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Zionism  
and anti-Semitism:  
Allies or enemies?

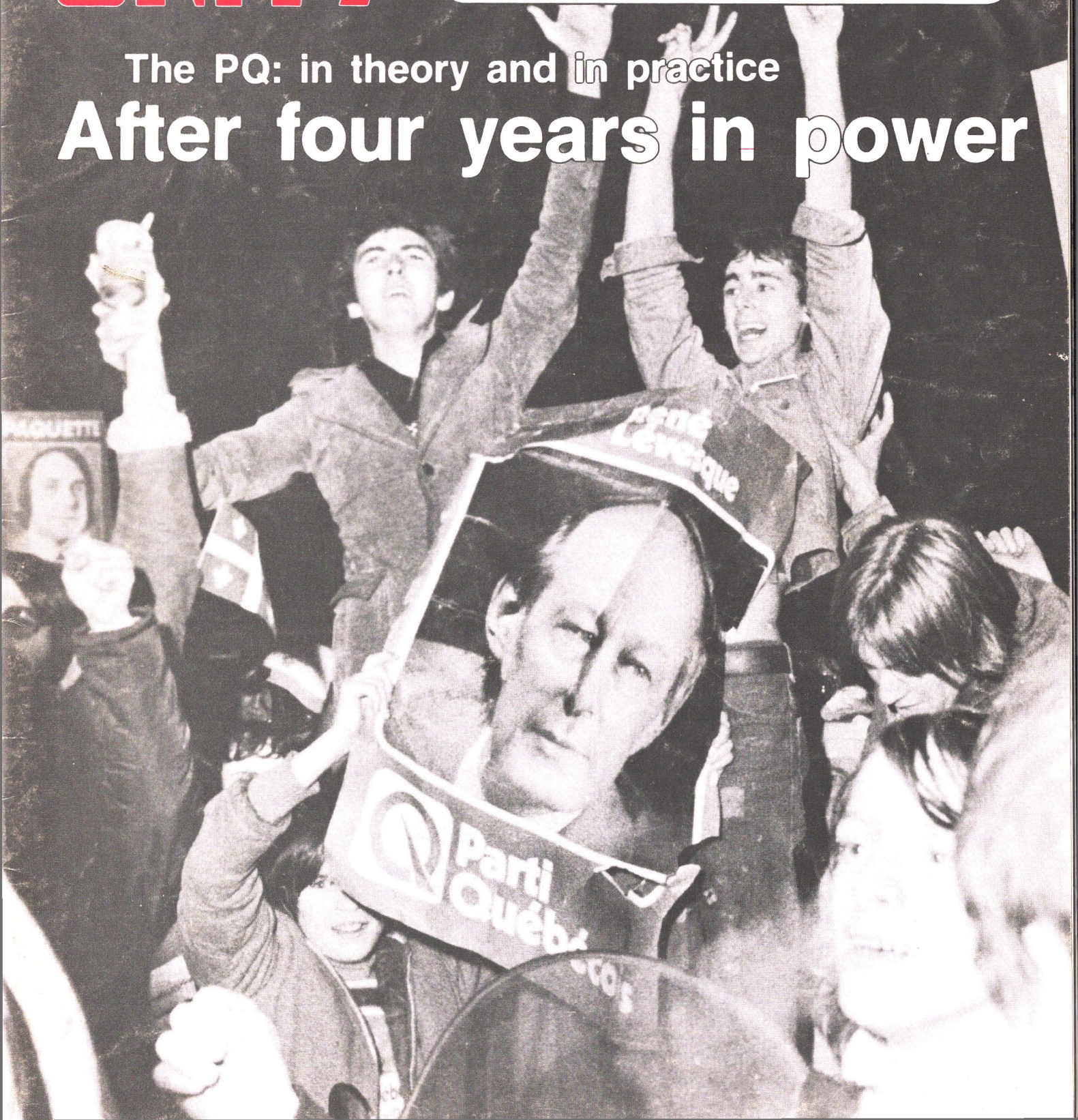
# PROLETARIAN UNITY



Theoretical and political journal  
of the Marxist-Leninist Organization  
of Canada **IN STRUGGLE!**

No. 24 (vol. 5, no. 2) April-May-June 1981

The PQ: in theory and in practice  
**After four years in power**



## Note from the editor

The debate raised in the letter from a reader in Regina in the last issue of the journal ("Who can write for the journal?") has sparked many different reactions from our readers. Some wrote to us about the kind of editorial policy the journal should have (see, for instance, one of the letters in this issue), and many more offered to work with us in one way or another on various topics — religion, ecology, science, women's oppression, etc. Although still limited, the results are encouraging and convincing. We most definitely have to work much harder than we have in the past at developing the work with people who can contribute to the journal. We have to make good use of all the human resources we have been discovering in recent months as the journal broadened its fields of interest and took a more open attitude towards what others have to say.

There are many different ways people can contribute to the journal. They can join the study collectives — we are currently in the process of establishing one that will work on science. Or they can contribute to the work of these collectives by corresponding with them or helping out on specific questions. People already involved in research on specific topics as part of their job or out of personal interest can let us know what they are doing and/or submit proposals for articles that could then be discussed collectively.

As a guide for people interested in working with the journal, we would like to give a general indication of our priorities for the next few months. In the next issue, we will explain in more detail the articles and subjects we are currently working on. We hope this kind of "report on work in progress" will become a regular feature.

### Debates on the left

There is a lot of serious discussion and debate going on in left-wing circles these days. An article in this issue reports on one of the recent forums of discussion — the

conference held in Vancouver in January on the theme, "Socialism in the 1980s". The women's movement and the partisans of independence and socialism in Quebec are also caught up in vigorous debates. PROLETARIAN UNITY intends to concentrate on these discussions and debates in the coming months. They raise some very fundamental questions — as fundamental as the question of the very validity of Marxism as a framework for analysing the history of societies and understanding the reality studied by social sciences in general (see the article in this issue, "For a scientific vision of the world: Determinism or free will"). There is no question that the ossified kind of Marxism that has predominated for years now has had some serious consequences, not the least of which has been a renewed upsurge in points of view that contradict dialectical materialism. Many people, and many progressive people, argue that history has no meaning, that there is no social progress, or that primitive communism is preferable to today's society or socialism. In psychology, biology — in fact in the sciences in general — right-wing ideas and theories are gaining ground. We think these trends have to be fought, and this will be one of our important tasks in the next while. We want to help put Marxism back on its feet and demonstrate that it is not a dogma, not an article of faith, not an ossified theory; rather it is an instrument for analysing reality and history in a scientific way.

One of the questions to which we will be paying particular attention is the question of the revolutionary party, its role and its relation to mass organizations and the struggle for socialism. We intend to deal with this question from various angles, both in more in-depth, background articles and in relation to current events and recent developments.

The journal will also be examining a variety of other topics (culture, ecology, science, psychology, etc.). Whatever the subject, our concern will be to help restore a Marxist approach in the analysis of these questions. In the next issue, we will bring our readers up to date on the work in progress.

that refers more concretely and directly to the major debates in today's revolutionary movement. To give you an idea of what we're looking for: we want a name that will identify the journal as an instrument of **debate, exchanges, ideological struggle** and **criticism** on the fundamental issues facing the working class, on **socialism** and **communism**.

**Write or phone us with your suggestions.  
Don't wait for someone else to do it for you!**

### Put your imagination to work — Help us find a new name for the journal!

Nothing is eternal, not even the names of our favourite journals. After repeated demands from many readers, we have finally decided to change the name of the journal. There are two main reasons. First, "proletarian" is still a relatively unknown and confusing word for most of the population. Second, the name PROLETARIAN UNITY makes direct reference to the specific political situation that gave rise to the journal, namely the struggle for the unity of communists in 1975-76. Now, in 1981, we would like to find a name

## PROLETARIAN UNITY

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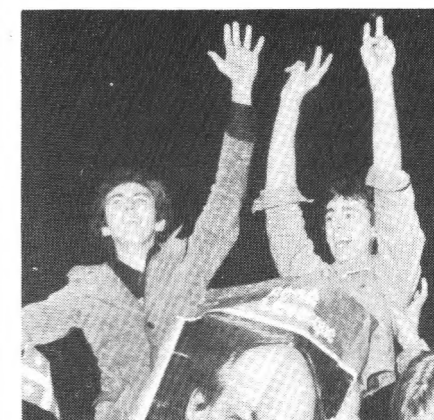
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*IWD 1981: More people, more united, more basic questions raised. International Women's Day celebrations this year were the most successful ever in the history of Canada. More than 35,000 people turned out for various events, demonstrations and meetings, publicly affirming their commitment to the women's liberation struggle.*

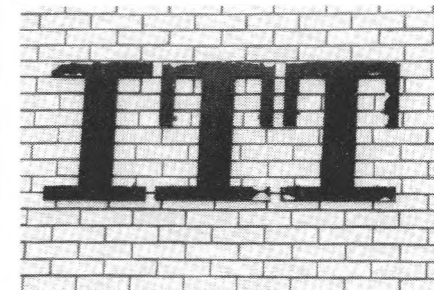


*The PQ after four years in power. In 1976, the PQ presented itself as "the lesser evil" and claimed to have an alternative to Trudeau's federalist vision. What was the PQ's programme? What has it done in its four years in office? By looking back at recent history and examining the PQ's strategy in the past four years, we can have a better idea of the interests defended by Trudeau and Lévesque. And just who is this new claimant to the throne, Claude Ryan?*

*Zionism and anti-Semitism: allies or enemies? This question is back in the news after recent Nazi and anti-Semitic attacks which have made headlines, notably in Europe. Is Zionism really an alternative to anti-Semitism? Or is it rather an ideology based on the same racist and reactionary ideas? Are we forced to choose either Nazi concentration camps and Palestinian refugee camps?*



*Notes from the land of the multinationals. This article is the first in a series aimed at contributing to our understanding of imperialism today. It analyses the rise of the multinationals since the Second World War. Are these companies really above nations and States?*



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International Women's Day 1981

# More people, more united, more basic questions raised

International Women's Day celebrations this year were the most successful ever in the history of Canada. More than 35,000 people turned out for various events, demonstrations and meetings, publicly affirming their commitment to the women's liberation struggle.

## The economic crisis sparks resistance

The vast array of events organized got tens of thousands of people involved — and not just in the major urban centres. Some 4,000 people demonstrated in Toronto (twice as many as last year). In Montreal, there were 10,000 at the March 7 demonstration and 20,000 at the March 8 events. In Sudbury, 400 (five times more than last year); in Regina, 550 (more than twice as many as in 1980); in Moncton, 150 (for the first broad-based IWD mobilization ever); in Edmonton, 350 (three times as many as last year).

But what was striking about the March 8 celebrations this year was not just their geographical extension. Even more impressive was the diversity of women who are joining the resistance to the crisis and crisis measures. Women from oppressed minorities, for example, raised their voices to speak of their oppression. The IWD celebration in Moncton was organized by nine Acadian women's groups. In Regina, one-tenth of the people attending IWD were organized to come by the Regina Native Women's Association. In Toronto, a working committee translated the IWD material into six languages. In Vancouver, Harminder Senghera, from the India Mahila Association, spoke about the isolation and fear in which immigrant women live and the importance of reaching out to contact them.

In organizational terms, IWD events were organized by broad coalitions of up to 80 women's organizations, unions and political groups that worked together. Solidarity messages from the Vancouver and Toronto coalitions were read out in Halifax.

What has given rise to this vitality, this diversity, this creative energy? Why were there so many personal statements, information booths, speeches, cultural events, celebrations, demonstrations? **Because women are fighting back.** They are refusing to be the victims of the crisis. The general theme of IWD in Vancouver was: "Women have paid enough! Fight back at all costs!" And Linda Yantz of the IWD Committee in Toronto explained it in these terms: "The crisis is really hitting people. Women are really feeling the effects of the lack of day care, equal pay, and increased violence against women."

The crisis means that our gains are always tentative and in jeopardy. The crisis also has an international dimension, and March 8 was an opportunity for women in Canada to express their solidarity with women everywhere throughout the



world. In Winnipeg, a spokesperson from the Chile Information Centre described atrocities committed in El Salvador: "Today in El Salvador, women charge that rape is used by the ruling junta as a systematic method of terror. Babies are thrown into the air and used as target practice by the military, and pregnant women are cut open, their wombs pulled out and the unborn infant murdered. The women are then shot point-blank."

Meanwhile, in Toronto, Sue Colley explained: "We've discovered that we have to fight all around the world to stop bombs from blowing up our sisters and brothers in Vietnam and the new Vietnam today, El Salvador."

## A unifying theme: resistance to the rise of the right

Besides the traditional specific demands of women, there was another theme that cemented unity in several parts of the country, and notable in Vancouver, Toronto and Saskatoon: the theme of **resistance to the rise of the right.**

People were extremely interested in this problem, and it provided a unifying theme in many discussions, speeches and demonstrations. It enabled people to link up concretely the women's struggle with the homosexuals' struggle, the lesbians' struggle and the struggles of oppressed national minorities. It was a focal point for building genuine solidarity. As the pamphlet published by the Toronto IWD Coalition put it: "The Right in this country is trying to consolidate a social and political majority by scapegoating racial and ethnic minorities, women, lesbians and gays. Abortion rights, the freedom to be open lesbians, the freedom to live and work without violence or discrimination — these are some of the freedoms these groups are trying to deny us. Women, workers, immigrants, gays, Unite!"

As well as bringing out the links between the various different kinds of oppression, the theme of resistance to the rise of the right helped to expose the disgustingly exploitative and patriarchal nature of the ruling system today. Why does the right attack homosexuals and lesbians? Why does it attack the right of women to decide when and how they want to have children? Why does it attack single and lesbian mothers? Because all these ways of living are serious challenges to the **patriarchal family** as a pillar of society. In the same vein,

even single women are seen as a threat to the sacrosanct family. Any challenges to the traditional place and role of women in society as a whole are seen as dangerous.

But women are not accepting this situation. "We are fighting back. Women are refusing to be forced out of the workplace and back into the home. Women are organizing to fight racism and discrimination. The struggle against conservative, racist and anti-woman groups is the struggle of us all," read the Toronto coalition's pamphlet.

All the educational work done around the rise of the right has without a doubt raised the political level of debates. It has helped make people aware of the scope and importance of the questions posed by the women's movement. Unfortunately, these debates were absent from the big demonstration and forum in Montreal, where the proposed topics for discussion and the limited possibilities for real debate meant that the discussions did not draw out the major issues that need to be examined for the development of the women's movement.

## The political outlook

In most regions, IWD was an opportunity for gaining a more thorough understanding of the nature of all aspects of women's oppression. It was also an opportunity to link the women's struggle to other struggles against oppression and other battles. Again, in the words of Sue Colley: "We are here to celebrate our increased commitment to the struggle and the fact it's shared by blacks, gays, workers and immigrants. We are here to celebrate as well a vision of the future — a world in which women are paid equal and decent wages, and immigrant women no longer suffer a triple oppression, and where there are no more profiteers and capitalists."

Nonetheless, one question remains unanswered and it came up in practical ways in a number of demonstrations

## Letters

### Open letter to the editorial board of PROLETARIAN UNITY

The note from the editorial board in issue no. 23 of the journal invited readers to debate the questions raised by a letter entitled **Who can write in the journal?** The note states: "As our reader points out, up to now, the writing of articles for the journal has been highly centralized."

Since the Organization has openly taken up the debate on revisionism, we have begun to realize just how much the science of Marxism-Leninism has stagnated. The supplement to issue 238 of the paper IN STRUGGLE! points this out:

"... for many years now communist forces, and notably the communists who identify themselves as Marxist-Leninists to demarcate from the positions of modern (Soviet, Eurocommunist, etc.) revisionism, have not

and events: how can all the power and potential of the women's movement be focussed and harnessed into a dynamic, vital and unified force? The bourgeois parties certainly do not have the answer — they have all proven their ineffectiveness in dealing with issues raised by the women's movement.

It is important to note, however, that socialist women are increasingly raising some questions that are vital for the future of the women's movement. In articles in publications like **Broadside** and **Canadian Dimension** they are also addressing questions to the socialist movement in Canada with regard to its actual capacity to combine the women's liberation struggle and the struggle for socialism. Similarly, IN STRUGGLE! celebrated IWD by organizing a public meeting in Montreal around the theme, "The women's struggle and socialism: a battle that's hard, that we can win, that must be fought now!" Some 500 people attended the meeting.

There is important work to be done. We have to improve our understanding of the nature of women's oppression in our society; re-examine the history of the relations between the left and the women's movement; examine critically the practice of left-wing organizations on the women's question; and work out a vision of society and a revolutionary organization that incorporates all the different aspects of the women's struggle. This is a crucial task, both for the future of the revolution in Canada and for the development of the women's movement.

All across the country — in Halifax, Vancouver, Regina, Toronto, Montreal and Quebec City — groups, collectives and organizations are beginning to discuss these questions. International Women's Day demonstrated the truth of the slogan expressed in the organizing leaflet for Toronto IWD: "Women stood united, stand united... Our power will free us. Forward ever! Backwards never!"

generally distinguished themselves by their interest for historical and theoretical questions, much less scientific and philosophical issues."

It would seem that the theoretical activity of Marxist-Leninists started to stagnate when the Soviet State developed its bureaucracy in the thirties and its leadership became the embryo of a bourgeoisie. Following this, Marxism-Leninism was transformed into an ideology of power in the hands of the bureaucrats. The modern progress achieved by the sciences in economics, history, culture or the theory of knowledge within the international communist movement were paralleled by advances made by intellectuals such as Bettelheim, Amin and T.S. Kuhn.

Our own Organization accepted this situation. What place did we use to give to intellectuals? We told them we had to build the party and distribute the paper. It was not the theoretical tradition of the Marxist-Leninist movement which interested us. For example, what happened to the people who had participated in the cultural magazines **Chroniques**, **Champs d'application** and

**Strategie** who rallied to IN STRUGGLE!? Did their integration in the group give new impetus to communist culture?"

We should definitely promote an open policy for the journal and to a much greater extent that the editorial board has done so far. How did the journal go about recruiting the eight or ten participants in the collective on science which was announced in issue no. 235 of the paper? Did they answer a public call in the journal or were they parachuted? Why limit it to "specialists" while "amateurs" are left out?

The editorial board must stimulate theoretical work more than it is doing now. And it should expand its horizons. It should give more leadership to research being done by professors and students, many of whom want to do academic work linked to our spheres of interest. And we shouldn't forget the proletarian "amateurs".

The activities of the editors must go beyond their work for the journal, and stimulate intellectuals to write to other journals, organize public conferences, etc. The journal could become our

organizer on the theoretical level, in the same way the paper is our tool for political communist agitation.

As for pertinent articles which the editorial board does not endorse, they could be preceded by a commentary.

I do not have a firm opinion on the pertinence of signing articles, but our main theoreticians and intellectuals should make themselves known in some way or another, in the same way as our main agitators are known.

A reader in Montreal

## Comments on the last issue

Just a note to congratulate you on the last issue of PROLETARIAN UNITY — it was even better than the last one! I just finished reading it from cover to cover and to my surprise I found every article stimulating!...

We sold ten copies of the journal in twenty minutes at the last International Women's Day Committee meeting — and I will gather reactions during the coming weeks and centralize to you.

Not only was the variety of topics covered excellent, but a spirit of "we invite debate" was all-pervasive. I'm sure many of the independent leftists in Toronto who've never bothered to read PROLETARIAN UNITY will be pleasantly surprised.

The article on the constitution was most interesting — especially the conclusion. I would add, however, that the eastern oligarchy has another card up their sleeve — the technological revolution. While I agree Ontario's manufacturing sector is in crisis, the monopolies are nonetheless feverishly trying to break into the electronic era — with some considerable success in the communications, utilities and micro-chip fields. If they succeed in "revamping" Ontario's industrial base, this will restore sagging profits and prove to be a buffer of sorts against competition out west. I'd like to see PROLETARIAN UNITY do an article in the future on the technological revolution — the trade-union movement in Ontario, at least, is starting to pay serious attention to the issue....

I'd also like to see more stuff from those psychology professors! The article was interesting but a bit advanced — good for academics! Why not another article that applies Wallon's approach to a specific problem? For instance, why is mental illness on the rise, how to cope with being single, how to raise a "liberated" child....

A reader in Toronto

## The Quebec election

# The PQ after four years in power: in theory and in practice

November 15 1976, the Parti Québécois (PQ) led by René Lévesque was elected to power with 40.1% of the votes. In English Canada, the election of a "separatist" party came as a shock while in Quebec, tens of thousands of people welcome this event as a promise of liberation. Liberal Premier Robert Bourassa, the man of 100,000 promises,<sup>1</sup> great friend of ITT and enemy of the labour movement, was even defeated in his own riding.

To swing this victory, the PQ took advantage of the widespread resistance in the labour movement against the Bourassa regime. It worked at channelling this sentiment into votes with a campaign based on its "favourable bias towards workers". By adding a "reasonable" touch to the nationalist mobilizations of the late sixties, the PQ presented itself as the respectable path towards the Quebec people's affirmation as a nation.

But the PQ lost no time in relegating its "favourable bias towards workers" to the electoral speech cupboard. It set about "building Quebec" with private enterprise. Today, the PQ has gone from sovereignty-association — a diluted version of the "separatist" independence project of the 1960s — to "safeguarding the province's autonomy", a pet slogan of former Quebec premier Maurice Duplessis.

What has the PQ's legislation taught us about the nature of this party and the interests it defends? How should we interpret the fact that Claude Ryan's Liberal Party seems to be on the rise again? What are the issues at stake in the electoral battle pitting the PQ against the Liberal Party in Quebec? The following article attempts to answer these questions.

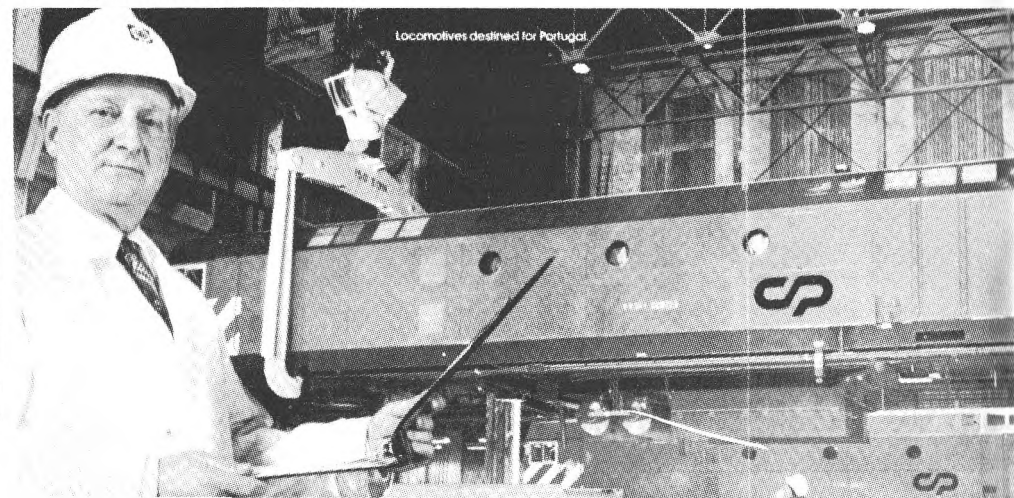
## The Quebec model

*"We had to fan the wind of the Quiet Revolution and transform it to suit today's circumstances. This is why we deliberately worked to ensure that the State would lead the way. The government's automobile insurance policy, the creation of the Société nationale de l'amiante (SNA — asbestos national corporation), and all our other endeavours*

*were aimed at this objective.... This is why we can say today that we are living social democracy Quebec-style.*

1. During the 1970 election campaign, Bourassa had promised the people of Quebec 100,000 jobs. What he finally came up with was more like 100,000 more unemployed.
2. Title of the PQ government's main economic policy statement.

