been decisive. All the people who helped me, for the most part strangers, could see that there was an organization and comrades outside who would not let me down. It was tremendous!” □

Martine Toulotte is greeted by friends on her release (DR)



# Towards another mass explosion?

ANOTHER MASS upsurge is mounting against a US-backed dictatorship and a key ally of US imperialism, the dictatorship of Zia ul-Haq in Pakistan.

The following comment on the perspectives in Pakistan today was written by Tariq Ali, a well-known Marxist writer, author of a number of books on Pakistan and India. The article was published as a guest column in the May 15 issue of *Was Tun*, the paper of the German section of the Fourth International.

For almost four decades, Pakistan has stumbled from one crisis to another. There have been three coups d'état, the breakup of the country [that is, the secession of East Pakistan to become Bangladesh], the execution of the country's first and last elected premier Zulfikar Ali Bhutto in 1979, and now there is a military dictatorship that is defending itself tooth and claw.

The return of the executed premier's daughter, Benazir Bhutto, represents a turning point. The men with the guns have a great fear of this unarmed woman. The question is serious: Can Benazir overthrow the dictator Zia ul-Haq?

The generals have every reason for concern. Benazir Bhutto is the only political figure in the country who enjoys support among the masses. A few weeks ago, half a million people poured out to greet her in Lahore — the biggest political rally in the history of the country.

In the coming four weeks, the fever thermometer will rise still more. Benazir will visit every major city. Her message is simple — for elections in which every party can participate. There is no doubt that her Pakistan People's Party would win an overwhelming victory. And therefore General Zia does not want to grant such elections.

However, his room for maneuver is very limited. At the end of last year — under US pressure — he had to lift martial law.

Today, the soldiers are back in their barracks. Of course, they could

openly take control again at any time, if the situation became more difficult, but even then there would be no guarantee that Zia would remain in power. His deputy, General Arif, has an evident hungry look. He could send his boss packing.

Everything depends on the development of Benazir's campaign. In Lahore she proclaimed, "Our movement has just begun. It will end with Zia's fall and with the people deciding freely who is to rule."

At the time of writing, her circuit is going through Punjab, the state where the army has the most support. If — despite the growing support for Benazir — Zia holds on to power, then she has no choice but to take a radical turn.

A lot depends on Benazir's ability in the coming weeks to make the correct strategic and tactical choices. Her opponents think that tensions in her People's Party will soon bring the campaign to a standstill. In Pakistan, there is a widespread tendency to minimize the mistakes that Bhutto unquestionably made with the refrain, "It wasn't him, it was the bad men around him."

Benazir has deftly taken advantage of this feeling and has pushed a lot of the Bhutto old guard out of the way and brought new faces into the limelight. She knows that her supporters are the urban and rural poor.

Her first serious dilemma could arise at the end of her tour when the poor realize that nothing has changed. Then she will face the decision whether



Zia ul-Haq

she should dare to make a frontal attack. Demonstrations are at best a dress rehearsal for insurrection. They cannot replace it.

Most recently the comparisons with the new Philippine president, Cory Aquino, ring hollow. There the US played a decisive role in Marcos' fall. More than Aquino, it feared the guerrilla movement of the New People's Army. So special US envoy Philip Habib jetted to Manila to get General Ramos to change sides and smooth the way for a peaceful transition.

In Pakistan, there is no guerrilla movement. On the other hand, the Soviet army is just across the border in Afghanistan. The West is therefore supporting Zia and flooding the country with military aid.

Since 95 per cent of the Pakistani parties are for an end to the war in Afghanistan and a negotiated settlement with Moscow that would allow the refugees to return, the idea of a bourgeois democracy in Pakistan makes the US State Department nervous.

Nonetheless, after Benazir's return, Washington is left without a great deal of maneuvering room. The situation in Pakistan is even more explosive than in the Philippines. If Zia hangs onto his presidential chair, confrontation will become unavoidable. And it will not simply be Benazir against Zia, but more fatefully, the army against the people. □