**Bombardier, a Quebec monopoly which has made it to the top and become part of the big Canadian bourgeoisie.**



*Basically, State intervention... has only one purpose: ensuring that the Quebec people control their economic future in harmony with the realities that must be taken into account today."*<sup>3</sup>

There you have Bernard Landry's description of social democracy "Quebec-style". The description given by the Lévesque government's State Minister for Economic Development can be summed up in four main ideas that are intimately linked to one another, and that all stem from the "Quiet Revolution" of the sixties. Put together, they gave the PQ the four elements of a working plan:

— an **objective**: control by the Quebec bourgeoisie over the province's capitalist development;

— a **privileged tool**: the Quebec provincial State, transformed, if possible, into a sovereign State;

— a **tactic** to deal with the labour movement: a "favourable bias towards workers";

— and last, but not least, an **alliance**: this alliance takes into account the "realities" of non-Quebecois big capital, particularly U.S. capital.

## "Masters in our own house"

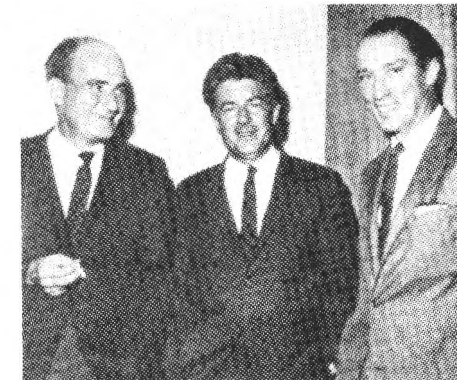
"Control by the Quebec people and for the Quebec people over its economic future" — this is the stated objective of the "Quebec model". Needless to say, the Quebec people's "economic future" is of course a **capitalist** one. During the Quiet Revolution of the sixties, the Liberal Party launched the slogan "Masters in our own house". And today, twenty years later, the "masters in our own house", the French-speaking capitalists of Quebec, have hoisted themselves to the summits of real industrial, financial and commercial monopolies.

Bombardier, Normick-Perron, Québecor, Papier Rolland, Télé-Métropole, Simard Beaudry, Vachon, Provigo, United Auto Parts, Campeau Corporation, Hydro-Québec, Mouvement Desjardins, Sidbec-Dosco, Société générale de financement, Caisse de dépôt et de placement — just a few of the most important names that personify the growth of private or public Quebec enterprises. Nor should the major role played by French-speaking capitalists Paul Desmarais in Canadian financial empires like Power Corporation be overlooked. In 1975, Power Corporation's assets totalled \$6,236 million. As well, the last twenty years have seen an important number of French-speaking Quebec executives hired by businesses that are not controlled by Quebec capital.

The promotion of French-speaking PROLETARIAN UNITY

capitalists is confirmed by statistics that indicate that the gap between the income of French-speaking and English-speaking management personnel in Montreal is closing: from 51% in 1961, to 32% in 1970, to 15% in 1977. As well, a look at the situation of the best-paid 15% of management reveals that French-speaking executives have moved up the ladder at breakneck speed. In 1961, French-speaking personnel accounted for only 44% of this category. In 1971 they made up 57% of the same category; and by 1977, 70% of the best-paid executives in Montreal were French-speaking. These statistics, compiled by the Economic Council and published in the Montreal daily *Le Devoir* (Feb. 24, 1981), do not take into account the effects of Bill 101 (the French Language Charter) on businesses.

But the PQ is not the only party that has aimed at reinforcing the Quebec



**Pelletier, Marchand and Trudeau in 1965. In Quebec they were known as the "three doves". In English Canada, they were sometimes known as the "three wise men", but terms like "French power" were more common...**

bourgeoisie. All political parties in Quebec share this common goal, including the Quebec sections of the federal parties. What distinguishes the PQ's "Quebec model" from others is the strategy used to reach this objective.

## A State that serves business

The State is the privileged tool in the PQ's strategy. As Finance Minister Jacques Parizeau explained:

*"It's inevitable that the State intervene directly in Quebec affairs. This is what gives us a left-wing reputation. If Quebec had 25 companies like Bombardier (Ed. note — one of Quebec's leading industrial monopolies that exports more than half of its production) and a number of major banks, then the situation might be different."*<sup>4</sup>

The PQ obviously sees State intervention as a way of compensating for

the relative weakness of the Quebec bourgeoisie, as a way of creating 10, 15 or 25 Bombardier companies. This is why the PQ's "Quebec model" recognizes the driving force of the State while at the same time staunchly defending the "private sector as a first-rate economic agent".

Energy and Resources Minister Yves Bérubé, also minister responsible for Hydro-Québec, explains this "marriage of convenience" in more detail by distinguishing three stages in the development of the "Quebec model".

*"The first stage, which seems to be completed now, with all State corporations reoriented towards profitability, is the stage of know-how. Profitable and dynamic, State corporations are the living proof of their own success."*<sup>5</sup>

In other words, the first stage of the PQ's model is to turn State corporations into profit-making enterprises. Once this goal reached, the second stage consists in ensuring that private enterprise profits from this:

*"We have reached the second stage: close co-operation with private enterprises in Quebec on important joint projects."*

The State plans "important joint projects" that will permit Quebec companies to break into new sectors. Bérubé goes on to give a series of examples of joint projects involving State and private corporations. In the pulp and paper sector, there has been the creation of two paper mills (Normick-Donohue and *Papeterie du Bas St-Laurent*). Two State corporations, the *Société générale de financement* (SGF) and *Rexfor*, have supplied 50% of the capital needed for the paper mills. In the asbestos sector, the PQ also created a new State corporation, the *Société nationale de l'amiante* (SNA), which will launch joint projects with *Distex* and *Lupel-Amiante*. In the mining sector, *SOQUEM* has associated with private enterprise directly in some cases and draws royalties from all the province's mines. In the petrochemical industry, the SGF invested in a 35% share of the important *Petromont* project. In the food and farm industry, *SOQUIA* has become a junior partner of Quebec private enterprise. With this participation by State corporations, the PQ wants to clear the way for Quebec

3. Bernard Landry quoted in the weekly *Finance*, Dec. 1, 1980, p. 2

4. Jacques Parizeau, quoted by Pierre Fournier in the article "Projet national et affrontement des bourgeoisies québécoise et canadienne", in *La chance au coureur*, Nouvelle Optique, Montreal, 1978, p. 49.

5. *Bâtir le Québec* (Building Quebec), Enoncé de politique économique, Synthèse, orientations et actions, Quebec Government, 1979, p. 168

6. Yves Bérubé in *Finance*, Dec. 1, 1980, p. 3

7. *Ibid.*

capitalists by planning major projects with them, and also to supply "risk capital" and the necessary expertise to improve their competitive position.

As Bérubé points out, this is why "the associations very clearly strengthen our Quebec enterprises".<sup>8</sup> He then goes on to explain how through the Normick-Donohue project in Amos (in northwestern Quebec), the Normick-Perron company "made it into the big league of newsprint production".<sup>9</sup> In other words, the State lends a helping hand to Quebec capital to get it into the "major leagues" of certain sectors, like the paper industry, that are dominated by U.S. or Ontario capital.

Then comes the "third stage of the Quebec model as far as State corporations are concerned: the emergence of our private enterprises thanks to the support of State corporations".<sup>10</sup> This how Quebec social democracy intends to set about creating 10, 15, 25 Bombardier companies!

But, to be effective, the multiple-stage strategy of the "Quebec model" needs a precise tactic to win over the workers' movement, and more particularly the union apparatus. This tactic is social democracy, what the PQ itself described as its "favourable bias towards workers". As Building Quebec specifies, "the objectives proposed by this economic policy will only be met if all those concerned — business, unions, co-operatives, the population and the State — unify their efforts to really build Quebec."<sup>11</sup>

As far as the PQ is concerned, the very symbol of "Quebec-style social democracy" has been the various economic summits it organized. Company presidents, union central leaders and cabinet ministers were invited to these "family gatherings"... With a wave of the "Quebec model" wand, the "co-operative ideal" was attuned to social peace; for, as Yves Duhaime, Quebec Minister of Industry and Commerce, pointed out: "In America, the economy tends to be characterized by clashes between employers and unions. The co-operatives offer an escape route"...<sup>12</sup>

### When competition rhymes with alliance

Of course, "control by the Quebec people and for the Quebec people over its economic future" can only be ensured if — as minister Landry was quick to note — it is exercised in "harmony with the realities that must be taken into account today". In other words, to succeed in developing its control over the province's capitalist economy, Quebec big capital must not lose sight of certain "realities", namely

the fact that big monopoly capital controlled from Toronto or New York is very present in Quebec. This is why while depending on the State to develop its 25 Bombardier corporations, the Quebec nationalist bourgeoisie must work in "harmony" by setting up "stable and mutually profitable associations"<sup>13</sup> with English-Canadian or foreign, especially U.S., capital.

No wonder that René Lévesque's

## The limits of the PQ's project

According to another PQ cabinet minister, "No other government is as much in contact with the business world as we are."<sup>15</sup> Yet very few businessmen in Quebec supported the "yes" camp during the referendum on sovereignty-association. During the referendum campaign, the PQ did its best to create new "stages" in its constitutional project, hoping that a spoonful of sugar would make the medicine go down... The labour apparatuses, especially the Quebec Federation of Labour (QFL), pledged their support. The leader of the Union Nationale Party, Rodrigue Biron, resigned as leader to rally to the "yes" camp. But all this wasn't enough. The PQ lost the referendum, as nearly 60% of the population refused to mandate the government to negotiate sovereignty-association.<sup>16</sup>

### Option-Quebec or Option-Canada

The PQ's setback once again brings

first move after taking power, even before he started working out a programme of legislation, was to don his tuxedo and present his credentials to U.S. financiers at the very exclusive Economic Club in New York. Actions like these even won the PQ support from big monopolies like Alcan, second world producer of aluminium. As Landry said: "They understood us... We and Alcan are now working hand in hand."<sup>14</sup>

to the fore the basic political dilemma confronting the Quebec bourgeoisie for the last fifteen years. The May 1980 referendum was in fact the outcome of the "Option-Quebec" formulated in 1967 by René Lévesque when he turned his back on the Quebec Liberal Party's "Option-Canada". There is a remarkable continuity between the PQ's pre-referendum White Paper on sovereignty-association and the

8. *Ibid.*

9. *Ibid.*

10. *Ibid.*

11. *Bâtir le Québec, op. cit., p. 3*

12. Yves Duhaime in *Finance*, Dec. 1, 1980, p. 3

13. According to the *Petit Robert*, vol. 1 (a French language dictionary).

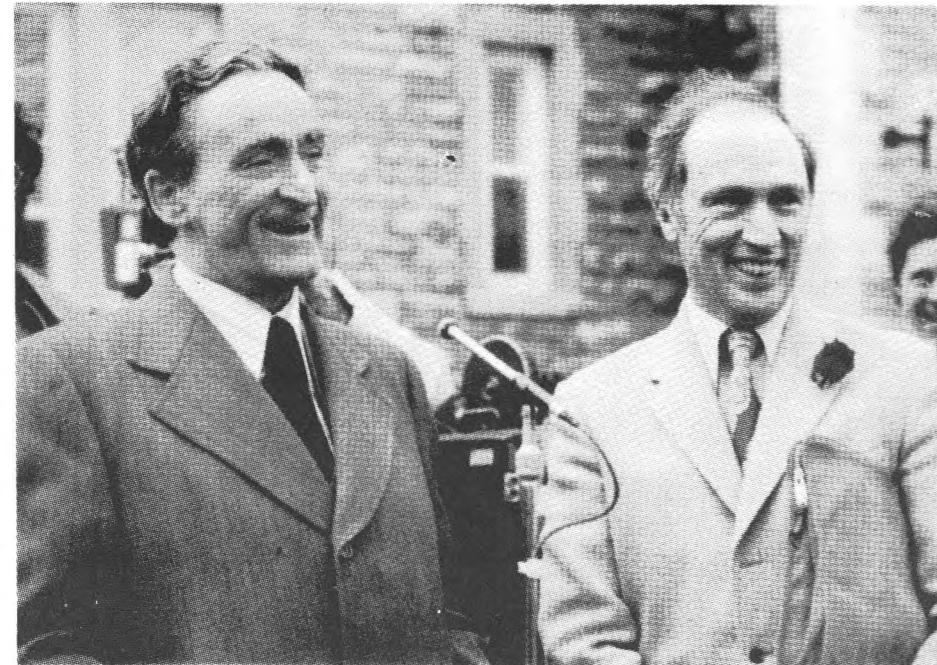
14. Bernard Landry quoted in the weekly *Finance*, Dec. 1, 1980, p. 9

15. Denis de Belleval quoted in *Finance*, Dec. 1, 1980, p. 3

16. For a detailed analysis of the Quebec referendum results, see PROLETARIAN UNITY, no. 22

17. The expression is by René Lévesque, whose book *Option-Québec* led to the creation of the PQ.

### Ryan and Trudeau: both for Canada, but not with the same project.



PROLETARIAN UNITY

manifesto, "A Sovereign Quebec in a New Canadian Union", presented by René Lévesque to the Quebec Liberal Party's convention in October 1967. In this manifesto, Lévesque wrote:

"We must dare to win full freedom for Quebec.... This implies that Quebec must become a sovereign State as soon as possible."<sup>18</sup> Lévesque went on to specify that "there is no reason why the neighbours we (Canadians and Quebecois) will become should not remain, by choice, associates and partners in a common enterprise."<sup>19</sup>

Paul Gérin-Lajoie, the father of the reform in Quebec education, presented a report against Lévesque's manifesto. The report argued for continued federalism based on a new constitution that would grant a special status and more powers to Quebec. Gérin-Lajoie's report condemned "all forms of separatism" and stressed that existing institutions were capable of ensuring the defence of Quebec's demands. It was thus better to rely on these than to "seriously endanger Quebec's economic life".<sup>20</sup> This position was what can be called the Canada-Option. This option aimed at reinforcing the power of the Quebec State while maintaining the federal institutions that guaranteed the existence of a Canada-wide market.

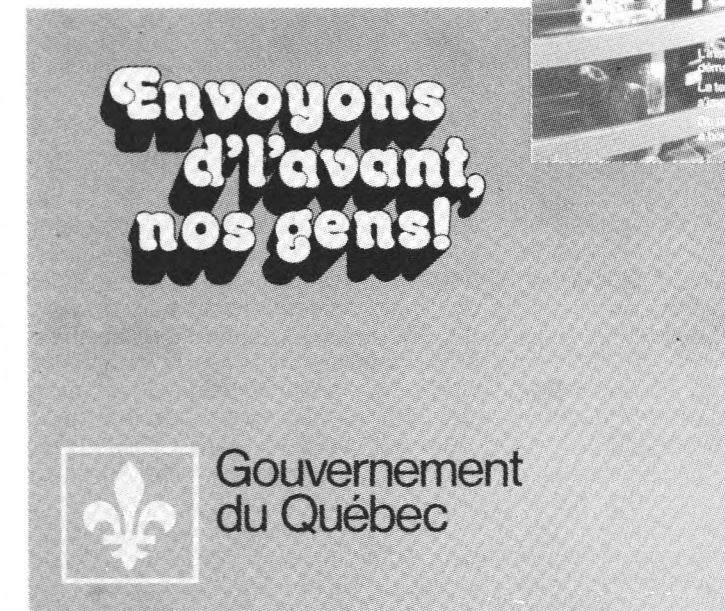
The Canada-Option may seem simple at first glance, but a closer look reveals its ambiguities. For instance, in 1967 the Quebec Liberal Party's demand that Quebec be granted a "special status" seemed to be an illusory political project. Indeed, at that time the monopolization of Quebec capital was much too recent to be able to impose such a political measure on other Canadian capitalists. Politically speaking, this reality was reflected in the isolation of the Quebec government, confronted with the united front constituted by the federal government and the other provinces in Canada. This united front coincided with a long tradition of anti-French chauvinism in Canada.

But though Canadian capitalists were united against Quebec's autonomy, this did not prevent the growth of increasing economic rivalries throughout the country. The political reflection of these rivalries was the series of minority governments in Ottawa. In the context of this crisis in federal politics, people like Jean Marchand, former president of the Confederation of National Trade Unions (CNTU), Gerard Pelletier, an editorialist who had been fired from the Montreal daily *La Presse*, and Pierre-Elliott Trudeau, a millionaire intellectual known especially for his writings in the reformist journal *Cité Libre*, decided to join the ranks of the federal Liberal Party. On June 25, 1968,

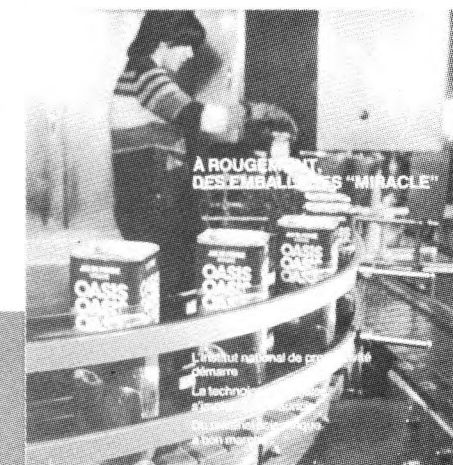
PROLETARIAN UNITY

Trudeau won his first election as prime minister and formed the first majority government in Ottawa in a decade.

The "three doves",<sup>21</sup> Marchand, Pelletier and Trudeau, were seen as "traitors" to the cause by the nationalists. But an important part of the Quebec bourgeoisie was quite satisfied with the turn of events, for it hoped to profit more from the federal State's intervention. For example, the Official Languages Act on bilingualism, and the million of dollars



OSE Opération Solidarité Économique



"Let's move ahead", the slogan of OSE (Operation Economic Solidarity), a government programme to promote the monopolization of small Quebec businesses.

granted by the federal Department of Regional Economic Expansion under Jean Marchand, were interpreted as means of promoting French-speaking capitalists. The Official Languages Act, sponsored by Gerard Pelletier in 1969, aimed at reinforcing the presence and influence of francophones within the central State.

The Department of Regional Economic Expansion (DREE) was supposed to battle regional disparity. In other words, politicians set about proving that the central State, which had been controlled by Toronto financiers ever since Confederation, could also serve the interests of capitalists in other regions. Of the projects subsidized by the DREE and completed on December 31, 1978, sixty per cent were for Quebec. This represented 41% of the total grants and 59% of the jobs created through such projects.

As we can see, there were clearly two political options developing side by side. One, represented by "French power" in Ottawa, aimed at investing in the federal State to defend the interests of a Quebec bourgeoisie which sought to "benefit" from Canadian capitalism. This is one of the reasons why for the last fifteen years Trudeau's Liberal

Party has by and large (with only minor interruptions) managed to form a majority government in Ottawa by relying on the massive election of Liberal MPs in Quebec. Though "French power" has made few breakthroughs in Ottawa and remains little more than an electoral illusion, the Liberal Party has been able to stay in power in Ottawa essentially because it continues to serve the interests of a financial oligarchy dominated by Ontario interests. It was no coincidence that Pelletier and Marchand left the federal scene. They left because they felt that they couldn't counterbalance the decisive political influence of English-speaking,

18. René Lévesque, "Manifeste", September 15, 1967, published in the daily LA PRESSE, Oct. 12, 1967; quoted by Roch Denis in *Luttes de classes et question nationale au Québec 1948-1968*, PSI-EDI, Montreal, Paris, 1979, p. 458.

19. *Ibid.*

20. Report of the Constitutional Committee to the Quebec Liberal Party's convention in October 1967; quoted by Roch Denis, *op. cit.*, p. 457

21. The English-speaking chauvinists preferred the image "French power" to the one favoured in Quebec of peaceful and reformist doves ("les trois colombes")... We shouldn't forget that in June 1968, Trudeau took power on the theme of a "just society".

and especially Ontario, cabinet ministers. For example, Marchand resigned very noisily after the federal government capitulated to the English-speaking air controllers striking against the use of French in air traffic control over Quebec!

The other option, of course, is the one put forward by René Lévesque. When Trudeau took power in Ottawa, René Lévesque created the Parti Québécois (PQ) which was to lead him to power in Quebec. Beyond the principle of "Quebec sovereignty-association", which can be achieved to a fair extent within the context of a provincial State, Lévesque's "Option-Quebec" is a political show of strength by the most nationalist section of the Quebec bourgeoisie. The PQ's strategy of sovereignty-association consists mainly in proclaiming, at least in a referendum or election mandate, the sovereignty of Quebec and thus imposing a new association with English Canada on this basis. Thus, the "Option-Quebec" has a curious resemblance with the "special status" that the Quebec Liberal Party demanded for Quebec at the end of the sixties. In both cases, the objective is to increase the powers of the Quebec State within the context of a unified Canadian market. Of course, there is one fundamental strategic difference between the two options: Quebec's withdrawal from the federal State to ensure bilateral treaties between two legally sovereign States.

Yet, even though the PQ made numerous compromises on its initial strategy, most Quebec capitalists rejected the sovereignty-association option during the May 20 referendum in 1980. Why? Because Quebec big capital is already capable of extending its operations to the entire Canadian market. In doing so, it reinforces itself and is better able to penetrate the U.S. market. Quebec monopolies find that centralized power is needed to ensure the existence of a Canadian market and to strengthen their position on the international market. The facts are that today Quebec capital is more interested in investing in the Western provinces and in guaranteeing stable sources of oil and gas than it is in establishing a preferential market within Quebec itself.

Last, but not least, small and medium-sized enterprises — referred to in Quebec as the PME ("petites et moyennes entreprises") — are certainly quite happy to "dare"<sup>22</sup> with the PQ government. The problem is that these enterprises desperately need a Canadian market to develop and "dare"! This explains why their nationalism



The OSE programme is launched with Jean-Paul Létourneau, of the Quebec Chamber of Commerce (standing), and Louis Laberge of the QFL (to the right).

cannot be carried so far as to risk the loss of the Canadian market by supporting the PQ's sovereignty-association project. The PQ can rave all it wants about the democratic and "gentlemanly" spirit of English-Canadian capitalists, Quebec capitalists — like any sensible men — aren't naive enough to believe in "perfect love" after a divorce... Nothing would deal a harder blow to Quebec capitalists than protectionist policies in English Canada. The presence of the federal State and Crown corporations and contracts in Quebec already represents a serious danger of economic reprisals.

An objective look at the present situation reveals clearly why, beyond tactical considerations, the referendum on sovereignty-association was ultimately seen as a battle between two options, between two bourgeois centres of power personified by two French-speaking leaders: Trudeau in Ottawa and Lévesque in Quebec City.

### Claude Ryan and the new "Canada Option"

Lévesque may have lost his referendum, but Trudeau is on his way out. He even resigned after being temporarily defeated by the Progressive Conservatives under Joe Clark in the May 1979 election. His comeback and re-election in February 1980 was most probably largely due to the referendum looming in Quebec. As the present crisis triggered by Trudeau's attempt at unilateral patriation of the constitution clearly indicates, however, Canada is in the throes of a political crisis which, far from diminishing, is growing sharper day by day. Indeed, today the Quebec nationalist bourgeoisie is not alone in challenging the hegemony of Toronto financiers. The manufacturing crisis in Ontario and the growth of capitalist

development in Quebec and the Western provinces have considerably modified the balance of power between capitalists in Canada.<sup>23</sup> This new situation has brought to the fore a new "Canada Option", especially in Quebec. This new strategy relies on the provincial States to force a political change within the central State.

Although the sovereignty-association project was too ambitious for the political possibilities of the Quebec bourgeoisie, any "autonomy" project that not propose a coherent project for re-organizing the federal State will not serve the economic potential of a Quebec bourgeoisie which is increasingly stronger and which has developed allies in other Canadian regions.

This helps us understand why Claude Ryan, the present leader of the Quebec Liberal Party, paints himself as the most clear-headed defender of the interests of the Quebec bourgeoisie, after having condemned the Bourassa government in the past, and applauded the PQ's "good measures" when he was editor for the Montreal daily *Le Devoir*. In his political project, Ryan has abandoned the illusion of gaining a "special status" for Quebec. In opposition to the PQ's sovereignty-association project, he proposes instead to rely on the State of Quebec to force changes within the central State itself. So Ryan is doing his best to prove that he is the only one

22. OSE, Opération Solidarité Economique (economic solidarity operation — the French abbreviation spells the verb "dare") is a generous grant programme created by the PQ to help small and medium-sized enterprises develop into medium and big enterprises...
23. For a more thorough analysis of the evolution of the balance of power within the Canadian bourgeoisie, see PROLETARIAN UNITY, no. 23, "The economic underpinnings to the constitutional crisis".

capable of standing up to Pierre Elliott Trudeau. Meanwhile, since its setback in the referendum, the PQ can only defend the principle of provincial autonomy which was so dear to Maurice Duplessis, Quebec's premier in the fifties.

The failure of the sovereignty-association project is not the only sign that the "Quebec model" does not please a part of the Quebec bourgeoisie. Cabinet minister Bernard Landry pointed out once that "Quebec has become the paradise of small and medium-sized enterprises".<sup>24</sup> But what is a "paradise" for some has turned out to be hell for others. The PQ's strategy consists in extending the monopolization of Quebec capital by using the State to integrate small and medium-sized enterprises. Evidently, a lot of small capitalists are against this strategy. This fact explains why in *Building Quebec*, the PQ does not mince its words about an important sector of small businessmen who, according to the PQ, prefer to buy themselves a big bungalow and Cadillac rather than risk reinvesting their profits. These "nouveaux riches", who are very influential on school boards and municipal councils, view the State's omnipresence with distrust. They are just as suspicious of the "new class of entrepreneurs who are more concerned with production rates and penetrating markets than with short-term profits, and who are oriented towards enterprises that move beyond the family context and the sectors traditionally reserved for francophones."<sup>25</sup>

Ryan's Liberal Party hopes to take power by playing on the dissatisfaction of these small capitalists. This is why, for example, the Quebec Liberal

Party's programme has decided to focus on an anti-bureaucracy and anti-technocracy campaign while preserving most of the PQ's reforms. The Liberal

Party promises to decentralize administrative powers to the school boards and municipal councils and give State corporations less leeway.

## Is it worth voting for the lesser of two evils?

In Quebec, a certain section of the left likes to portray Ryan as Quebec's Ronald Reagan. This is also the PQ's favourite tactic. Since the PQ has nothing new to propose, it paints itself as the defender of past reforms against Ryan's intentions of setting Quebec back a decade. The language of the Liberal Party's programme certainly seems much closer to the traditional liberal ideology than to the technocratic ideology that characterizes the PQ. It is evident that the Liberal Party intends to play on the local elite's resistance to centralization and the national minorities' dissatisfaction with the PQ's arrogant nationalism. It is also quite clear that the Liberal Party intends to rely more on the AFEAS<sup>26</sup> than the labour bureaucracies. But when you get right down to it, the Liberal Party's programme is fundamentally the same as the PQ's. As for the Liberal Party's intention of setting Quebec back a decade, we should recall that the PQ itself has launched some real counter-reform projects, especially in education.

Some will try to convince us that the

issue in the upcoming election in Quebec is to prevent Ryan's "extreme right" from taking power. To do this, they have resorted once again to the magic formula of "critical support for the PQ" or of "voting for the lesser of two evils". But the facts are that in 1981, even more than in 1976, the working class has nothing to gain by electing either of these two bourgeois parties. Whoever the winner is on election night, the battle will be down in the street the very next day. Community and workers' organizations should take advantage of the election campaign to defend their demands and confront the bourgeois parties. The division of the bourgeoisie is a good thing as long as it doesn't drag working people into its quarrels. Working people should respond to the bourgeoisie's division by building their own unity.

24. Bernard Landry quoted in the weekly *Finance*, Dec. 1, 1980, p. 9

25. *Bâtir le Québec*, op. cit., p. 2

26. AFEAS — Associations féminines d'éducation et d'action sociale (féminine association of social education and action): a traditional women's organization.

## Theoretical Review



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Canadian Dimension recently made an appeal to its subscribers. The following excerpts sum up the financial crisis this magazine faces.

This may be DIMENSION's terminal appeal to you. Unless we receive enough contributions in the next month DIMENSION will cease to exist. We are in the most difficult financial bind of the magazine's history. It is only you, our readers, who can get us out of it.

In our last appeal letter we discussed our substantial editorial optimism for the coming year. The need for a national socialist magazine in Canada has rarely been greater. We expected to continue filling this need. We also discussed the financial gloom which has hit so many publications on the left and has reached DIMENSION. Many subscribers apparently did not realize the seriousness of our situation. The contributions fell far short of donations received over the last four years. So we are writing again to tell you we will not survive unless you decide to contribute now....

There are some encouraging efforts under way. Fund-raising parties have been organized in Winnipeg and Toronto, to bring in some immediate funds to pay the most pressing bills. We now appeal to you to mail in your contribution today. Please make it as generous as you can. Help save DIMENSION!...

# A conference, and an on-going debate

The left in English Canada is involved in a process of reconsideration of its recent past and an exploration of its future possibilities. At least this is so if we are to judge by a conference on *Socialism in the 1980s* held in British Columbia in late January, and by some recent publications.

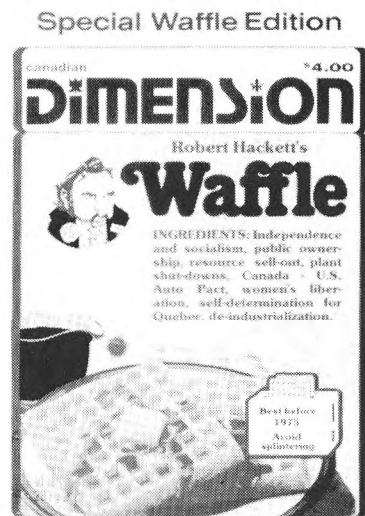
The mood at the conference is best characterized as sober. No heady euphoria or resounding proclamations. Participants were tentative in the presentation of their views. One complement of this tentativeness is greater openness towards differing opinions. This spirit of tolerance surprised several of the participants themselves, who were moved to reflect on why this was so. Was it a regional phenomenon? Or was it not rather the turmoil of world reality and unrealized expectations that have brought increasing numbers of progressive people to open their doors to serious debate?

During the conference, this tolerance was extended to Marxist-Leninist views — views that were excluded from the platform of the conference in its initial planning stage; views which most participants came to the conference rejecting out of hand, as dogma; views which still are treated with special scepticism.

The theme of the conference held in British Columbia, January 23-25, was "Socialism in the 1980s". Most of the participants were academics from across English Canada. Several are central figures in well-known journals of the political and cultural left, like Cy Gonic, an editor of *Canadian Dimension*, and John Saul, an editor of *This Magazine*. Several, in addition to their writing and teaching, are activists in popular movements: Jack Warnock in the environmental and anti-nuclear movement; Heather-Jon Mulroney, in the women's movement; Norman Penner, along with conference organizer Phil Resnick, in the defence of Quebec's right to self-determination during the May referendum; John Saul, in organizing support for African liberation movements... and there are others.

Though the conference had a central theme, the presentations covered a kaleidoscope of subjects. These included panels to consider the results of the worldwide struggle for socialism, the rise of right-wing forces, the international economic crisis, the women's movement, the environmental movement, socialist ethics, the political strengths and weaknesses of social-democratic (CCF-NDP) and Marxist-Leninist (CP mainly) organizations... and more.

All this in a short two-day period! While each panel had its own importance, it is not practical to review them one by one. Rather, at this point it seems more appropriate to try and highlight certain strands in the discussion throughout the conference, questions that must be returned to in the serious debate that is on the agenda for the Canadian left as a whole.



The November 1980 issue of the Winnipeg-based magazine *Canadian Dimension* was entirely devoted to the history of the Waffle's struggle within the NDP.

Firstly, there is the question of the importance to be given to and the character of the fight for "independence", both in English Canada and Quebec. On more than one panel this question emerged. Secondly, there is the question of political organization. Mass movements, social-democratic and vanguard formations were mixed, matched and opposed in the comments of various participants. Thirdly, the conference explicitly put on the table, as an unsolved problem, the transition from successful national liberation struggles to the successful construction of socialism.

Finally, there is the question of Marxism as a method of analysis. This was not directly addressed. Instead, the varied methodology of the participants passed largely without comment. But in future discussions, the left will have to return, with some rigour, to the question: is historical materialism (Marxism) the method for analysing society and, if so, what precisely are the major elements of this method?

## Independence and socialism

One important back-drop to this conference was certainly the defeat of the "yes" option in the Quebec referendum. The consequent confusion and malaise among the Quebec socialist supporters of this option has its echo among progressives in English Canada, those who also saw nationalism as a way forward. For them this latest setback on the independence road to socialism follows the earlier collapse of the Waffle in English Canada itself.

(Just before the conference *Canadian Dimension* published a special issue examining this failed marriage of independence and socialism. This is the November 1980 issue.)

Prompted by these setbacks, there was questioning of the independence and socialism path. But, despite these setbacks, the questioning was still hesitant at the conference. Resnick seemed the most willing to reconsider this perspective. Firstly, he bluntly pointed out that the "left has to learn nationalism is no short-cut to socialism". Events themselves, like the Quebec referendum, have shown that. Secondly, on a Canada-wide scale, the actions of Trudeau, particularly around the expansion of Petrocan, show how

1. An evaluation of this study of the Waffle was published in *IN STRUGGLE!*, no. 239 and 240.

the struggle for national independence is in danger of being co-opted to serve capitalist ends.

Resnick might have added how ten years later one cannot escape the irony that the main demands raised by the Waffle on the nationalization of natural resources are being defended as well by an old Waffle enemy, Ed Broadbent... the man who moved the Waffle's expulsion from the NDP. Broadbent is not posing any threat to Canadian capital. Quite the contrary, he is consciously working to improve its international competitive position!

But, in the view of Resnick and other participants, the election of Reagan to the U.S. presidency, and his continentalist policies — this rise of (foreign) reaction — calls for a strong effort from Canadian socialists to "defend Canada". And the "but" is important. With this very pregnant three-letter word, progressives can again give birth to activities that retrace the footsteps of the Waffle, which itself followed in the footsteps of the Canadian Communist Party in this regard. (As a matter of fact, several former CP members were involved in founding the Waffle.) There is a danger that we could again exhaust energy in the fight against some 'greater danger', without waging the political and organizational struggle to seize power from our **homegrown** bourgeoisie.

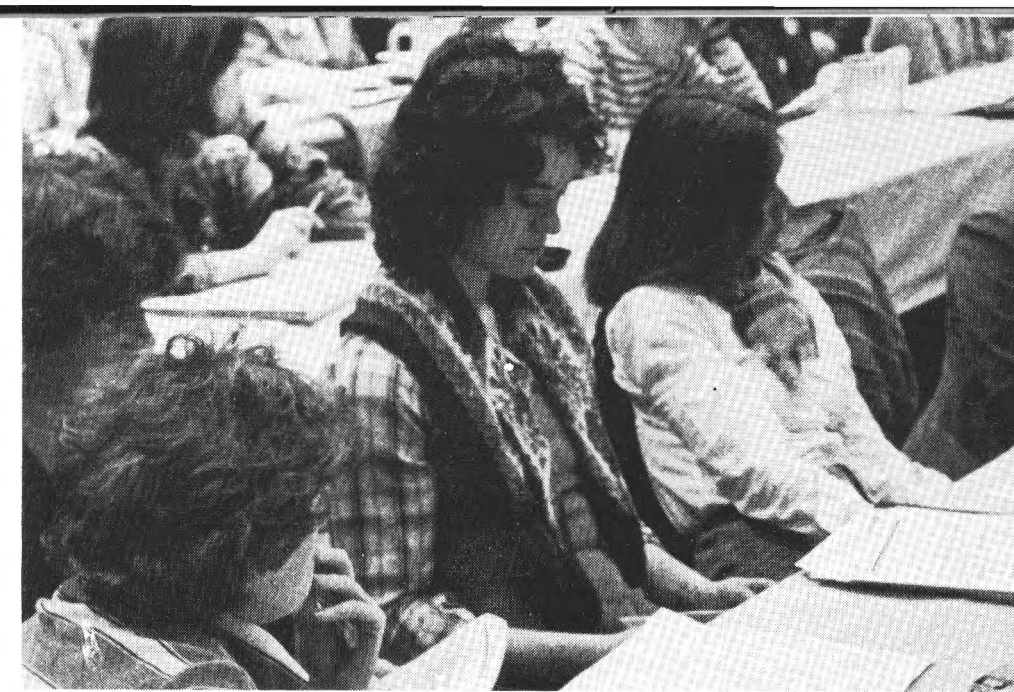
At least this remains an acute danger so long as there is no agreement on the fundamental fact that Canadian capitalists are themselves an imperialist bourgeoisie, and in no way progressive.

## Political organization

It was argued that mass movements, particularly the women's and environmental (anti-nuclear) movements, must be central concerns in the struggle for socialism. There was little disagreement. Rather the dilemma was **how**.

The women's movement was described by Heather-Jon Mulroney as being once again at a crossroads, "fragmented and defensive". With the economic crisis, its gains of the last fifteen years are under attack and the response of the left was said to be "inadequate". Vis-a-vis the environmental movement, in the assessment of John Warnock the largest mass movement in capitalist countries, the left remains politically and organizationally on the periphery.

The fusion of the struggle for socialism with the mass movements remains beyond doubt a dilemma for the Canadian left.



In the labour movement, the women's movement and the left as a whole, the present period is one of questioning and debate on the orientation needed to move forward in the struggle.

One section of the left inclines to eulogies of spontaneism. This anarchist tendency is a strong theme in Myrna Kostash's reconsideration of the new left in the 1960s, *Long Way From Home*.<sup>2</sup> Publications like *Our Generation*<sup>3</sup> take up this viewpoint even more vigorously.

At the conference itself, most participants made a point of rejecting the concept of vanguard organizations. They made little or no efforts to differentiate among them, characterizing them all as: dogmatic — without any theoretical capacity; anti-democratic — inevitably tied to the **diktat** of a foreign centre; sectarian — isolated from and without influence within popular movements.

It is not that these characterizations are entirely baseless, that there are not self-proclaimed "Marxist-Leninists" in Canada who are living caricatures. But this stereotype does not encompass the entire reality of Marxist-Leninist organizations, a reality that is dynamic — not static, a reality that most participants were still unfamiliar with in any concrete way. To take one example, the current character of **PROLETARIAN UNITY** was a genuine surprise to several.

The disjunction between stereotype and reality appeared in another form in the conference. In his review of Marxist-Leninist organizations in Canada, Norman Penner made a point of arguing that Marxist-Leninists had made a very positive contribution on the politically central struggles of the defence of Quebec's right to self-determination and the incorporation of popular and national democratic rights in the constitution. He further con-

trasted this positive, active, contribution with the passivity of many independent progressives on these same issues.

This raises an interesting paradox. If Marxist-Leninist formations are so 'unsuited' to Canadian reality, as many at the conference claimed, why is it that Marxist-Leninist formations took important initiatives in identifying key political questions in Canada, in a timely way? And, secondly, how is it that they demonstrated a capacity to act in a way that mobilized popular forces well beyond their own ranks? So long as one clings to the stereotype of "vanguard", this paradox cannot be explained. It is appropriate for progressives to re-examine the **real** activities and publications of Marxist-Leninists and see the very consequential distinctions among them.

Some do have a vigorous theoretical life, democratic debate, a demonstrated capacity to learn from experience and to work with integrity with others outside their own ranks. We believe that this is true of **IN STRUGGLE!** The vanguard formation is not solely an efficient instrument for some future, unspecified but inevitable, combat with the concentrated force of bourgeois power, in conditions of extreme repression. Participants at the conference were considerably more sympathetic to the necessity of vanguard formations in the context of armed struggles for national liberation, for example.

2. Myrna Kostash, *Long Way From Home*, James Lorimer & Co., Toronto, 1980.  
3. A libertarian socialist magazine published in Montreal, in English.

Right now, the vanguard formation, even if it has not yet achieved the maturity of a party, is an efficient instrument for drawing together the best and most useful ideas for advancing the interests of the working class in a way that they can be tested with some precision, vigour and determination in practice.

There were at the conference a minority of defenders of the NDP of the boring-from-within school of thought. But most of the criticism of this approach was on the basis of the anti-democratic nature of the NDP, not the class-collaborationist basis of its programme. Even with this limitation, the revolt against back-room manipulation cannot be underestimated. As one of the students attending the conference said in the sum-up discussion: "I have been to two NDP conventions and as a democrat I was appalled. I never realized it was so anti-democratic. If the NDP is the only choice we have, we have no choice!"

### National liberation and socialist construction

Support for national liberation struggles as a stepping stone to socialist construction has been a pillar in the thinking of many progressives in English Canada. But as John Saul reflected in a perceptive overview of this

question, this "dramatic historic transformation has been much more difficult than earlier thought".

The danger of "authoritarian denouement", of the crystallization of new classes, of the reassertion of imperialist control after independence, have proven in several cases to be more real than were the hopes and desires of the left for steady progress on the path to socialist construction.

Saul reviewed and rejected views that such a "denouement" was inevitable, that capitalism is a necessary preliminary stage for socialism; or that universal simultaneous revolution is the only possibility. However, there was no opportunity at the conference itself for him to present his particular analysis of the Mozambican revolution, which he contends is progressing in the construction of socialism.

The restructuring of international capital (which Duncan Cameron spoke of as the "transnationalization of finance capital to form a global monopoly capital") is one major element in understanding the obstacles to and character of socialist revolution. Another element considered at the conference was the dynamic tension between leadership — the organizations formed in the struggle for national liberation — and the masses within countries where the working class is tiny, the accumulated capital small, and the opportunity to increase productivity

through reorganization of work limited by a generally low level of development of technical capacities and absence of collective work discipline.

But these two dimensions of the problem were not closely integrated in the discussion. One other striking weakness was the failure to directly address the character and actions of Soviet imperialism, which appeared only as a shadow throughout the conference.

### Marxism as a method

In a discussion of current developments in China, Jack Scott recalled Marx and Engels' explanation for the defeats of the revolutions of 1848: not the sabotage of renegades but the capacity within capitalist relations for the further development of productive forces. Scott emphasized the difficulty of building socialism when productive forces are as undeveloped as in China. But after quoting, in this context, current Chinese formulations of the theory of productive forces — "build production and you automatically build socialism" — he himself avoided any public criticism or overt agreement with this perspective.

Yet his was one of the few presentations to attempt to use the major constituents of a historical materialist analysis. There were passing references to methodology, however. One side there was a warning against the danger of reductionism — the practice of liquidating the distinctive dimension of sexuality and nationality in particular, considering them exclusively as expressions of economic interest. At another point, Penner, whose analysis of political ideology (Marxism-Leninism in Canada) was separated from economic developments — quite the opposite of reductionism — made a telling point. It is necessary, he said, to abandon any preconception that "Marxism-Leninism is the only theory that need not be judged by its results".

Indeed, Marxism-Leninism, as much as any other theory, must be situated historically, in the context of political economy, connected to the consequences of its actions as much as to the circumstances in which its debates take place.

But if this is to be done with objectivity, to draw valid and not preconceived conclusions, knowledge of the Marxist method itself and proficiency in its use must be improved.

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Some who came to the conference dismissed it as intellectualist. But it is more, not less, hard thinking that is required to solve the questions facing the Canadian left.

PROLETARIAN UNITY

## Notes on the international situation

# Here come the '80s

At first glance, the international situation seems to be an incredibly complicated tapestry where the only clear pattern is the steadily worsening crisis. Now that the '80s have begun, all countries seem to be heading deeper into an apparently bottomless crisis.

To analyse this situation, we have to go beyond the simplification of turning the East and West, North and South into monolithic realities. The present crisis cannot be summed up with these kinds of geographic polarities because the ties between countries are growing stronger and there is a continual evolution in the contradictions between them. The U.S. inflation rate and the indebtedness of third world countries are but two examples that illustrate how today's international situation resembles a house of cards where every country is helping to hold the others up. This can be understood by looking at how the contradictions among third world countries or between Western Europe and the United States have evolved in recent years.

The countries that do not export oil include the poorest countries in the world. They are the hardest hit by the crisis and its consequences: famine, illiteracy, expropriations, etc.

### Crisis from North to South

Practically all observers agree that the crisis in 1980 was one of the worst on record, and 1981 doesn't look much better. Many compare the present situation to the Great Depression. This comparison is not out of line with regard to some factors such as the unemployment rate in many countries. The present crisis is the continuation and deterioration of a crisis that began in 1974 (or even earlier) with the first big round of oil price increases, the weakening of the dollar and the beginning of the United States' decline. Significantly, inflation in practically all industrialized and non-industrialized countries has hit record highs simultaneous with a general slowing down of production.

However, the main characteristic of this period has been the increasing imbalance in the world financial system. This is shown by the huge deficits or surpluses registered by different countries. Between 1974 and 1979, the number of countries unable to meet their financial obligations grew from 4 to 20. This financial crunch has been especially difficult for the third world countries that have no oil reserves. These countries, which include the poorest on the planet, have only been able to keep their head above water and maintain growth since the 1974-75 shock (when oil prices were first jumped by the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries, OPEC) by going into hock and imposing drastic austerity measures. It was then possible to recycle petro-dollars back to these

countries in the form of loans. But even this is no longer possible.

These countries' indebtedness is near the point of no return, the point where the countries most in debt will be incapable of paying any more. To put it plainly, they will be bankrupt. These countries' total debt has already doubled from \$36 billion to \$70 billion in the past two years. (See Table 1.) These countries include the world's poorest, such as the African countries in the sub-Saharan region where the outlook for growth is grim, the illiteracy rate is the highest and life expectancy the lowest in the world. The countries of southern Asia, where half of the world's poor live, are in the same situation. Many refer to this half of humanity as the *fourth world* to underscore how the crisis, with its famine, unemployment and abandonment of the land, has had greater effect there than elsewhere.

We must also include some countries that have undergone rapid industrialization since the 1960s among the non-oil producing countries in serious financial difficulties. There are about a dozen countries in this category, including Brazil, South Korea, and Argentina. In recent years, these countries have absorbed half of the investments made by industrialized countries in the third world. These countries were only able to industrialize by contracting massive loans from financial institutions.

Industrialized or not, today all these countries have become insolvent and private institutions will no longer grant loans to them. This led the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) to grant them "special" financial aid — "special" because it usually means the direct intervention of imperialist powers in the economies of these countries. The instability resulting from this situation is not difficult to imagine. Big monopolies, whose clients can no longer pay, face financial instability. It also limits the industrial expansion of imperialist countries which then lose important markets. Finally, this situation is also a source of political instability.

How did these countries get into such a situation when in the early 1970s it seemed that there would be an upsurge in their demands? Wouldn't their natural resources assure them prosperity and a more important role on the world chess board?

Between 1956 and 1972, some 20% of the foreign assets of the multinationals were nationalized. A series of multilateral organizations were set up in the early 1970s that included the main countries exporting raw materials in the third world. This is when the majority



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of third world countries formed the "group of 77" and there was talk of a new world economic order that would come out of the North-South dialogue. OPEC's bombshell in 1973 was the culmination of a third-worldist movement that had grown up in the anti-imperialist struggles of the 1960s. But times changed, OPEC's achievement was not to be repeated.

Many factors explain this. There were, of course, the direct political interventions, such as the intervention in Chile to help force down the price of copper and undermine the copper cartel. But there was more than that. The crisis that began in 1974 dealt a severe blow to these countries' unity and caused the prices of many raw materials to plunge. At the same time, the main imperialist powers in a posi-

tion to do so have been exploiting their own natural resources. This is the case for Canada, with, for example, the Athabaska tar sands project, Albertan oil and the James Bay hydro-electric project in Quebec. Indeed, 80% of all investment in resource exploration in the world since 1973 has been spent in the United States, Canada, South Africa (Azania) and Australia.

Only the OPEC countries were able to maintain their cartel and continue making profits. However, even they have thus far been unable to use their enormous oil revenues to push forward their own industrialization. They have instead invested the money in industrialized countries or simply used it to buy weapons.

It is clear that the growth rates for most third world countries has fallen

below expectations. Their own financial dependence, their economic structure, their technological weaknesses and their lack of skilled labour have hampered the industrialization of many of these countries. For example, Nigeria has become practically a dumping ground for cast-off machinery which remains underused because of a lack of technicians.

The plain facts of the present crisis are simply eating away at the supposedly uniform reality of what is called the third world or the developing countries. For example, there was recently a confrontation between oil-producing countries and non-producing countries of the third world at the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD). The countries without oil reserves accused the oil producers of

not having given them enough economic advantages. Furthermore, the third world countries are increasingly divided on the political level along the lines of the imperialist rivalries, as is illustrated by the confrontations at the conferences of the non-aligned countries. The period when raising nationalist demands held centre stage has passed and today new forms of dependence are appearing. These include political, economic and technological forms as well as the integration of the national bourgeoisies of these countries into the imperialist system. These increasingly diverse forms of dependence are becoming stronger as the crisis continues and the dependent countries are the first ones to feel its effects. But they are not the only ones...

### A war economy

Although the third world countries feel the worst effects of the crisis, they are not the only ones affected. The crisis has also heightened the tensions between industrialized countries. It has generally been true that periods of crisis are also periods when the imperialist order is re-worked and the balance of power shifts.

All observers speak of 1980 as the year of the second oil shock and the beginning of a world recession. One of the most striking elements of the crisis is how it has hit the big capitalist countries almost simultaneously. Even West Germany, which had escaped the main blows of the crisis in previous years, felt its effects strongly last year. Economically, the crisis has had its effects everywhere, even if unequally. Only Japan seems to have escaped and has maintained a 5% growth in its GNP. (See Table 2.)

It is in this context that we must look at Ronald Reagan's coming to power and his plan for economic revival. The same can be said for Britain's Margaret Thatcher. For these countries, and to a certain extent for Canada, a war economy has become the only way out of the crisis. The solution is simultaneously a political, economic and technological one.

Militarization is a **political solution** insofar as the Soviet presence in the Middle East is a threat to the West's oil supplies. This threat puts real pressure on the Western economies, especially for Europe and Japan. The U.S. is also the power most affected by the revolutionary struggles in Iran, Latin America and elsewhere. The precarious situation of many third world countries caused by their growing political and economic instability also makes it more difficult for the U.S. to count on local regimes to police their neighbours in



Symbol of a crisis which affects the United States more seriously than many other industrialized countries: ration tickets are already being printed.

various regions of the world. It is not simply a matter of whether the U.S. has as many tanks and guns as the Soviet Union over-all. It is also a question of where they are placed, the relative strength in each region, etc. As Robert W. Tucker, an ideologue in the new Reagan administration, put it, "In the two most critical areas of concern to the United States (the Persian Gulf and Europe — ed. note), the necessary means — not the only means but the necessary means — are military."

Militarization is also an **economic solution** insofar as Reagan's proposals are based essentially on the thesis that considerably bigger military expenditures (which Carter had, in fact, already proposed) will stimulate the U.S. economy. Of course, getting the economy moving again will require the highest "national discipline" since productivity has been stagnating in the U.S. (U.S. productivity grew only 1% in 1978, while it climbed by 4% in West Germany and by 5% in Japan the same year.)

In responding to the crisis, not only does the United States have to keep its existing markets intact, it also has to increase its own productive capacity. This is what is behind the present debate in many advanced capitalist countries on what orientation to give research and development. It would appear that in the United States, at least, the answer has been to step up military research whose technological fallout can be applied by industry. In fact, this is the source of the United States' near-monopoly in the computer field.

A recurring characteristic of periods of crisis is the emphasis placed on investing in and developing new means of production (like the robots in the auto industry) instead of consumer goods (like cars).

This is because it is more and more difficult to sell consumer goods on either domestic or foreign markets. This is also the reason behind the race for new technologies. The imperialist

countries want to use them to modernize their means of production and to develop new forms of the organization of work.

However, while the U.S. response to the crisis seems to have been the war economy, other imperialist countries do not necessarily agree.

### The European "Reich"

The European Reich — these are the words used by the former British Ambassador to Washington Peter Jay to express his concern over the growing differences between Europe and the United States. In practice, the Common Market countries, and West Germany in particular, do not need the artificial stimulus of a war economy as much as the U.S. does. Until recently, in fact, only Japan has been able to match West Germany's economic growth. The Germans were able to benefit from a stable market and the stable prices that the Common Market offered. West Germany's predominance in the Common Market is almost a unique situation. Perhaps, this is what keeps the competing member countries together in Common Market. It also gives West Germany a decided advantage over its competitors, Japan in particular, whose exports are regularly threatened by protectionist measures. This is how West Germany has established a near monopoly in the manufacture of appliances and durable goods which it exports to other advanced capitalist countries and to many third world countries.

There are other factors as well. There are the economic ties between the Soviet Union and COMECON countries (COMECON is the Eastern economic community) and Western Europe. These ties make Western Europe totally opposed to the cold war

1. *Foreign Affairs*, Winter 1980-81, p. 251.

In the end, the OPEC countries' power play was not repeated by other countries in the third world. Below, an OPEC meeting in Stockholm in July, 1977.

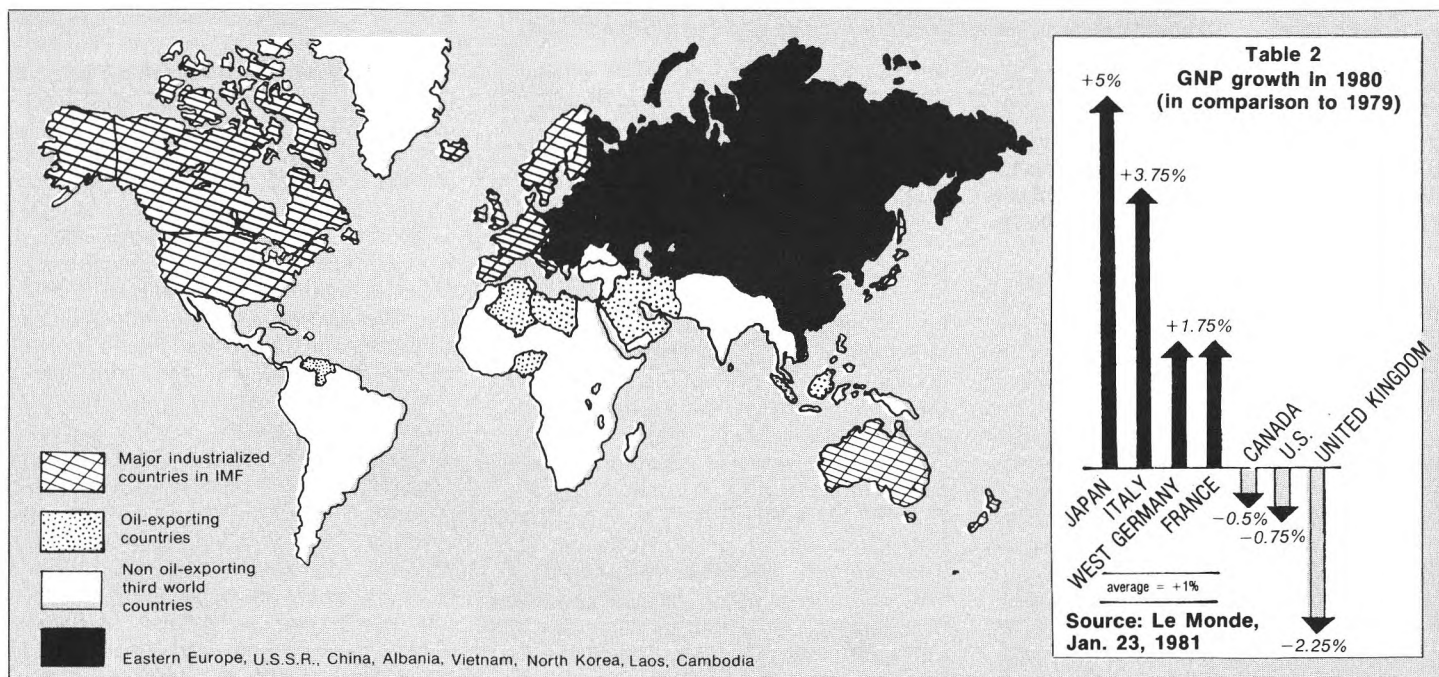


Table 2  
GNP growth in 1980  
(in comparison to 1979)

Table 1  
Balance of payments, 1973 — 1980'  
(in billions of \$U.S.)

	1973	1974	1975	1976	1977	1978	1979	1980 <sup>2</sup>
Industrialized countries <sup>3</sup>	19,3	- 11,6	17,9	- 0,5	- 4,1	33,4	- 9,8	- 50
Big seven <sup>4</sup>	14,1	- 3,8	23,0	9,0	9,3	36,1	2,9	- 29
Others	5,2	- 7,8	- 5,1	- 9,6	- 13,4	- 2,7	- 12,7	- 21
Developing countries								
Oil-exporting countries <sup>5</sup>	6,6	67,8	35,0	40,0	31,9	5,0	68,4	115
Non oil-exporting countries <sup>6</sup>	- 11,5	- 36,9	- 45,9	- 32,9	- 28,6	- 35,8	- 52,9	- 70
Total <sup>7</sup>	14,4	19,3	7,0	6,6	- 0,8	2,6	5,7	- 5

1. Goods, services and private transfers. See following notes for classification of countries.  
2. Projections by IMF.  
3. Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, Finland, France, Ireland, Iceland, Italy, Japan, Luxemburg, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, United Kingdom, United States, West Germany.  
4. Canada, France, Italy, Japan, United Kingdom, United States and West Germany.  
5. Algeria, Indonesia, Iraq, Iran, Kuwait, Libya, Nigeria, Oman, Qatar, Saudia Arabia, United Arab Emirates and Venezuela.  
6. All other Fund members plus some autonomous territories we have adequate statistics for.  
7. Including errors, omissions and inconsistencies in published statistics on balance of payments and balances in countries listed here and elsewhere.

Source: *Finances et développement*, September 1980.



**Will technological change enable the leading capitalist countries to solve the crisis at least temporarily?**

and Reagan's policies. Apart from political considerations, the U.S.S.R. and the COMECON countries represent an attractive market for Western Europe. This is why an official from the German-owned Commerzbank could declare in the middle of the crisis following the Afghanistan invasion: "We think that we stand a good chance of obtaining commercial contracts... German industrialists are rushing to Moscow as they never have before..."<sup>2</sup>

Another example: The French firm Creusot-Loire won a contract over the U.S. firm Armco for delivering equipment for a metallurgical factory to the Soviets in the middle of the trade embargo.

One thing is certain. The East European countries are increasingly important trading partners for the Common Market. As Poland so clearly illustrates, the Eastern European countries have expanded their commercial and financial transactions beyond COMECON. The economies of Eastern and Western Europe complement each other to a large extent. Machinery and industrial goods account for 88% of the Common Market countries' exports towards Eastern Europe, while 75% of the latter's imports are raw materials. This economic interdependence is particularly strong in the case of East Germany, Romania, Poland and Czechoslovakia.

Last year, the U.S.S.R. proposed to France and West Germany that they negotiate their oil agreements together with OPEC. It did not happen, but the very idea shocked the U.S. government and again showed how the Middle East is the key that will either unhinge the NATO alliance or lock it together more solidly.

West Germany has also increased its presence in this area in recent times. West German exports to petroleum producing countries like Iran and Saudi Arabia are constantly increasing. More significant still, West Germany was given the job of co-ordinating the international aid to Turkey at the Guadalupe summit in 1979. Turkey is a classic case of a country which is on the verge of bankruptcy, is viewed as

strategically important and possesses untapped oil wealth.

This shows how the combination of the effects of the crisis in the underdeveloped countries and in the advanced capitalist countries are leading to new alliances. This also helps explain the overtures many European governments are making towards the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO). It also accounts for the increasing involvement of the Socialist International in areas where the people are rising up against U.S. imperialism.

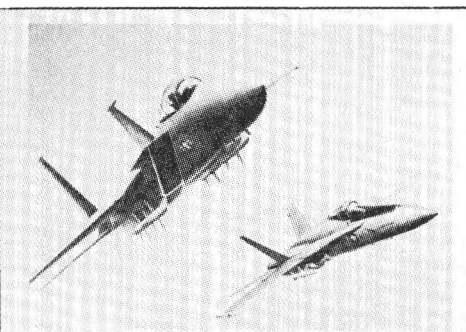
We hear a lot about the Socialist International these days. Is this not simply a political reflection of Europe's growing role in the world? Nor is the Socialist International's interest in third world countries surprising. Its interest is highest in those countries which West Germany is eyeing, where it is competing with U.S. capital, as is the case in Latin America for example.

It is also worth noting that it was Willy Brandt, former chancellor of West Germany and now head of the Socialist International, who chaired the Independent Commission on International Development Issues which revived the North-South dialogue with the publication of its report.<sup>3</sup> This report proposes forms of aid to the poorest countries suffering from famine, promotes world detente, condemns protectionism and calls for reforms in the international monetary system.

Nevertheless, the North-South dialogue, which has gone from one failure to the next in recent years, has tended to gain support from those countries who are doing better than the U.S. in pulling themselves out of the crisis.

These countries are eager to extend their tentacles further into the countries of the third world. This is the case with Germany especially and perhaps also with Canada, which is also making a lot

**The United States's answer to the crisis is the militarization of its economy.**



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of noise about the North-South dialogue.

The crisis does not only affect the third world countries. It has also heightened contradictions among countries that had long been considered a monolithic bloc. There can be no doubt about this today, or at least there is less doubt about it today. There are ample indications (even if a more detailed analysis of the contradictions within the Soviet bloc remains to be done) that the present contradictions experienced by imperialism and the factors that could lead to war do not neatly and automatically cut along the lines of an impending confrontation between two monolithic blocs, East and West.

\* \* \*

The present crisis is worldwide. Its implications have become much clearer. Sometimes these implications are explained as the ushering in of a new protectionist era in the capitalist world. It is clear that capitalism is facing serious problems in formerly key areas like the auto and steel industries. These are the sectors where countries are thinking of adopting protectionist measures. But it would be wrong to argue that we are returning to a new protectionist era. This is a false debate. A closer look would force us to recognize that State protection of economic sectors in difficulty is often accompanied by a domestic philosophy of laissez-faire and anti-big government. When we start to look at modern technology sectors or countries that are rising economic powers, protectionism is no longer in the picture; just the opposite. This, talking about free trade vs. protectionism, isn't the way to understand what the crisis is all about. Rather, the question to pose is: how is capitalism going to get the wind back in its sails that it has seemed to lack since 1974? How is it trying to do this through a new division of markets and through changes in the production process itself?

One thing is certain. The crisis is bringing about a series of political realignments in both the third world countries and in the advanced capitalist countries. It is no longer useful to try to fit these realignments with the concepts of North-South or East-West. The realignments will undoubtedly not be accomplished without a few jolts and tremors. All signs point to growing political instability and social unrest.

1. *International Herald Tribune*, Feb. 7, 1980, quoted in *Le monde diplomatique*, June 1980, p. 5.
2. *North-South, A Program for Survival*, M.I.T. Press, Cambridge, Mass., 1980.

PROLETARIAN UNITY

## Zionism and anti-Semitism: Allies or enemies?

Anti-Semitism once again boldly occupies its place in the family portrait of capitalism-in-crisis. To the terrorist massacre of dozens of workers at the railway station of Bologna (Italy); to the gunning down of communists by the KKK in Greensboro (USA); to the hounding and murder of the black Albert Johnson in Toronto (Canada); we now can add the bombing of the synagogue on Rue Copernic in Paris (France) last fall.

In the decades since their last defeat, these fascist hyenas have not forgotten a single one of their classic victims: workers, communists, blacks, Jews.

And when their murderous attacks are directed against Jews, we soon hear the echoing appeal of the Zionists. To the fascist call "Judens Raus!" ("Drive the Jews Out!") echoes the Zionist call for the Jews to leave, "Israel is your only homeland!" Indeed, no sooner had the bomb exploded in Paris than Israeli Prime Minister Menachim Begin made this very appeal from his platform in Jerusalem.

When, in these circumstances, Zionists appeal to progressive people, who hate racism, for support, how should they respond?

### Two faces of the same lie

Contrary to popular impression, Zionism and anti-Semitism are not antagonists. Quite the opposite. Historical and contemporary fact show them to be allied. This alliance derives from a fundamental premise both share, the premise that Jew and non-Jew always have been, are today and will forever remain incompatible. Anti-Semitism and Zionism are grounded in this very same racist lie. To fight racism, therefore, means to fight them **both**.

For those raised with the prejudice that Zionism and anti-Semitism are antagonistic movements, it is an eerie sensation to compare some of the statements each has made. Eerie, because sometimes one literally cannot distinguish the sentiment of the anti-Semite from that of the Zionist.

"A state, built according to the principle of purity of the nation and race, can only be honoured and respected by a Jew who declares his belonging to his own kind."<sup>1</sup>

"If the Jews had a state of their own in which the bulk of their people were at home, the Jewish question could already be considered solved today.... The ardent Zionists of all people have objected least of all to the basic ideas of the Nuremberg Laws, because they know that these laws are the only correct solution for the Jewish people too."<sup>2</sup>

The state referred to in the first quotation is Hitler's Third Reich. The

Nuremberg Laws referred to in the second quotation are the racist laws of that Third Reich. The first statement was made in 1934 by a prominent German Zionist, J. Prinz. The second is part of the Nazis' own introduction to their Nuremberg Laws, 1935.

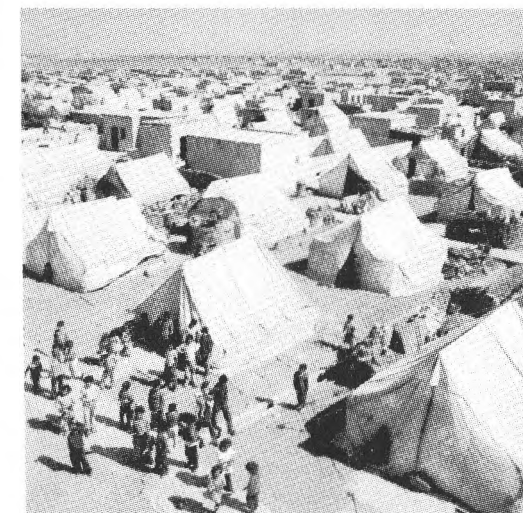
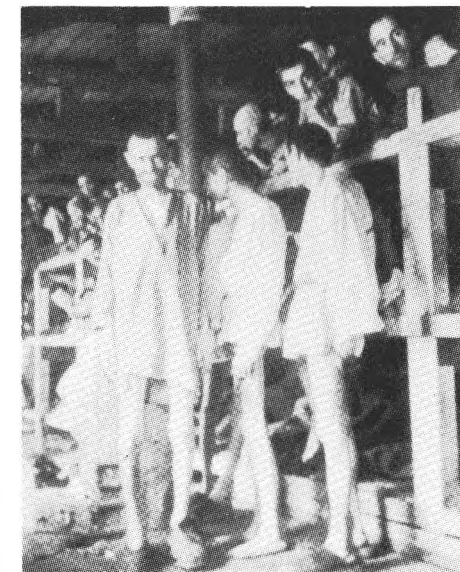
Nor is the following an excerpt from *Mein Kampf*. They are the words of a respected Zionist ideologue, Moses Hess.

"Jewish noses can't be re-shaped and black, curly Jewish hair can't be changed into blond hair or combed straight by christening. The Jewish race is a basic one and reproduces itself in its integrity despite climatic influences. The Jewish type has itself always remained the same throughout the course of the centuries."<sup>3</sup>

And what conclusion did the founder of the political Zionist movement himself draw from the anti-Semitic Dreyfus trial in France, in the last quarter of the 19th century? Here is how Theodor Herzl expressed his thoughts in his diary.

"I achieved a freer attitude towards anti-Semitism, which I now began to understand historically and to pardon. Above all, I recognized the emptiness and futility of trying to "combat" anti-Semitism"<sup>4</sup>

Certainly, if one believes it is futile to combat racism, if one is convinced the final solution is the most extreme form of segregation of the "races", then there is no barrier to practical collaboration of Zionists and anti-Semites.



**Are we forced to choose either Nazi concentration camps or Palestinian refugee camps?**

### Prejudice warps our expectations

Yet the record of this collaboration is shocking for most progressive people. The prejudice that Zionism and anti-Semitism are antagonistic movements warps our expectations.

Expected or not, it is fact that the founder of the political Zionist movement journeyed to Russia to meet with the Czar's Minister of Police, himself the founder of the anti-Semitic "Black Hundreds", a vigilante group responsible for major pogroms like the mas-

1. J. Prinz, *Wir Juden*, 154 (quoted in Machover and Offenberg, "Zionism and its scarecrows", *Khamsin* No. 6, pp. 33-57)
2. *Die Nurnberger Gesetze*, pp. 13-14 (quoted *ibid*)
3. Moses Hess, *Rome and Jerusalem*, pp. 25-26 (quoted *ibid*.)
4. *The Diaries of Theodor Herzl*, Gollancz, London, 1958, p. 6



sacre at Kishinev (1904). Why? Because, as Herzl's biographer put it, Herzl was convinced their interests coincided — their interest in the removal of Jews from the places of their birth, life and work in the Russian empire.

When, prior to World War 2, Jewish organizations called for an economic boycott of Nazi Germany, it was a **Zionist** Congress, meeting in Prague in 1933, which opposed this. Instead the Zionists made an economic agreement with Hitler, the Haavara Agreement, which allowed for the transfer of the capital assets of German Jews to Palestine and which promoted purchases from Nazi Germany by Jewish companies in Palestine. This helped break the boycott campaign, as well as giving Hitler cover for his anti-Semitic persecutions.

Also in the 1930s, Polish youth members of the Zionist movement smashed newspaper offices of left-wing groups. Their slogan: "Germany for Hitler! Italy for Mussolini! Palestine for us!"

During the Holocaust itself, Dr. Rudolf Kastner, leader of the Hungarian Zionists, entered into agreement with the Nazi SS. In exchange for the emigration of a few thousand hand-picked Jews to Palestine — "the best biological material" in the words of the arch-racist Adolf Eichmann — there would be calm and obedience in the assembly camps taking "unworthy" Jews to Auschwitz!

What words can describe such practical collaboration? Shall we choose those of the first Israeli President, Chaim Weizmann? "Zionism is eternal life and, compared with that, saving thousands of Jews is merely extending their lives on borrowed time." Or shall we choose the words of the first Israeli

**Fascist movements are not dead, as these two photos show. On the left, confiscation of a photo of Hitler during a demonstration in Germany. On the right, Dennis Darling, one of the leaders of the Nationalist Socialist White People's Party of the U.S.A.**

Prime Minister, David Ben-Gurion, when he wrote in 1938 to the Zionist Executive expressing his **fear** lest persecuted Jews would find refuge **outside** Palestine and Zionism would be "struck off the agenda". Or shall we choose the words of a "left-wing" member of the Zionist movement, Y. Grienbaum (a member of Mapam, United Workers Party, and Minister of the Interior in the provisional Israeli government of 1948). In 1942 (!) he opposed demands that Zionist funds be used to finance projects for saving the lives of European Jews.

"When I was asked whether the money of the Zionist Construction Fund may not be used for saving Jews, I said "No", and I now repeat, "No". I know that people wonder why I found it necessary to say this. Friends tell me that even if what I say is right, there are things which must not be revealed in a moment of sorrow and anxiety such as this. I cannot agree with this. In my view, the wave which relegates Zionist activities to second place must be resisted."<sup>6</sup>

As for the right wing of the Zionist movement, to which current Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin belongs, we can begin with the record of Jabotinsky in 1919-1921. He carried on negotiations with General Petlyura, a virulent anti-Semite well-known for leading pogroms in the Ukraine. Petlyura was a leader in the counter-revolutionary forces fighting the Bolsheviks. Jabotinsky wanted to form a Jewish military unit to help him reverse the Russian revolution, a revolution which was taking major steps to **combat** anti-Semitism.

It was Georg Kareski, a Zionist follower of Jabotinsky in the 1930s, who was appointed by the Nazis to the position of director in charge of Jewish activities in Germany. The December 23, 1935 edition of Goebbels' newspaper, **Angriff**, carried a full-page interview with this Georg Kareski. It appeared under the heading: "The Nuremberg Laws Fulfill Ancient Zionist Demands".

On April 20 and June 1, 1966, the Israeli newspaper **Ha'olam Hazeh** exposed a 15-year-old scandal that forms another chapter in this same pattern. In 1950 the reactionary Iraqi government and the Israeli State made a secret agreement to arrange for the exodus of Iraqi Jews. The unwitting and unwilling victims of this agreement were the Iraqi Jews themselves. They had no wish to leave their homeland. So **Zionist** agents secretly bombed Iraqi Jewish establishments and meeting places to terrorize them into fleeing. The Iraqi State thereby gained the property of their former Jewish citizens and the Israeli State gained new settlers.

Today, Zionist-dominated Jewish refugee organizations refuse assistance to Jews emigrating from anti-Semitic persecution in the Soviet Union unless they agree to go and remain in Israel, which up to half of them seem unwilling to do.

With one finger, Zionism points to anti-Semitism as its "justification". But

5. Quoted in Y. Elam, *Introduction to Zionist History*, Tel Aviv, 1972, p. 111

6. Quoted in S.B. Beit-Zvi, *Post-Ugandan Zionism in the Crucible of the Holocaust*, Tel Aviv, 1977, p. 110.

with the other nine, from its wrongly named "socialist" to its correctly named fascist wings, it has tolerated, collaborated with and supported even the most notorious anti-Semites. Witness the deals of Herzl and Plehve, Kastner and Eichmann, Jabotinsky and Petlyura, Kareski and Goebbels, the Zionist Congress and Hitler, the Israeli State and the Iraqi State.... From the beginning to the present it is a collaboration grounded in the racist premise of the eternal incompatibility of Jew and non-Jew, a collaboration that aims for the complete segregation of one from the other.

### Zionism itself is a racist project

Having chosen **not** to combat racism, having joined with anti-Semitic enemies of the Jews, Zionism justifies everything in the name of its own political project. And what precisely is this project? Nothing other than the creation of a State itself founded on the despicable and unscientific proposition of "racial purity", this time of "Jews". Zionism is not the political expression of an **existing** nation, but rather the creation of an entirely new entity from people who until then have lived for generations in every part of the globe and who, supposedly, share only common biological descent. Again the racist myth of common ancestry!

Thus it is possible today, according to Israeli law, for a Jew (by definition the child of a "Jewish" mother) born in Moscow, Vancouver, San Salvador, Addis Ababa, or anywhere to claim automatic Israeli citizenship; while an Arab, born in one of the obliterated villages of Palestine or any other part of their country, and subsequently driven into exile by Zionist economic and military colonization, has no claim whatsoever to citizenship and cannot return to her homeland.

Thus Palestinians and Jews (together) are victims of the barbarous effort of Zionists and anti-Semites (together) to segregate peoples into racially exclusive domains.

Little wonder then that Israel's first president (Weizmann) and South Africa's long-time prime minister (Smuts) had such a warm and lengthy personal and political friendship. Or that five years ago, then South African prime minister Vorster was warmly embraced when he visited Israel. This same Vorster was imprisoned in South Africa during World War 2 for his Nazi sympathies! Of course there are reasons beyond a shared ideology of apartheid for the close political and military alliance of Israel and South Africa.

Both settler-states depend on the maintenance of the political economy of Western imperialism for their very survival.

### "Drive the Palestinians Out!"

Just as anti-Semites aim to drive Jews out of "their" supposed lands, so Zionists raise the slogan: "Drive the Palestinians out!" Out of the lands where they were born, where they live and work.

"We came to this country, already inhabited by Arabs, and established here a Hebrew, i.e. a Jewish state. In large areas we bought lands from the Arabs. Jewish villages arose in place of Arab villages. You don't even know the names of these villages and I'm not reproaching you for that, as those geography books no longer exist. Not only do the books no longer exist but the villages don't exist any more either. Nahalal arose in place of Mahlul, Gevat in place of Jibta, Sarid in place of Haneifs and Kefar Yehoshua in place of Tel-Shaman. **Not one place in this country was built where there hadn't formerly been an Arab population.**"

The speaker knows what he is talking about. He has been a major shaper of the "new" geography of Palestine. These are the words of Israeli general Moshe Dayan, speaking to students at the Haifa Technical University.

It is not simply the case that Jews fled persecution to a land already inhabited. Canada and the U.S.A., to which the greatest number of Jews emigrated, were also inhabited. But the Zionist aim was not just to settle, it was to turn the land of Palestine into an exclusively Jewish state. This aim was shared by the **entire** Zionist movement. At the founding congress of the "left-wing" Ahdut Ha'avoda, this aim was stated as explicitly as possible. "The transfer of the land of Palestine, its rivers and its natural resources to the possession of the entire Jewish people." That is, to the people of the supposed Jewish "race", **anywhere** in the world.

Until the word became an embarrassment, a central Zionist agency, the Jewish National Fund (JNF), had a **Colonization** Department. Most of the land of Israel today belongs to or is administered by the JNF. It operates on a policy that, anywhere else in the world, would be automatically denounced by progressive people. The policy of the JNF is to forbid non-Jews to dwell, open a business or sometimes even to work on its lands, **simply because they are not Jews....** that is, they were born to the "wrong" mother. Those who are not Jews cannot be accepted as members of a kibbutz. Israel's

"progressive" show-piece for idealistic youth of the world.

How is the JNF policy different from the policy of Czarist Russia which prohibited Jews, just because **they** were born to the "wrong" mother, from living outside a restricted area, called the Pale?

There is an Israeli Ministry of Housing, with a special unit for "housing of minorities". In Jerusalem the Ministry of Housing builds flats only for Jews, inside Jerusalem. The "department of housing for minorities" does the reverse. It "thins out" (the official word!) non-Jews; that is, it transfers those now resident there out of Jerusalem. Examples could be mul-



**Prime Minister David Ben-Gurion proclaims the State of Israel in 1948.**

tiplied. The underlying principle is clear.

It is the systematic application of this principle that makes not just plausible, but inevitable, the recent testimony of young Israeli soldiers to the Chairman of the League of Human and Civil Rights in Israel, Professor Israel Shahak. Dr. Shahak, himself a survivor of Nazi concentration camps, is one of the Jews in Israel who bravely denounces the "racist nature of Zionism", the "Nazification" of Israeli Jews and their progressive adoption of "all the values and opinions of anti-

7. This explains the furious Zionist reaction to a book by Arthur Koestler which argued that millions of European Jews are descended from the converted Khazar population of southern Russia.

8. See the study by Richard Stevens, *Weizmann and Smuts*, Institute for Palestine Studies, Beirut, 1975.

9. April 4, 1968 in *Ha'aretz* (Israeli daily newspaper) (emphasis added).



Hebron, is the language of Cecil Rhodes, Ian Smith and the Algerian colon. Racism is one twisted strand of every imperialist's hangman's noose!

But here, as in the case of Israel's alliance with South Africa, we are not just speaking of a shared racist ideology. There is a material base for this. Even the most cursory study of the history of Zionism shows that this project of colonization had the closest support first of British imperialism and later of U.S. imperialism, because it was important element in the maintenance of their worldwide empires. Without serving this function, Zionism itself never could have realized

**An example of the logic of racism. Below a German woman and a Jewishman are paraded through the streets of Berlin for having had sexual relations. On the left, Israeli soldiers patrol the occupied city of Jerusalem.**

semitism".<sup>10</sup> This is the testimony he took from an Israeli reservist in May 1980.

"I served in the Hebron Hill area in the first half of May. I belong to a combat unit, and in general we are not called to serve in those areas. Immediately on coming to the Hebron Hill area, a representative of the Military Government and a colonial settler from Kiryat Arba, who was presented to us as an officer, although civilian clothed, appeared before us. Both lectured us about 'The Arabs as they are'. According to their description it was clear that the Arabs 'are not like human beings' whom we know and that 'one must relate to them as to beasts, which one tames.' Again and again it as stressed that beatings and humiliation are two means which 'teach the Arabs their lesson'. The representative of the Military Government even said that 'Arabs want to be beaten'.

"The more precise instructions were: when making searches in homes, one must particularly beat the father in front of the family, especially of his children. The Military Government man said: 'To beat the mother is not the same thing. If there is any resistance, the bones of the father and the older sons must be broken. But if there is no resistance, and especially if the father cringes in front of his children, he must be beaten and twice in his face and one may content oneself with this.' But there must be some minimal beatings."

Instructions of the "unsophisticated"? Well, compare them with the words of the undeniably "sophisticated" former Israeli foreign minister, Abba Eban. Here Eban, a South-African-born Jew, is speaking of Jewish co-religionists from North Africa and the Middle East, "oriental"



or "black" Jews as they have been called. They now account for a larger share of the Israeli Jewish population than Jews of European origin, and suffer **systematic** discrimination.

"So far from regarding our immigrants as a bridge toward our integration with the Arab-speaking world, our object should be to infuse them with an occidental spirit, rather than to allow them to draw us into **unnatural orientalism**." (emphasis added)<sup>11</sup>

This is the same "sophistication" that characterized Herzl's appeal to the British government for support at the turn of this century. Zionism "would constitute a bulwark against Asia down there.... We would be the advance post of civilization against barbarism," said Herzl. The language of Herzl and Eban, put into action by the Israeli military in

its own basic objective of the creation of a racist State on the territory of the Palestinian people.

### Jews and Zionists are not the same

Though Zionists would have us believe every Jew is a Zionist and that, therefore, to be anti-Zionist is to be anti-Semitic, facts show this to be completely unfounded propaganda.

For decades political Zionism was a **minority** trend among Jews in Europe, and did not exist at all in Jewish com-

10. See his essays: "What Are My Opinions?" and "The Racist Nature of Zionism and of the Zionist State of Israel".

11. On the practice and ideology of Zionism in relation to Jews from Africa and the Middle East, see also Raphael Shapiro, "Zionism and its Oriental subjects", *Khamsin*, No. 5, pp. 5-26.

munities elsewhere. The overwhelming number of those who fled anti-Semitic pogroms and economic misery before the rise of Hitler did **not** go to Palestine and had no desire to build a "Jewish" State. And many who survived Nazism in Europe did so through protection provided in the Soviet Union.

Out of 3,975,000 Jews who migrated between 1880 and 1929, only 120,000 chose to go to Palestine. More went to Canada, to Argentina, to Great Britain. Thirty thousand (one-quarter of the number that went to Palestine) even emigrated to Egypt. The greatest number, like other immigrants of this period, went to the United States (2,885,000). As well, a very significant number of those who first went to Palestine left after a short time there.

In Russia, which was the land of origin of the overwhelming number of Jewish immigrants (2,285,000), the greatest number of politically active Jews were not Zionists but were involved in revolutionary movements, particularly the Bund, which joined the Bolshevik Party after World War I. They chose to **combat** anti-Semitism by waging the struggle for socialist revolution in their homeland. They vigorously opposed the efforts of the Zionists to convince Jews to "accept" anti-Semitism. This they correctly saw as splitting the working class and undermining the common fight against Czarism and capitalism.

The Zionist movement itself was influenced by the revolutionary socialist current of the time. There was an important trend that aspired to be both Zionist **and** revolutionary. This is the origin of "proletarian Zionism" or "left Zionism". The main organization was the **Poale-Zion** (Workers of Zion) and its ideologue was Ber Borochov (1881-1917). Poale-Zion took an anti-imperialist stand in World War I, and it formed a contingent to fight in the Red Army. For four years it held discussions with the Comintern about joining. In

**Zionism has not put an end to class contradictions within Israel. Workers in Tel Aviv demonstrate against rising prices in November 1977.**



these respects they were completely opposite to fascist Zionists like Jabotinsky, who allied with the Whites. Nonetheless, they too foundered on the rock of nationalism, and the Comintern denounced them when they finally refused to abandon Zionism.

Borochov observed that the Jewish people of Eastern Europe had an "abnormal" social structure, resembling an "inverted pyramid". The masses were not workers and peasants but part of an urban petty bourgeoisie, many of them artisan workers. In a context where the feudal structure was in decay, where capitalism was eliminating artisan-scale production, and where there was intense national competition among workers because of massive unemployment, Jews both were the victims of persecution and were blocked from proletarianization.

The 'solution', wrote Borochov, was emigration to Palestine and the creation of a "normal" Jewish society, with its own capitalist class and proletariat, which then would have a 'strategic base' from which to wage the class struggle for socialism.

This search for a 'purely Jewish' standpoint from which to raise the struggle for socialism was mistaken from the beginning. Moreover, in order to create a 'purely Jewish' proletariat in Palestine, the "left Zionists" had to displace and expel the already-present Arab agricultural workers and then block their entrance into the developing urban working class. It had to uproot and make refugees of an entire people, to **duplicate** precisely what Jews themselves were enduring in Europe. Thus, however "radical" the professed socialist beliefs of the "left Zionists", they sank forever in the quicksand of their colonial project.

Some of the "left Zionists" who emigrated to Palestine were shocked by the reality they discovered, basically that Palestine was an Arab country. As the implications of this sank in, these Jews began to oppose and denounce Zionism. They, in turn, were denounced as "traitors". Many returned to join communist parties in their homelands and to be militants in the Communist International. Leopold Trepper, a major organizer of the Red Orchestra, an anti-Nazi intelligence network that operated within Germany itself and elsewhere in Europe during World War 2, dates his change from Zionist to communist convictions during his emigration to Palestine.<sup>12</sup>

Others remained to form the Palestine Communist Party (PCP) in 1922, the product of many splits growing out of the "left-Zionist" Poale-Zion. The PCP was recognized by the Comintern in 1924. The greatest prac-

tical weakness of the PCP was that it was initially formed exclusively from Jewish immigrants and had no ties with the Arab population. It was only after the mid-1920s that the first Arab members were recruited. It was not until the 1930s that major efforts were made to "Arabize" the party. There also was the brutal reality that the Palestinian masses were too often dominated by a leadership that had no interest in distinguishing between Zionist and anti-Zionist Jews, Arab landowners, Zionists and the British imperialists were better served by diverting anti-imperialist consciousness of the Arab masses into inter-communal conflict with **all** Jews.

The complex and only recently studied history of the PCP, shows its efforts, which ultimately were unsuccessful, to build a single communist party rooted in both the Jewish and Arab proletariat and peasantry. These efforts, already difficult enough, particularly in the course of the 1936 Palestine revolt, were made more complex by the changing policy of the Comintern towards alliances with different classes in the struggle for national liberation.

In 1943 the PCP split along national lines, with the Arab and the Jewish members forming separate organizations. Then they merged again in 1948, but this time to form the **Israeli Communist Party (MAKI)**, in name and policy accommodating to the Zionist "fact". This was consistent with the position of the Soviet Union at that time. In 1965 MAKI split, once more almost entirely along Arab-Jewish lines, once more over the stand to take toward the Zionist project. But neither group contested Zionism itself.

Both inside and outside Israel today there are an increasing number of Jews who do oppose Zionism, though Zionists unquestionably retain their political domination, in contrast with the pre-World War 2 period.

### You cannot fight one without fighting the other

The fight against anti-Semitism is an essential part of the fight against Zionism, for historically Zionism is a by-product of anti-Semitism. The link between racial persecution and the development of Jewish nationalism can be dated and quantified. The waves of Jewish immigration to Palestine correspond to the waves of anti-Semitism and the very dates of pogroms.

Why and when has anti-Semitism flourished? With the economic crisis of

12. Leopold Trepper, *The Great Game*, Michael Joseph, London, 1977, see chapter 3

capitalism, compounded in Eastern Europe by a decaying feudal society, a native petty bourgeoisie cloaked itself more and more in economic nationalism and turned this against the Jews. Jews were seen as competitors because their society itself was disproportionately artisanal and petty bourgeois, a consequence of the preceding epoch of feudalism.

Like German minorities in Slav countries, Chinese in Southeast Asia or Hindus in Burma, Jews in medieval Europe maintained a cultural distinctiveness because of their particular socio-economic role. Their role was linked to the rise of commercial capitalism.

In the crisis of decaying capitalism, when anti-capitalist sentiments are widespread among the masses, anti-Semitism is a way of diverting those sentiments away from their true and contemporary target. Because they were associated with the rise of capitalism, the period when capitalism in fact played a progressive role in human history, Jews become the false target.

The pattern of anti-Semitism in Canada during the 1930s Depression, and particularly in Quebec, reveals a similar class dynamic.<sup>13</sup>

In some circumstances anti-Semitism hides itself under the cover of anti-Zionism. Argentinian fascists, for example, have appeared on anti-Zionist platforms in Libya and Egypt to promote anti-Semitism. It was Palestinian delegates who led the denunciation of this in Libya at an international anti-Zionist and anti-racist conference. The PLO systematically stresses the difference between Zionists and Jews. In Canada, outright racists like Doug Collins occasionally like to cover their tracks with anti-Zionism. All of this has to be exposed. It only helps serve the interests of Zionists in trying to "prove" that all anti-Zionism is anti-Semitism.

But it is equally unacceptable to tolerate or support Zionism in the name of fighting anti-Semitism.<sup>14</sup> This inconsistent and mistaken practice is common among otherwise progressive people. Because they do not understand the racist character of Zionism itself and its own historical and contemporary compatibility with anti-Semitism, they refrain from opposing Zionism.

Anti-Semitism and Zionism thrive on the misery of racism. Therefore, as we combat racism, we will find ourselves fighting them both.

13. Lita-Rose Betcherman, *The Swastika and the Maple Leaf*, Fitzhenry and Whiteside, 1975.

14. See a recent example of this in the editorial by Robert Fulford, "Blaming the Jews" in *Saturday Night*, November 1980.

## Imperialism today

# Notes from the land of the multinationals



**Lenin identified monopoly as the essence of imperialism. Today, there is a very extensive library on the "multinational corporation", with centres like Harvard University's Multinational Enterprise Project and the United Nations Centre on Transnational Corporations specialized in its study and analysis. However, this theoretical work is generally quite far removed from Lenin's analysis of imperialism.**

**All sorts of theories on the "multinationals" have evolved. The social democrats see them as the sources of human progress — if only multinational mechanisms or institutions could be established to control them (see the arguments of Charles Levinson, for example). At the other end of the spectrum, the revisionist concept of multinationals holds that they are the principal enemy of the people in the various countries of the world.**

**Has this movement to "multinationals" led to these monopolies becoming "a-national" or "supra-national" or even "anti-national", to the point where they are independent of States, and have even become the principal obstacles preventing the various State apparatuses from carrying out policies in the interests of their populations?**

**Have the notions of State and national sovereignty become historical anachronisms because of this development of the "multinationals"?**

**Have the giant corporations become financially independent of the banks and other financial institutions to the point where Lenin's concept of the "financial oligarchy" is out of date? Or, on the contrary, are we witnessing the emergence of an international financial oligarchy?**

**There are clearly some major theoretical issues behind these kinds of questions that require clarification. In what follows, however, we shall proceed mainly to examine some facts which should provide a basis for this kind of work of clarification.**

## Rapid growth since World War II

In spite of their extremely rapid growth since World War II, it is important to recall that the existence of monopolies with international operations is not a new phenomenon. According to a well-documented study by an economist close to the French Communist Party, Henri Claude:

"The most recent historical studies indicate that the creation of branch plants or production subsidiaries dates back in the history of capitalism to the middle of the 19th century. This phenomenon developed particularly rapidly between 1914 and 1973, by which time 100 U.S. firms were truly multinational, in terms of today's criteria, and some 40 others had subsidiaries in at least one foreign

country. Most of the most important multinational groups today already existed in 1914."<sup>1</sup>

Table 1 indicates the particularly rapid growth of foreign subsidiaries of the major American industrial monopolies during the post-war period: from 1950 to 1975, the number of these subsidiaries multiplied by six.

Not only was there rapid acceleration of foreign investment in the post-war period, but a growing share of this investment took the form of "direct" investment (i.e., aimed at control of enterprises overseas) as opposed to the "portfolio" form of investment (which seeks the financial returns primarily in interest, dividends and capital gains).

Table 2, indicating the accumulated dollar value of foreign direct investments by American firms, presents even more strikingly how tremendous this growth has been in the post-war period. The total grew by 17 times between 1945 and 1976.

The general pattern in foreign investments is as follows: British dominance throughout the century until the Second World War; the dominant position then passes to the U.S.A., which begins to decline in the 1970s (see table 3).

In the 1970s we see a slowing of the rate of foreign investment expansion by the U.S.A., Britain and France and an important acceleration by Japan and Germany (table 4).

While these figures indicate a relative decline in U.S. companies' foreign investments, in absolute terms there continues to be growth at an impressive rate: the percentages in table 4 represent growth in U.S. direct investments from \$56.6 billion to \$137.2 billion.

## Important transformations in the post-war period

Contrary to much popular opinion, the statistics indicate that a constantly decreasing part of foreign investment is being directed to the underdeveloped countries, as the imperialist monopolies invest mostly in the other imperialist countries (see table 5).

In terms of direct investment only, the UN study indicates that in the mid-1970s, about one quarter of world investments went to the underdeveloped countries, with the following specific figures for the various investing countries in 1974: USA, 21%; Britain, 16%; Canada, 23%; West Germany, 30%; Japan, 54%.<sup>2</sup>

Despite this last figure, it seems that

1. H. Claude, *Les multinationales et l'impérialisme*, Ed. sociales, Paris, 1978, p. 22.

2. United Nations Economic and Social Council, *Transnational Corporations in World Development: a Re-examination*, New York, 1973, p. 8 and 242.

**Table 1**  
Number of foreign industrial subsidiaries of 187 U.S.-based "multinationals"

1901	1913	1919	1929	1939	1950	1959	1967	1975
47	116	180	467	715	988	1891	3646	6000 (estimated)

Source: R. Vernon, *Les entreprises multinationales — la souveraineté en péril*, Calman-Lévy, Paris, 1973, p. 39.

**Table 2**  
The accumulated dollar value of foreign direct investments by American firms (in billion of US\$)

1897	1914	1919	1931	1945	1950	1960	1970	1976
0.6	2.6	3.9	8.1	8.1	11.8	32.8	75.5	137.2

Source: *Business International* (Geneva)

**Table 3**  
Foreign investments by country of origin (in billion of US\$)

	1913	1938	1957-58	1967
USA	4	12	54	117
Britain	18	23	20	43
France	9	4	10	17
West Germany	6(a)	1(a)	2	12
Various	7	13	15	39

(a) for all of Germany

Source: United Nations, *Statistical Year Book*, 1978.

**Table 4**  
Stock of direct investment abroad (% of total)

	1967	1976
USA	53.8%	47.6%
Britain	16.6%	11.2%
West Germany	2.8%	6.9%
Japan	1.4%	6.7%
France	5.7%	4.1%
Others	19.7%	23.5%
	100%	100%

Source: *Business International* (Geneva)

**Table 5**  
Investment in underdeveloped countries as a % of total investment

	1929	1949	1959	1968
USA	50%	50%	45%	35%
Britain	50%	?	40%	33%

Source: *Business Eastern Europe*, April 11, 1980, p. 116.

Japan too is following this same general trend. Here is part of a recent statement by Kazuo Iwata, chairman of Toshiba Corp.:

"The turmoil in the Middle East and political instability in other areas of the developing world is causing companies to shift their focus towards more stable areas, particularly the United States and Europe. This trend will gather momentum in the 1980s.

"Inflation, political instability, shifting economic policies and the threat of war are discouraging companies from venturing into some parts of the developing world. In addition, due to the changing nature of our own economy, companies' overseas investment strategies are now emphasizing projects that will develop new technologies or increase their own productive efficiencies...

"Such investments not only advance the technical prowess and competitive power of Japanese companies, but also help avert trade frictions and potential economic or political problems with Japan's leading trade partners."

While most foreign investments in Lenin's day were directed at raw material extraction and railway development, the recent period sees a growing proportion of foreign investments directed to manufacturing (table 6). In 1974, the share of manufacturing in the stock of direct foreign investment was the following: USA, 45%; Britain, 45%; Canada, 50%; West Germany, 71%; Japan, 35%. This emphasis on manufacturing investment is also affecting a certain number of underdeveloped countries (table 7).

## Internationalization or integration of capital

We have already looked at data indicating a very rapid expansion of capital exports in the post-war period. One of its concentrated expressions is the fact that in 1971, there were nearly 200 monopolies each with subsidiaries in at least 20 different countries. For example, IBM was present in 80 countries, Siemens in 52, Imperial Chemicals (ICI) in 46, etc.<sup>3</sup> This kind of fact, along with the growth in the number of multinational joint-ventures, consortiums, co-operative agreements, etc., leads most analysts of the post-war period to conclude that there is a growing internationalization or integration of international capital — and for many of these analysts, this kind of integration represents the most important trend of the post-war period. In the following, we shall examine the different forms in which this kind of trend

**Table 6**  
Investment in manufacturing as a % of total investment

	1929	1949	1959	1968
USA	24%	33%	32%	41%
Britain	6%	?	32%	36%

Source: *Business Eastern Europe*, April 11, 1980, p. 116.

**Table 7**  
Stock of direct foreign investment in manufacturing as a percentage of total foreign investment

Argentina (1973)	65%
Brazil (1976)	77%
Mexico (1975)	78%
India (1974)	92%
South Korea (1975)	80%
Thailand (1975)	93%

Source: COMECON, *Statistical Year Book*, 1976, pp. 411-413.

**Table 8**  
% of foreign content of leading Western industrial monopolies

Foreign content	no. of firms
More than 75%	21
51% to 75%	31
26% to 50%	101
6% to 25%	156
less than 5%	47
Nil	25
Unknown	41
Total	422

Source: M. Lavigne, *Les économies socialistes et européennes*, Armand Colin, Paris, 1970, p. 381.

is manifested.

The first type of case is the "multinational corporation" in its literal sense: ie, the situation where the ownership and, more importantly, the control of a given monopoly is shared by members of the bourgeoisie of different nationalities. The two latest Fortune 500 lists (for inside and for outside of the USA), identify 3 examples of this type: Unilever and Royal Dutch Shell (Britain-Netherlands for both), and Dunlop-Pirelli (Britain-Italian). According to Barratt-Brown, the first two examples are companies which had already been created towards the end of the 19th century.<sup>5</sup> Dunlop-Pirelli is indeed a post-war merger. The rest of these major industrial monopolies are under the control of capital of a single national origin. Thus, the "mul-

tinational corporation" is certainly not the dominant phenomenon of the present period.

However, the fact that most of the monopolies have production facilities in several countries is certainly a phenomenon that has become much more widespread in recent years. This "foreign content" in the production of the monopolies may be measured by a variety of indicators: sales generated abroad, or profits, or assets abroad, or number of employees abroad. By the careful selection of examples, some very strong impressions about the extent of this phenomenon may be created. For example, Levinson informs us that the 9 largest industrial enterprises in Switzerland all have less than 50% of their employees in Switzerland (Nestlé, CIBA, Hoffmann-La Roche, Brown Boveri, Sandoz...); Switzerland is, of course, a relatively small market, and to acquire the strength to compete internationally, these companies require a massive presence in foreign markets. Other impressive examples of high foreign content are ITT (U.S.A.), with 72% of its employees abroad; Unilever (British-Dutch), with 70%; and Pepsi Co., (U.S.A.), with 52%.

The United Nations study provides an analysis of the "foreign content" of its list of the 422 largest industrial monopolies (outside of the Soviet bloc) in 1976, on the basis of the per cent of sales generated abroad by subsidiaries (excluding such sales which may merely return to the parent company) (table 8).

We see here that 52 of these monopolies, or 12%, had a foreign content of more than 50% in 1976, and that 25 of them had none. While it is important to situate this phenomenon (especially with respect to theories which describe the "multinationals" as some kind of free-floating entities, without any particular attachments to any national economy or State), it would be incorrect to dismiss this kind

3. *Fortune*, 11/8/80, p. 60

4. H. Claude, *op. cit.*, p. 25

5. M. Barratt-Brown, *The Economics of Imperialism*, Penguin, 1974, p. 219

6. C. Levinson, *L'inflation mondiale et les firmes multinationales*, Seuil, Paris, 1971, p. 79

7. H. Claude, *op. cit.*, p. 41

of reality as insignificant: 153 of these monopolies, or 36%, have a foreign content of more than 25%. This phenomenon is especially developed in some sectors like pharmaceuticals, where 15 out of 16 firms have a foreign content exceeding 25%, or scientific instruments, where 5 out of 6 firms are in this situation. Aside from Switzerland (which had only 14 firms on Fortune's list last year), the important country whose monopolies have a high degree of foreign content is Britain, with 15 out of its 41 firms (or 37%) on the UN list of 422 having a foreign content of more than 50%; this compares to 0 out of 27 for West Germany, 1 out of 49 for Japan, and 12 out of 223 for the USA. This United Nations data explicitly excludes much of the effects of a certain type of international specialization that is being developed by the monopolies, where various parts or components of a given product are produced in different countries — for example, GM's "world car", Ford's specialization of its tractor plants (transmissions in Belgium, hydraulic circuits in Britain, automatic gear boxes in Detroit), and IBM specializing its operations in various countries in certain types of research and development and production. Nonetheless, it is clear that this form of internationalization seems to be growing in importance.

The multinational joint-venture refers to the creation of jointly-controlled subsidiaries by firms of different national origins. A typical example is the establishment by John Deere and Fiat (on a 50/50 basis) of a subsidiary to produce agricultural machinery and public works equipment for the Common Market. In the automobile industry, joint-ventures are quite numerous: Ford and Honda, GM and Isuzu, etc. The revisionist countries also find this form of association with the Western monopolies interesting: Fiat in the U.S.S.R., Skoda-Simmons Machine Tool Corp (N.Y.)... These kind of arrangements in general have the advantage of sharing the risks in new projects and pooling technology to improve the competitive position of the joint-venture. According to Levinson, the percentage of foreign subsidiaries of American monopolies that were owned 100% by the U.S. parent firm dropped from 75% to 40% between about 1950 and 1970.<sup>8</sup> The U.N. study confirms the same kind of trend for the subsidiaries of the imperialist countries in the underdeveloped countries in recent years,<sup>9</sup> and we know that in many underdeveloped countries legislation has been passed requiring local participation in foreign investments.

However, studies of U.S. monopolies PROLETARIAN UNITY

show that joint-ventures tend often to be unstable, and that companies which centre their marketing around their trade mark or are constantly generating new products (like IBM) tend to prefer 100% ownership. According to Yoshino, a bourgeois authority on the Japanese economy, Japanese monopolies which showed a large preference for the joint-venture formula in their foreign subsidiaries until the mid-70s, "because such partnerships were consistent with the firms' strategies and their relative lack of resources and international experience", will probably be reducing the proportion of their joint-ventures in the future.<sup>10</sup>

Consortiums differ from joint-ventures in that while a joint-venture establishes a subsidiary which in principle will operate for an undetermined period of time and which can extend its activities in many ways over time, a consortium tends to be an association of companies for a very definite activity over a limited period of time. Financial consortiums, established on an ad hoc

basis — for example, to organize the sale of a major bond issue — have been around for a long time. Consortiums are also quite common in costly high-risk projects like oil and gas development, or in major projects requiring a variety of specializations, like hydro-electrical projects. For example, in a major hydroelectric project currently under way in Nigeria, Montreal Engineering is responsible for surveys and planning, a Japanese firm for the construction and installation of generators, an Italian firm for the construction of housing for the projects personnel and for roads, etc.

A variety of co-operative agreements also enter into the category of internationalization of capital. For example, the countries of the Soviet bloc have proven extremely adept in developing a variety of forms for acquiring and pay-

8. C. Levinson, *op. cit.*, p. 116

9. UN Economic and Social Council, *op. cit.*, p. 229

10. N.Y. Yoshino, *Japan's Multinational Enterprises*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, 1976, p. 229

## What are the "multinationals"?

Leaving aside the extensive debate on the nuances in the definition of this term and the polemic on the relative superiority of the concept of "transnationals" for the present, we can say that concretely, our subject matter refers to the world's largest industrial monopolies. Typically, we are referring to various lists of companies, compiled especially by *Fortune* magazine: the top 500 industrials (companies with more than 50% of their sales derived from manufacturing and/or mining) in the U.S.A.; the top 500 industrials outside the U.S.A.; and the world's top 500 industrials. The United Nations Centre works primarily with a list of about 400 of the world's leading industrials, of which 180 are based in the U.S.A. Thus monopolies in transportation, public utilities, merchandising, banking and insurance (for which *Fortune* compiles separate lists) are typically excluded from these lists. Also generally excluded are the monopolies of the Eastern bloc.

These facts give an idea of the economic strength of these monopolies:  
— 80 U.S. firms accounted for 69% of the total U.S. overseas investment in 1957.  
— 49 U.K. firms accounted for 83% of total British foreign investment in

1962.

— 50 Japanese manufacturing firms accounted for 40% of Japan's direct foreign investment in manufacturing in 1974.

— the world's biggest 200 companies provided about 3/4 of all foreign investments in the early 1970s.

— sales by General Motors in 1970 exceeded the GNP of 126 of the 150 independent States.

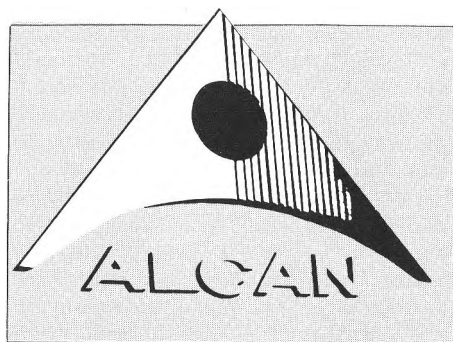
— sales of U.S. subsidiaries in Europe in 1966 totalled 2 1/2 times as much as total U.S. exports.

— In 1974, Fortune's 500 industrials in the U.S.A. employed 3/4 of the United States' industrial labour force, and produced 3/4 of industrial profits in the U.S.A.

— In 1967, these 500 U.S. industrials had 2,500 industrial subsidiaries; 130 of these companies had 2,000.

### Distribution by country of origin of the 422 largest industrial monopolies (from the UN's list)

United States	223
Japan	49
United Kingdom	41
West Germany	27
Other developed countries	72
Developing countries	10
Total	422



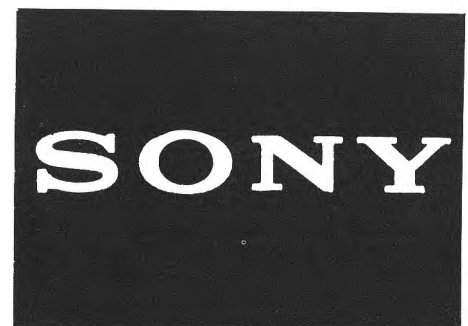
ing for Western technology. They range from the purchase of fully completed factories to the setting up of joint-ventures involving production, research and development and marketing. They may also take the form of co-productions (in which each party manufactures parts or components of the final product), or the purchase of licences, know-how and training programmes, or certain specialized components in a process. The usual form of payment is in the form of a certain part of the production that results from the process. These are called "East-West industrial co-operation contracts". Contracts for the delivery of industrial plants, which accounted for about 35% of these types of agreements, came to over \$4 billion during 1975-76. These included an \$800 million gas liquification plant for Poland purchased from Krupp, an aluminum plant to produce 500,000 tonnes per annum in the U.S.S.R. purchased from Pechiney (France) for \$700 million, as well as an oil refinery, chemical plants, rolling mills and a tractor plant.

A wide variety of co-operative agreements are also entered into by financial institutions for the pooling of resources in various ways or for mutual representation, as well as for the establishment of joint-ventures. One such example are the agreements entered into by Ina Corporation (USA), Morgan Grenfell (Britain), Compagnie financière de Suez (France), Credito Italiano, and Nikko Securities (Japan). Another joins Bank of America, Warburg, Paribas, Bayerische Vereinsbank, C.Itoh, and Bank of Tokyo.<sup>12</sup>

### The State and monopoly

Social democrats have arrived at the conclusion that we are witnessing the withering away of the State under monopoly capitalism! This is the other side of the coin of the theories of the international integration of capital. It is worth giving the reader a chance to savour some of this thinking in its original form. This is how Charles Levinson, international union bureaucrat and theorist of social democracy, puts it:

"The growth of multinational operations, and consequently of international financial transactions, is undeniably one of the most significant structural changes in the modern economy. This concentration of power raises questions about the nation-State's capacity to control its own economy. Although it is still the official government, the nation-State no longer seems to govern. It has less and less control over its economy,



as is seen in its desperate efforts to stop inflation. After a long but steady decline, the chances are good that it will disappear.

"Thanks to their economic power, the multinational corporations are becoming formidable enemies for the United States..."<sup>13</sup>

The social democrats argue that in the face of this erosion of State power by the "multinationals", the role of the working class becomes that of reinforcing the State. The second conclusion drawn from this line of thinking is that multinational institutions (including multinational labour union organizations, so as to maintain a niche for our international union bureaucrats), must be developed and reinforced, in order to offset and control the power of the "multinationals".

Can the monopolies maintain an indifference to State connections in a world of international conflicts, the danger of world war and open and violent class confrontations and anti-imperialist struggles in many countries? Are these conflicts independent of the interests of the monopolies? Are these conflicts independent of the interests of the monopolies? Are the domestic and international policies of the imperialist States a matter of indifference to the monopolies? Although the theories which present a fundamental opposition between States and monopolies and which argue that the integration of "multinationals" is relegating the State to the garbage can of history are very popular and widespread, they are contradicted every day by the facts of reality.

Are the United States' policies regarding monetary and fiscal manipulations, mass repression, tariffs, subsidies to industry, support for failed

monopolies (e.g., Chrysler) and nationalizations, education, immigration, research and development, etc.) a matter of indifference to American monopolies? How about the Exim Bank which provides loans to foreign purchasers of American products? Or State insurance against "political risks" of foreign investments? Or foreign "aid", or international diplomatic and military agreements? Is State spending a matter of indifference to the monopolies? According to Barratt-Brown, military contracts accounted for 20% of the profits of the major American monopolies in the 1960s — and it is unlikely that this has declined since that time.<sup>14</sup> According to H. Claude, world military expenditures went from \$185 billion in 1956 to \$334 billion in 1976, in constant 1976 dollars.<sup>15</sup> International institutions' policies, like those of the International



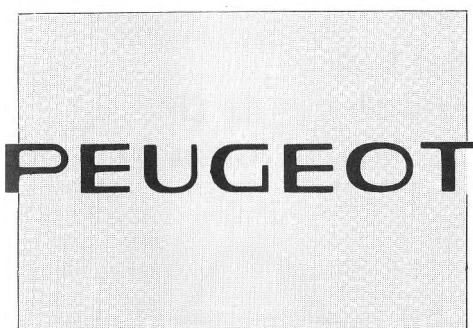
Monetary Fund, the World Bank and various regional institutions are also very important to the profit figures of the monopolies; and these institutions are, of course, controlled by the various States. The links between the State and the monopolies in the revisionist countries are certainly indisputable. But among the Western imperialist countries, it seems that Japan is the place where class relations are most systematically enshrined. This is certainly what Yoshino (a leading Western authority on Japan) argues: "There is an informal understanding in the Japanese bureaucracy that senior career bureaucrats must retire from civil service in their early fifties, and most of these men seek a second career in business or politics. The bureaucracy has developed a rather subtle but highly effective system of placing these men in appropriate positions in private firms. Its main targets, of course, are companies with close government ties. In some industries, the practice has become so routine that certain positions are reserved for these men. The process

11. UN Economic and Social Council, *op. cit.*, pp. 281-82-85
12. H. Claude, *op. cit.*, pp. 26-39
13. C. Levinson, *op. cit.*, p. 119
14. M. Barratt-Brown, *op. cit.*, p. 169
15. H. Claude, *op. cit.*, p. 169

is popularly known as Amakadori, which literally means 'descending from heaven', a phrase poignantly suggestive of certain aspects of the relationship between government and business in Japan."<sup>16</sup> Like C.D. Howe's "dollar-a-year-men" policy in Canada during the Second World War — in reverse.<sup>17</sup>

### On the financial oligarchy

Without trying to push polemics very far at this point, it seems that what was at the heart of Lenin's conception of the "financial oligarchy" was the fusion of bank and industrial capital, the fact that capital had become monopolized in all the areas of the economy and that there existed a certain unity among the various sectors of the monopoly bourgeoisie which was consecrated by a variety of financial and personal links. This fusion was the key aspect — and not whether the bank monopolies controlled the industrial monopolies or vice versa. Certain analysts have argued that the large industrial monopolies have become financially independent, and that the concept of the financial oligarchy was no longer relevant.<sup>18</sup> Even though we have not yet attempted any kind of systematic analysis of this ques-



tion, there are a few points which can be made.

In the first place, it seems that there have been important conjunctural changes in the general debt status of the industrial monopolies over the post-war period, but this would have to be confirmed. However, we will not be examining this question systematically at this time. What we do have is an analysis of the long-term (more than 1 year) debt situation of the Fortune 500 in the USA for 1969. About 20 of these companies had no long-term debt at all, and for another 30, it was less than 5% of their total capital. On the other hand there were about 50 companies where long-term debt was about 50% or more of total capital. The leader in indebtedness that year was the conglomerate Ling-Temco-Vought, with 85%; now, if we are not interpreting this ratio incorrectly, that means that LTV

was supported by nearly 6 times as much debt (mainly to banks and other financial institutions) as investment by the stockholders. The average indebtedness for the US 500 industrials in 1969 was 26.1%; meaning that the banks and financial institutions had about one-third as much invested in these companies as did the stockholders. This seems to suggest a certain amount of dependence on these financial institutions, and that the companies' operations would certainly be subject to a certain amount of conditions dictated by their creditors.<sup>19</sup>

Another element which can be introduced in this question is the portrait of the boards of directors of any of the major banks in Canada, which inevitably include the presidents of many of Canada's leading industrial monopolies. These boards of directors certainly give the impression of close links among the leading monopolists of the various sectors. Or take an important American family like the Rockefellers, who have Exxon, the Chase Manhattan Bank, and many more... Reading about the Japanese economy certainly gives the impression that a financial oligarchy exists there; we shall limit ourselves to one quotation from the previously cited bourgeois authority:

"Although the Zaikai is not an officially organized body and its membership is not clearly defined, the term generally refers to a small group of the most powerful of Japan's elite business leaders, and they often hold high offices in such powerful organizations as the Japan Federation of Economic Organization, the Japan Chamber of Commerce, and the Japan Employers' Association.

"As the respected elder statesmen of



the business community, they serve, individually and collectively, as the chief spokesmen for business interests. They maintain a close relationship with the leaders of the ruling Liberal Democratic Party and play a critical role in mobilizing the financial resources of the business community for the Party. In fact, the support of the Zaikai is considered essential to win the nomination to the premiership. ... They

serve as intermediaries in resolving conflicts between business and the government or between specific industries and enterprises. They discipline industries and enterprises whose actions they do not consider in the best interests of the business community as a whole."<sup>20</sup>

Does that correspond to your conception of an oligarchy?

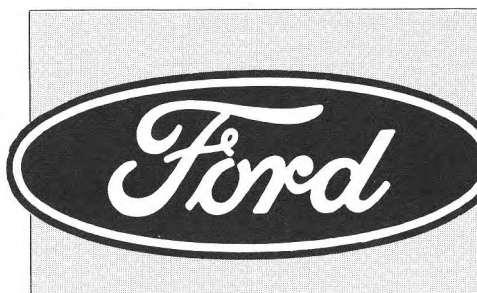
### Questions that need further analysis

The expression "multinational corporation" is popularly used to refer to monopolies with foreign subsidiaries, or to an international participation in the ownership or control of monopolies or their subsidiaries. As we have seen in this article, although this phenomenon has been around since the beginning of the century, we have seen that it has been growing extremely rapidly since the Second World War. We saw that for American firms, the value of foreign investments had multiplied 17 times between 1945 and 1976. Together with a rapid growth in international trade over this period, this represents an important development in the international character of the world economy.

Other important new phenomena that we could identify were the relative shifts in foreign investments to the advanced countries and to manufacturing. This suggests that the penetration of large and prosperous markets has become a more important source of profits for foreign investments than the exploitation of cheap labour and guaranteed access to raw materials.

These new phenomena are at the root of several new theories on the nature of capitalism today. Frequently, the conclusions identify a new "phase" or

16. N.Y. Yoshino, *op. cit.*, p. 54
17. The "dollar-a-year-men" were top businessmen paid a token amount (one dollar a year) to sit on the government committees overseeing and managing Canada's war effort
18. See P. Baran and P. Sweezy, "Notes on the Theory of Imperialism", *Monthly Review*, vol. 17, no. 10, reprinted in Boulding and Mukerjee, *Economic Imperialism*, University of Michigan Press, 1972, p. 156-170
19. *Fortune*, May 1970, p. 222
20. N.Y. Yoshino, *op. cit.*, p. 13



“stage” in the development of imperialism, characterized by the domination of the multinationals.

Social democrats like Charles Levinson, or the Socialist International and the leadership of the Canadian Labour Congress, see the integration of the various national economies as a result of the growth of the multinationals. Underlying this conclusion is the implication that economic rivalry among imperialist States has declined, so that imperialist wars are no longer necessary. For the social democrats, the characteristic of the multinationals is their lack of any strong attachment to specific national economies or States; they are not only “a-national”, but also “anti-national”, in opposition to the sovereign nation-States. In typical social-democratic fashion, the solution to this contradiction between States and multinationals is to be found in reforms — reform of the international economic order to permit greater international control of the multinationals. Then, say the social democrats, the multinationals could fulfill their essentially progressive role in developing the world economy.

Others, like the Soviet-line revisionists, while not denying the national character of these monopolies, see the multinationals as the principal

enemy of the peoples of the various countries in the world. And they also situate the non-monopolist fractions of the bourgeoisies in the imperialist countries in the people's camp in this struggle. Their solution consists in nationalizing the multinationals as a necessary democratic stage leading to socialism.

We also touched upon the debate among Marxist economists over whether the “financial oligarchy”, described by Lenin as representing the “merging of bank capital and industrial capital”, continues to exist. Some argue, as Baran and Sweezy have, that the multinationals are financially independent, which means that the merger of bank and industrial capital is no longer typical of the monopoly bourgeoisie in the imperialist countries.

All these theories have important implications for the strategy and the tactics of the proletariat in the various countries of the world and for the international communist movement. They lead to conclusions about class alliances, the role of the State in the imperialist countries, the analysis of international economic and political relations, and the perspectives for peace and war. This is why it is so important

to deepen our study of imperialism today.

On the basis of this text, our conclusions are that monopolies continue to have a national identity; that competition among them is growing — especially along national lines; that they are increasingly intertwined and united around the State in imperialist countries; and that the financial oligarchy still seems to be an accurate characterization of the dominant fraction of the bourgeoisie in these countries. Despite important new developments in the post-war period, the essential features of imperialism analysed by Lenin seem to still be with us. However, a serious analysis of imperialism today will require much more research: on the role of the Soviet bloc in the imperialist system; on the movement toward economic and political integration (in Europe, for example); on the significance of the scientific and technical revolution; on the nature of class relations in the different types of countries in the Third World; on the role of these countries in the development of the imperialist system; etc.

If this article has at least demonstrated the vital need for a Marxist analysis of imperialism, it will have accomplished one of its goals.

## Documents for the criticism of revisionism

For a scientific vision of the world:

# Determinism or free will?

**The history of mankind can be described as the history of the efforts of human communities to free themselves from the constraints always imposed by the necessity of meeting their daily survival needs and reproducing the species.**

**Banal at first glance, this statement in fact sums up one of the major conclusions of historical materialism. Unless we understand the implications of this correctly, we cannot wage a systematic and effective struggle against the various forms of idealism that underlie many of the political trends and theories so fashionable today. These range from open opposition to Marxism, whose scientific validity is increasingly challenged,<sup>1</sup> through the virulent condemnations of Marxism-Leninism, for which the “monster Stalin” serves as the living and ever-so-repulsive embodiment.**

**We cannot hope to present a thorough defence of Marxism in the limits of a short article for the journal. In any case, this is undoubtedly not the last time we will be discussing this question. For one thing, the questions which we have drawn attention to about the struggle for socialism have not had the universal effect of getting people to undertake a more materialist and scientific examination of the struggle up to now. One other result of our questioning has been to open the door to various positions and points of view that are not unrelated to the current prevailing forms of idealism.**

**The limits of the brief notes that follow are obvious. Nonetheless, it seems useful to publish them as a contribution to a debate that is very necessary, a debate that is a political debate. For there are times when to make progress in our political practice we have to get seriously involved in the realm of theory. Now is one of these times.**

One of the most troubling questions confronting humankind in trying to understand its own evolution is without a doubt the question of the role played by men and women in this evolution. In individual terms, it is the question of free will; in terms of society, it is the question of the relation between the objective factors and the subjective factors. Do men have free will? Can societies influence the course of their own development? These questions are certainly not new. They are, however, questions that are still worth asking today, and notably with respect to the framework of the struggle for socialism.

## A journey back into the past

In the beginning, mankind was composed of many, many very primitive communities descended, let us not forget, from certain species of animals. With populations that were usually fairly small, these primitive communities developed in much the same way that herds of animals do, using their natural environment to ensure their survival and reproduction. The first human

communities remained ignorant of the laws of nature for a long, long time. This was the period Engels described as the **age of necessity**: man was governed by nature, subjected to overwhelming natural forces. Water, fire, thunder, wind, the earth, animals, other human communities — all were uncontrollable, or nearly uncontrollable, enemy forces.

As mankind's knowledge grew, as the natural and social sciences developed, the foundations were laid for the **age of liberty**. Human societies gradually came to master the laws of nature better and better. Their new knowledge allowed them to make more use of natural forces.

Meanwhile, the isolated primitive communities gradually evolved into the worldwide society of the 20th century. Worldwide society, because there is today an international division of labour — all societies throughout the world are now interdependent. The socialization of humanity has reached unprecedented levels.

The history of humanity is the history of human communities involved in the struggle for their existence. This phenomenon precedes the phenomenon of social classes. It is prior to class ideolo-

*“Documents for the criticism of revisionism” is the general title for the articles PROLETARIAN UNITY is publishing with the purpose of contributing to a better understanding of the successes and failures in the struggle for socialism so far.*

*The articles, accompanying comments and other texts in the series “Documents...” do not necessarily represent the point of view of our Organization, which is currently studying these questions. Our Organization will be debating these issues broadly in its own ranks, with its readers and friends and with other organizations and parties before coming to firm conclusions.*

*All our readers are therefore strongly invited to share their comments, points of view and criticisms with us. We will do our best to circulate all such contributions, either by publishing them or by summing up the basic points made in them.*

*A correct understanding of our struggle's history will inevitably contribute to its progress in the future. This history is rich in lessons that the proletariat must be allowed to put to its advantage today, free from the distortions that have all too often accompanied our understanding or interpretation of this history.*

**The editorial board of PROLETARIAN UNITY**

gies. It is even prior to societies' awareness of their own organization and development.

All this means that history cannot be seen primarily as the result of the conscious actions of this or that class, and even less as the work of this or that individual. We have rejected the vision of history that says that the history of Europe in the early 19th century can be

1. **The Monde Diplomatique for February 1981 reports that French academics have set themselves the task of destroying Marxism's “hegemony”. Well-known biologists like Jacques Monod and Henri Laborit make insidious attacks on the scientific nature of dialectical materialism. Theirs and other points of view find an echo, even in progressive circles.**
2. **These positions are defended by “libertarian socialists” like Dimitri Roussopoulos, of the magazine Our Generation. In less extreme form, they are also defended by most of the “anti-Stalinists”, who characteristically reject the “vanguard party based on democratic centralism...”**

## Six films about “another Mexico”

Available from the CIP  
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### Mexico is more than Acapulco

Premières questions sur le bonheur

The film describes the daily life of “comuneros”, peasants fighting against small landowners.

Colour, 1 hour, 40 min., by Gilles Groulx

### Tierra y libertad

There are 50,000 men, women and children living in slums called “colonias”, surrounding the town of Monterrey. A real movement of opposition is developing in these colonias in Mexico. The capitalists in Monterrey are scared... “How can this possibly be happening, right under our very noses?”

Black and white, 93 min., by Maurice Bulbulian

### Le deal mexicain

Sooner or later, the Mexican peasant dreams of solving his poverty by going to harvest tomatoes and tobacco in Ontario. But once in Canada, the disillusionment sets in. The film shows us who really profits from the “Mexican deal”, and how.

Colour, 50 min., by Bosco Arachi

### Ethnocide

How capital exterminated a major Indian minority. Industrialization will never be in their interest. The film ends with a note of hope: a demonstration for proletarian unity.

Colour, 103 min., by Paul Leduc

### Journaleros

Each year, one quarter of Mexico's population move from region to region, from harvest to harvest, in search of work. They hardly earn enough to live until the next day. So they consider organizing in spite of the threat to their life which this represents.

Colour, 84 min., by Edouardo Maldonado.

### Les délaissés

What future can the young Mexicans of poor classes hope for? Juvenile delinquency, drugs, poor living conditions: three phenomena which go together in other places besides Mexico.

Black and White, 25 min., by Maurice Bulbulian

**All these films can now be rented from the CIP (Political Information Cinema), 1407 Iberville, Montreal H2K 3B1, Quebec. Tel. (514) 523-0285**



reduced to the Napoleonic Wars and Napoleon's talents as a general. Now we also have to break with a similar vision that attributes the decisive role to Marx, Lenin or Stalin. What holds true for the 19th century holds true for today: the history of societies is the history of communities as a whole — human communities that want to survive and reproduce, human communities that increasingly want to do so with less expenditure of human energy, by making full use of the techniques they have developed to transform nature and benefit from the treasures it can provide.

From this point of view, capitalism is first and foremost enormous social progress. The generalization of industrial production, for example, holds the promise of much greater potential welfare for the human race than any previous method of production has. As well, the prodigious development of the sciences — especially since the 19th century, or, in other words, under capitalism — has created the conditions for even greater social progress.

Recognizing this does not mean ignoring the fact that this social progress has been accompanied by much suffering and many social ills. Indeed, in some respects the social ills under capitalism are just as great and just as abhorrent as any in pre-capitalist societies. Nonetheless, it is important not to see capitalism as a kind of universal scourge, whose emergence was the root of every evil imaginable. Capitalism should not be seen as something intrinsically evil, that mankind could and should have done without.

This vision of things is not limited to history alone, and that is why it is so important. The social sciences in general, and anthropology in particular — or certain popularizations of anthropology, to be more precise — have created a tremendous fascination with pre-capitalist societies, especially primitive societies. Their way of life, their system of values, seem to hold such an attraction that some people, nostalgic for the "natural" life of primitive man, conclude that the progress achieved by class society has actually been a setback, and that the future of mankind lies in a return to the past.

This line of thinking ignores a number of very concrete realities, starting with demography: how could the billions of people who inhabit the earth today live from hunting and fishing and gathering wild plants? It ignores the progress made by science in general and the many positive ways this

progress affects man's living conditions, even if scientific progress also has some negative effects. Despite pollution, despite cancer, despite the lab monkeys deprived of their freedom, despite the carbon monoxide that chokes cyclists, it is nevertheless true that the life expectancy today — in some of the most polluted countries of the world — is 70 years and more. It is also true that there is a steady drop in the infant mortality rate, despite the "barbarism" of deliveries under spotlights in cold, modern stainless steel hospital rooms.

We could go on and on. What it comes down to is this: the possibility of entertaining the dream of a return to a "natural past" exists because of the material progress they enjoy today; and this material progress is itself conditional on the "unnatural" things, deplorable events and even negative side effects created by man that the dreamers complain so bitterly of.

**"There are times when to make progress in our political practice we have to get seriously involved in the realm of theory."**

Man has acquired steadily increasing control over nature, but at a price; and the price was the development and use of various practices, some of which are revolting and even loathsome by our standards today — for instance, cannibalism, slavery, class domination, the oppression of women and of smaller or weaker communities.

This much is admitted by most people: we cannot return to primitive society's way of life except at the price of a disaster worse than any of the problems that plague the world today. Despite this, however, there are still some who argue that we need to return to the values of the past, and as far back in the past as possible. But these people forget that the "primitive values" they are so nostalgic for were the expression or reflection of social relations that no longer exist, social relations that corresponded to a very backward level of development and incomparably less scientific understanding than we have today.

Only an idealist can think like that, for it means assuming that there are eternal values that exist independently of the material conditions of existence of the societies that uphold and trans-

mit any given values. And to believe in the existence of eternal or absolute natural values means disregarding the entire history of mankind; it means disregarding the history of life and the living beings on earth from which man evolved million of years ago. All moral values and cultural forms are the products of the societies that developed them in the course of history. And the most natural thing in the world for mankind is still its own evolution.

From this point of view, the purpose of socialist revolution is not to restore a "natural order of things" that was somehow get rid of at some point in history. The various forms of society in the past have been the responses worked out by men and women to surmount the problems of how to survive and reproduce. Cannibalism, for example — the practice some communities had of eating the members of communities they defeated — preceded slavery in some parts of the world, and was just as "natural" a practice as is capitalist exploitation today. And some of the prisoners condemned to spend 20, 30 or 40 years behind bars in our penal system tend to think it would be more "natural" to re-establish the death penalty.

No, the purpose of socialist revolution is instead to provide today's society with a form of organization that corresponds to the material possibilities open to us today and that satisfies the cultural and moral values that current conditions and the history of mankind have taught us to consider most appropriate to the well-being of humanity. Contemporary society has the objective material capacities — in the developed societies, at any rate — to put an end to capitalist exploitation and all the forms of oppression that it perpetuates — the oppression of women, national oppression, the oppression of the different "minorities" in our society such as the old, the handicapped, homosexuals, etc. This is the basic and primary reason for working for socialism.

### **But socialism is not predestined**

The question of the extent to which men are masters of their existence, the extent to which they can make real choices as individuals or social communities, is nearly as old as man himself. It is certainly as old as the study of philosophy; it dates back to the earliest times when men began to think about their world, life, themselves,

began to try to understand why things happened the way they did, and whether they could happen differently, and how they could be made to happen differently.

This is much the same problem as the question of the relationship between the objective and subjective factors in the evolution of societies. The subjective factors are the expression of society's freedom to change its situation; the objective factors are the things that society cannot directly change, the things it must accept as factors independent of its will.

On all these questions, be it the question of individual liberty or the role of subjective factors in the evolution of societies, philosophers have always wavered between two poles: pure determinism on the one hand, and absolute free will on the other.

It was in the 19th century that a scientific conception of the world began to win out definitively over previous ideologies, all more or less religious. There was considerable growth of scientific attitudes towards natural phenomena, but this development was much less pronounced when it came to attitudes towards people and societies. Idealist conceptions about the latter were much more tenacious: man is reluctant to acknowledge that his existence and that of societies are governed by laws that can be discovered and understood scientifically, just as all other natural laws can be.

Marxism can be described as the first rigorously scientific vision of society. The fundamental law of Marxism holds that the life of human society is in the final analysis determined by the level of development of the productive forces.

Does this mean that Marxism is a philosophy of social determinism? Does Marxism hold that the existence and development of societies are determined absolutely, that they have no freedom? If the answer to this is yes, then it is misleading and deceptive to hold out the prospect of revolution, for in the final analysis it would be the determinism of the productive forces that counts.

The idea is hard to accept. For one thing, everyone can think of situations in which it is possible to make choices. The people of El Salvador are today faced with the choice between continuing to be governed by a reactionary regime or waging a struggle to overthrow that regime and establish democracy and perhaps even socialism. Furthermore, we can think of many, many historical situations in which societies have made choices that have altered the course of events. Men can

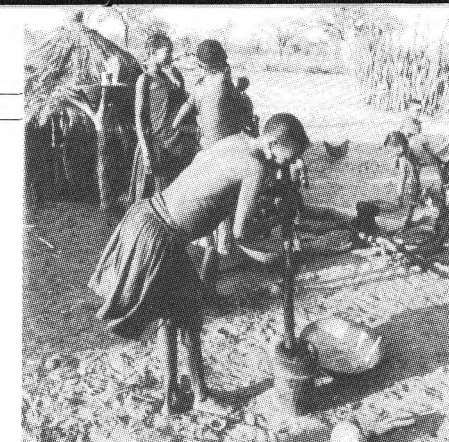
**The history of human communities, from time immemorial to the present-day, has always been the history of their struggle for survival and the reproduction of the species.**



make plans for their individual and collective existence, just as they can make plans to transform nature and put it to work for them.

The history of humanity, especially in the last few decades, provides ample proof that men can use nature for specific purposes and transform it to a considerable extent to suit their needs. How is this possible? It is possible inasmuch, and only inasmuch, as they rely on the laws governing the "life" of nature to transform it. Man is now capable of sending a spaceship outside our solar system; he can do so only because he has learned and mastered many of the laws governing gravity, energy, the strength of various metals, electronics and communications, etc. In other words, men's freedom to transform nature depends on how well they understand it.

This is basically the same reason Marx and Engels studied the life of human societies, and especially capitalist society. Through their research, they gained a certain understanding and vision of history. They concluded that human life in society was historically determined by the level of development of productive forces, that is by the gradual and progressive development of man's capacity to ensure his subsistence by transforming nature. This means that the first law of human society is that a society is determined by the need to ensure its own subsistence. Everything it does is ultimately oriented towards satisfying this "fundamental determinism". The way a given society goes about doing this, the organizational forms it develops to satisfy this basic requirement, are determined by the level of



development of the productive forces. This is what Marx and Engels meant when they said that the relations of production are, in the final analysis, determined by the development of the productive forces.

This raises the question of the action of the working class, and more specifically the action of communists, in relation to the struggle for socialism today. Does it even make sense to talk about waging the struggle for socialism? Should we not just view socialism as the necessary and inevitable result of the development of the productive forces? Isn't the struggle for socialism a delusion?

Unless I am very mistaken, no communist, no socialist — of any stripe — has ever said that the struggle for socialism is a delusion, a sham. No one has ever categorically suggested that socialism would inevitably result from the development of the productive forces alone. Nonetheless, there have been times in the history of the communist movement when positions were defended which in practice boiled down to making the future of socialism solely dependent on the development of the productive forces. It can certainly be argued — although it has not yet been proven rigorously — that this point of view became predominant in the international communist movement after World War II, and that it was already predominant in the Second International by World War I.

As a matter of fact, certain phrases written by Marx and Engels can easily be invoked in support of such a view of historical development. **Marx said that** there is a "necessary correspondance" between the relations of production (and thus the various historical forms into which society has been organized) and the level of development of the productive forces. From this, it is sometimes rather easy to slip into **saying something else:** that a given level of development of productive forces will necessarily coincide with an equally advanced set of relations of production.

Yet there is an enormous difference between the two statements. It is one thing to say that capitalism emerged in Western Europe in the wake of

feudalism and commodity production, because of the level of development of the productive forces that had been attained in that part of the world. It is another, quite different thing to say that it was inevitable (necessary) that capitalism emerge in Western Europe as soon as the Middle Ages were over.

In other words, historical materialism enables us to understand to a certain extent — for we still have much to learn about this — some stages in the evolution of human societies; but it does not tell us that these stages were inevitable. Nor does it enable us to foretell the future. In short, historical materialism cannot be treated as a magic recipe for the sure-fired road to socialism. To try and do so would be to commit the mirror image of the same mistake that many have made in trying to understand past history, when they conclude that the “failures” of socialism are the result of a poor application of Marxism-Leninism.

The development of societies does not follow a predestined, predetermined course. Societies can act on and influence their development. But — and this is the fundamental lesson of Marxism — societies cannot act in ways that contradict the laws currently governing the evolution of societies. It is important to learn to understand these laws, because then we can intervene more effectively in the process of social change in the future and, above all, better serve the cause of socialism.

### Some practical consequences

Theoretical arguments like these sometimes seem very abstract and far removed from “real political problems”. Yet, take any “real political problem”, any at all, and it is clear that there is a constant need to defend the solutions to these problems based on a materialist theoretical approach against all the various solutions rooted in what are basically idealist conceptions of society. Let’s look at a few examples.

Many, many socialists and democratic people in Quebec are in favour of independence for the Quebec nation. They have various different reasons: they want to prevent the assimilation of French-speaking Québécois; achieve a national identity; put an end to their oppression; weaken the federal State and hasten the victory of socialism in Quebec and all of Canada... There is nothing wrong with any of these reasons, in themselves. Many struggles have been waged in the past, and more will be waged in the future, for these goals.

But in looking at the question of independence from the point of view of

**“... the ‘primitive values’ they are so nostalgic for were the expression or reflection of social relations that no longer exist, social relations that correspond to a very backward level of development and incomparably less scientific understanding than we have today.”**

historical materialism, the basic question is: is political independence important enough for any class in Quebec society to justify revolution, and if so, for what class? For in the current situation, it is hard to imagine Quebec winning its independence through negotiations among a dozen first ministers. Unless and until there is a serious answer to this question, we have to conclude that the interests of the masses of ordinary Québécois are not served by the “independence and socialism” programme that some offer them; on the contrary, such a programme perpetuates illusions that will eventually give way to severe disillusionment.

\* \* \*

There are at least as many political tendencies and trends in the women’s movement as in any other mass movement. Some of these tendencies give priority to changing people’s “consciousness”, rather than women’s material conditions. This does not reflect a materialist way of looking at reality, and can also lead to setbacks and dead-end solutions. Changes in ideology can only be lasting if they are grounded in transformations in material conditions.

Significantly, the women most involved in the women’s movement are usually women who are active outside their homes, who are in direct contact with social reality, who are confronted with the contradictions in society without the intermediary — shield or smokescreen — of a man who supports them. Women activists are mostly workers (sometimes unionized, sometimes not), farmers’ wives, students, single mother (many of whom are forced to live on welfare), and so on.

This is why it is important, from a materialist point of view, to support struggles to improve women’s access to jobs and to benefit from the same working conditions that men have. This is

why it is equally important to combat the tendency to reduce the women’s struggle to a promotion of “feminine values” in contrast to “masculine values”. These values do exist. But most, if not all, of them are more the result of the age-old oppression of women than the expression of any specifically feminine nature. More often than not, they have been used to justify an inferior status for women.

If we lose sight of the relationship between ideology — including moral values and cultural expressions — and the social relations that constitute its main “material foundation” or the conditions of their existence, then we run the risk, in this specific instance, of playing into the hands of the bourgeoisie. In today’s society, the idea that women are different by their very nature is a justification for confining them to specific roles, the effect of which is to keep them in a situation of material and social inferiority.

It is very probable that the women’s liberation movement will not become an irreversible tide unless and until the vast majority of women attain sufficient material autonomy to have a decisive political influence on the course of events. So far, the political force of a social class or section of class has been drawn from its material force, namely its place in production — not only in the production of goods (with a use value) like meals for the family, but also, under capitalism, in the production of commodities (with an exchange value) that generate capital.

\* \* \*

It is very fashionable to criticize “Stalinist parties” these days. Indeed, in some circles any political party is Stalinist almost by definition. Anarchism, or libertarian socialism, has a very definite influence among people on the left today, and its most radical followers totally reject any kind of party. In its place they advocate a federation of various organizations based on people’s affinities as much as on common interests. Others who call themselves libertarian socialists or who are attracted by these ideas argue for a new kind of party that would be neither Stalinist (read “communist”) nor social-democratic, a party that would not operate on the basis of democratic centralism, that ultimate expression of Stalinism! As well, there are many self-described social democrats who clearly welcome the new enthusiasm for condemning Stalinism.

The hunchback Stalin is such a huge, grotesque target for these critics that

his figure seems to have cast a shadow on history long enough to push people like Bakunin, Bernstein and Kautsky, completely out of view — along with the political trends they stood for. Stalin becomes a mere whipping boy used to discredit communism, and this suits the detractors of Stalin just fine. It means they can usually gloss over the fact that the history of libertarian socialism (or utopian socialism and anarchism) and social democracy goes back at least as far as the history of communism. It would therefore be entirely appropriate to examine their contributions to the development of the struggle for socialism as well. What happened to the worker-controlled communities modelled on the ideas of Owen and Fourier in Great Britain, the United States and elsewhere? How has socialism progressed since the social democrats held power in Great Britain, in West Germany or in various provinces in Canada? These experiments and experiences are also part of history, and deserve to be examined.

The libertarian school of thought is an expression of idealism, both in its simplistic vision of history and in its understanding of revolutionary political action. It promotes the cult of spontaneity, individualism and supposed total democracy. Strip democratic centralism of its label, the libertarians argue, and you have authoritarianism; and in the name of rejecting this authoritarianism, they call for structures of direct democracy in which everybody is of course free to say whatever they want to, but in which just as surely certain individuals in practice are in a position to make the decisions they want to, when they want to. The libertarians call this “revolutionary democracy”; it bears a remarkable resemblance to the kind of democracy practiced by the Liberal Party.

The same goes for their opposition to the Stalinist party: they do not justify their criticism on the basis of an analysis of the relative strength of the political forces involved, or in the light of a coherent strategic line; no, their criticism stems rather from an out-of-hand categorical rejection of organization, discipline and collective work.

The line of the libertarian socialists and, more generally, the “anti-Stalinists” on the party and democratic centralism is also a political expression of idealism.<sup>4</sup> It is based on ideas and aspirations that are present, all right, in bourgeois society, ideas that are indeed opposed to exploitation and oppression. But the libertarian line stays on the level of these ideas. An effort is made to apply them in practice without taking a

PROLETARIAN UNITY

look at the material bases which generated the ideas in the first place, without taking any account of the material conditions that have to be met in order to implement those ideas that truly reflect the interests of the majority of people.

The libertarians, incidentally, are very fond of an argument that used to be found exclusively in bourgeois propaganda: “By what right,” they argue, “can communists claim to represent the interests of the majority?” Such a question assumes that all points of view are equally valid, that each individual spontaneously acquires a clear and progressive vision of things. It denies the possibility of a progressively more thorough and more scientific understanding of reality, if we only take the trouble to study it. It ignores the fact that we are bombarded with bourgeois ideology in what we see and read, in the symbols and advertising that surround us, on television, in the newspapers, at work, in school, day in, day out, from when we get up to when we go to bed...

## Books in review

Where will the “path to greater knowledge” lead?



La voie initiatique

by Jacques Languirand, Editions René Ferron, 1978.

This article is the result of a critical reading of Jacques Languirand’s<sup>1</sup> book *La voie initiatique* (the path to greater knowledge). First of all, we should be asking ourselves where this *path to greater knowledge* leads to. Unfortunately, it is impossible to find out since it is a *secret* which we can only learn through “... experience which, by definition, is not communicable.” (p. 25) The *secret* can only be *revealed*! The goal of knowledge is *illumination*. But, the teaching of this esoteric thought is, luckily, communicable. Let’s take a look at this teaching.

First, Jacques Languirand’s esoteric philosophy is based on an erroneous interpretation of the discoveries of contemporary physics. According to the physics of Einstein, when matter is

placed under certain conditions, it is transformed into energy because of its intrinsic characteristics, and vice versa. Should this lead us to the conclusion that matter does not exist? No! The ground on which I am standing remains matter. However, if the speed with which the earth travels through space were to reach the speed of light, the earth would be transformed into energy. But this is not what is happening and anyone who would defend the contrary is silly. And yet, that is exactly what Jacques Languirand defends:

“At the end of the last century, it was possible to believe a materialistic explanation of the physical universe. But today we know that matter does not exist. What has been called matter, is, in fact, energy. The break down of MATTER, and of the materialist explanation, should lead to the downfall of REASON...” (p. 43)

So we can now see where this abusive interpretation leads to. Jacques Languirand provides us with a schematic resume, a *guiding plan*: reality is formed of the spiritual, while all things psychological, physical and human are illusions. His reasoning is quite simple, it is an algebraic equation.

These are very brief and very summary examples. Nonetheless, I think they adequately illustrate the urgent necessity of making a much more thorough examination and analysis of history and the present-day situation as well as the importance of waging a firm struggle against the political expressions of idealism. If we ignore these tasks, the criticism of revisionism is liable to be transformed into its opposite, paving the way for political trends that are entirely foreign to historical materialism.

Charles Gagnon  
Secretary-General  
of IN STRUGGLE!

3. Bakunin was a leading member of the anarchist trend and actively promoted it in the workers movement. German Social Democratic Party members Edouard Bernstein and Karl Kautsky were leading defenders of variants of the reformist position and the reformist section of the workers movement.

4. This does not mean that everyone who criticizes, even severely, the positions and actions of Stalin is an “anti-Stalinist”. The term is used here to designate those who use the criticism of Stalin as a pretext for opposing the party and democratic centralism.

placed under certain conditions, it is transformed into energy because of its intrinsic characteristics, and vice versa. Should this lead us to the conclusion that matter does not exist? No! The ground on which I am standing remains matter. However, if the speed with which the earth travels through space were to reach the speed of light, the earth would be transformed into energy. But this is not what is happening and anyone who would defend the contrary is silly. And yet, that is exactly what Jacques Languirand defends:

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1. Jacques Languirand is a writer who has hosted a daily radio show on the French CBC network for many years which is devoted to his “esoteric thought”. He is also host of a similar programme on television.

If, energy = real, and if consciousness = energy, then real = consciousness. We really cannot state it any better than the author himself: "it is the spirit which constitutes the STUFF of matter." (p. 37)

From a dialectical materialist point of view, ideas are supported by practice. So let's take a look at some of the practices which support Languirand's idealism.

First, nothing should be criticized, divided, analysed or questioned. "Esoterism should only be discussed in favourable circumstances..." (p. 27). Further, "An intellectual process reinforces the Ego, while going beyond this, as advocated by esoteric thought, presumes that we let ourselves go to something which is greater than ourselves." (p. 103)

If we let ourselves go, if we abandon the struggle which has to be waged if we are to acquire autonomous thought, then, we are accepting the domination of something which is more powerful than we are. What is this thing which requires that we attack our instinct of conservation, to make it give way a little more?

This thing which is much superior to our petty individual consciousness is the universal cosmic consciousness. This consciousness is characterized by the fact that it is unified and that it is supported by an experience which is both universal and non-communicable.

Obviously if you put the axe to all intellectual criticism, if you force people to clam up by telling them that the superior experience is mystical and thus non-communicable, you will neutralize all resistance to this discourse. And this discourse then has the field wide open to spread out, to become universal without any opposition.

The most dangerous thing about this esoteric philosophy is that, under the cover of undoing conditioning, it advocates the death of the individual, the death of our Ego, of our creativeness, the end of the struggle we should be waging for our autonomy. Languirand does not mince words, he comes right out and states: "... we must start dying again. To be initiated, we must die in order to be reborn." (p. 104)

Being reborn after being totally brainwashed, without our instinct of conservation, means becoming a puppet, but, in whose hands?

This ideological discourse is mainly addressed to those who are already crushed by the weight of prohibitions, who have an unreasonable fear of reprisals. Esoterism adds and exploits another fear — a terrible fear that the world is ending.

In this age of Aquarius, "humanity now has the power to self-destruct."

Finally, we should underline the infantile nature of this magic thought which takes its fantasies for reality, and is afraid of things which are the product of its imagination.

We have to speak out against these ideologies which obscure and paralyze the thought and action of women and men who are living with the contradictions of advanced capitalist societies.

Marie-Josée Rhéaume  
professor of philosophy

Those who would like more information on this type of social phenomenon, can read the book *Le trust de la foi* by Jean-Pierre Gosselin and Denis Monière, Editions Québec/Amérique, Montreal, 1978.



## Writing for whom?

### Interview with Henri Lamoureux

**Henri Lamoureux represents a new phenomenon in literature in Quebec, possibly in Canada. This phenomenon is important to all who fight to defend the interests of the proletariat and the labouring classes.**

**Needless to say, the progressive writer who has the humble goal of making the experiences of the people and the working class known, using simple language to be understood — because being understood is a priority for him — is very rare in the literary jungle.**

**When someone like Henri Lamoureux, who comes from a working-class family, who learned about life in unions and popular groups, without going through university, who on top of all wants to take part, as a writer, in class struggle — and who succeeds, then that person deserves recognition, and that is why we went to talk with him. Here are excerpts from an interview with him conducted last August.**

**PROLETARIAN UNITY: Why did you write *L'affrontement* (the battle) and *Les meilleurs d'entre nous* (The Best among us)?**

**Henri Lamoureux:** Basically, *L'affrontement* talks of the death and mutilations workers suffer in their factories. The novel is about a union struggle to break up a situation imposed by those hungry for profits. It also illustrates the difficulties met by a person who is not from the working class trying to join a class he was not born in. I tried to explain that a strike is no fun for workers. When workers go on strike, they usually have good reasons.

As to *Meilleurs d'entre nous*, it attempts to describe life in a working-class neighbourhood. It is a book that tries to express the joys and trials of a certain number of characters linked by being members of the same class. The action is centred around a family going through a series of dramatic and trying events. I talk about citizen groups and the place petty bourgeois take in them.

In both books I have characters choosing to break with the class they were born in, to work in factories and working-class neighbourhoods. I have a great deal of respect for some who left their comfortable downy nest to get involved where struggles are waged. Some of those I have known are, to my mind, among the best elements of their generation.

If I wrote these two novels, it is because as far as I know these are not subjects which ordinarily interest Quebec writers. However, when one remembers that wise people only talk about things they know, one understands why our writers are hesitating to deal with these topics.

To my mind it is very important to encourage a correct understanding of the life of the proletariat. I try to have readers of my books discover that there are causes to their problems. Such a discovery should encourage them to develop their combativity and a viewpoint that is theirs and not that of the bourgeoisie looking for scapegoats to be blamed for their errors.

**PROLETARIAN UNITY: What relationship do you see between the work you did as an activist in unions and citizen groups and your work as a writer?**

**H.L.:** I approach my work as a writer in the same way I tried to approach my work as an activist in the union movement and in citizen groups and organizations. I think a good activist is a good educator above all else. This is also true for a writer. When a writer speaks of the proletariat, he must do it

with respect and loyalty. He should describe reality frankly and avoid the trap of populism. I am very happy when readers who read my books tell me they learned something or if they say I honestly portrayed situations they are familiar with. I am most satisfied when people who were prejudiced about workers and working-class neighbourhoods tell me that reading one of my books made them reconsider their opinions.

**PROLETARIAN UNITY: What do you think popular culture is?**

**H.L.:** It is an expression of the people's lives. It is manifested by many kinds of behaviour, attitudes, ways of being and of grasping reality. When we speak of popular culture, it is in opposition to bourgeois culture. Bourgeois culture is marked by its inaccessibility, its closed mind, its elitism... It is a culture reserved for a caste of upstarts who often claim they are the avant-garde. Sometimes, bourgeois culture even takes on proletarian airs, as long as this doesn't make champagne turn sour or raise the price of caviar.

Popular culture is expressed in the celebration, everyone can participate at a popular celebration... It is also expressed by theatre, by song, by language, by kitchen recipes, by a kind of complicity, by a thousand and one things that make a people live and progress.

Finally, there is also what is often called universal culture which is the common heritage of all human beings. Generally, it is the fruit of the labour of millions of workers and slaves who came before us.

**PROLETARIAN UNITY: How can producers of cultural material contribute to the advancement of the proletariat?**

**H.L.:** I think that producers of cultural material can do this in three ways: first, by getting involved in the struggle for humanity's progress; then by telling of the many facets of exploitation and oppression, and finally by expressing the richness of the proletariat. However, I believe that a producer of cultural material should avoid like the plague any temptation to develop proletarian Goldoraks (A technological superhero cartoon) of any kind. Subliminal images whether on supermen or on a morbid caricatural level, do not correspond to reality and are harmful in all respects.

**PROLETARIAN UNITY: What solutions do you see to the problems encountered by your characters?**

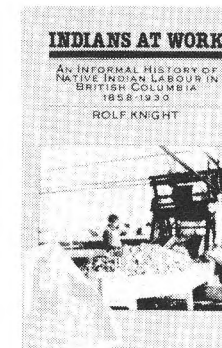
**H.L.:** To collective problems experienced by my characters, I make them respond by collective actions

(strikes in *L'affrontement*, demonstrations and community groups in *Les Meilleurs d'entre nous*). The most conscious of them see political solutions to political problems. However, even if this disappoints certain activists who are too idealistic, I have not yet put the need of the party to the forefront. These novels, it must be said, refer to what was being experienced in the 70s rather than the 80s. I believe I must let my characters take their own road. Maybe in a future novel some of them will have become communists.

You see, in novels, like in real life, characters must escape from their author's paternalism...

## Indians At Work

by Rolf Knight,  
New Star Books  
1978



Chief Dan George was born on an Indian reserve in North Vancouver, B.C., in 1899. Today he is a famous Hollywood actor. On the movie screen he plays an "old-Indian-wise-in-the-ways-of-nature". Would you guess this same man began his entertainment career after an accident ended his first 27 years of adult work as a... longshoreman?

The first union formed on the Vancouver docks in 1906 held its meetings at a hall on the same reserve. For Native peoples were both a majority of union members, along with workers of English and Hawaiian origin, and union leaders, as was a black worker from Barbados.

Union organizers, militants of bitter strikes — hardly the images that come to mind when people think of 'Native elders'. Yet this is one part of Native history, a part buried for a long time. The path-breaking character of knight's book is that it is the first to unearth, collect and systematize the very real history of Native peoples as wage workers, as proletarians.

Both the red-neck and the romantic versions of Native history crumble before the facts presented in this study: British Columbia Natives won prizes

for short-hand (in France, around 1900); spoke German to the anthropologist Boas when he landed on this coast for his first time (1886), for they already had visited his homeland; captained a motorized infantry transport ship supporting the British siege of Baghdad (Iraq) in World War I. The deserved victims of this study are those versions of history that substitute static stereotypes, most often nationalist, for analysis of the contradictory, dynamic reality that people live.

*Indians At Work* concentrates on British Columbia from the period of the Fraser River gold rush in 1858 to the Great Depression of 1930. It includes shorter histories of Native peoples at work on the Prairies, in Ontario, Quebec, the Maritimes and the North. Woven in are accounts of Native capitalists. In a substantial appendix, Knight provides an informative survey of other "parts" of the picture: the composition of Native societies prior to European colonization and some of the major repressive actions of the Canadian State and its agents, through the Department of Indian Affairs, missions, and a special "net of Native laws".

With a wealth of facts, mainly ordinary and all the more compelling for that, Knight demonstrates the central proposition of the book: Natives everywhere in Canada, except for the northern trapping regions, have been involved in a variety of wage labour and commodity production for well over a century. As cannery workers on mechanized production lines, as well as fishermen; as crewmen on inland sternwheelers and ocean sailing ships; as teamsters and commercial farmers (B.C. Natives won prizes for wheat growing at international expositions (1976)); as lagers' sawmill workers, coal miners. "Their jobs have been extremely varied and were not limited to unskilled modifications of traditional pursuits." (p. 194)

Like many other workers in this earlier phase of resource-based competitive capitalism, Natives combined wage labour with a domestic subsistence economy. What is made clear is that the "semi-permanent unemployment and reserve dependence... is a relatively recent phenomenon". It dates from the last Depression and is the result of the inevitable evolution of capitalism toward greater and greater monopolization.

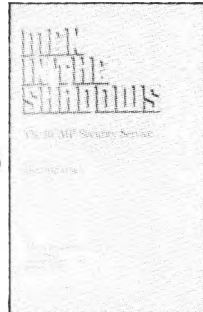
Native peoples were colonized by the expansion of capital from Europe to North America. They were incorporated in large numbers and for a long period directly into the daily process of

exploited labour, along with the workers of other nations. Today monopoly capital reduces many of them to reserve dependence and unemployment.

Surveying this history, who can deny that the liberation of Native peoples has been and clearly remains linked with the struggle of all workers against the rule of Capital?

## Men in the Shadows

by John Sawatsky



**Men in the Shadows** by John Sawatsky was published in the spring of 1980. This book sheds a bit of light on the doings of the Security Services officers of the RCMP, those "men in the shadows". Very few books on the RCMP have given us as much information on such secret "services". John Sawatsky, the author, is a reporter for the Vancouver Sun in the Ottawa parliamentary press gallery. His book deals with the secret services question from a reformist point of view in the sense that Sawatsky believes that as long as the government does not change the inadequate structures that have been imposed on the Security Services, these services will remain relatively inefficient. This being said, the reader will certainly appreciate the author's direct inquiry into the milieu. Rather than tail after the Keable or MacDonald Commissions on the same subject, Sawatsky crisscrossed the country and interviewed many of the people directly involved in the cases he relates.

Sawatsky, with the dead-pan humor that characterizes him, relates numerous examples in a very detailed fashion which illustrate the strengths and weaknesses of the RCMP.

**Men in the Shadows** speaks of a lot of unknown events: the machine developed in the late fifties to detect gay civil servants who are necessarily subversive; the unsuccessful attempts by the Soviet embassy's defector Gouzenko to reveal his secrets — every time he showed up at the RCMP offices, they told him to come back the next day; Richard Benning's infiltration into the Partisan group in Vancouver in 1970-1971; and other attack plans of the political police against activist groups.

Sawatsky also informs his readers on the Security Services themselves, par-

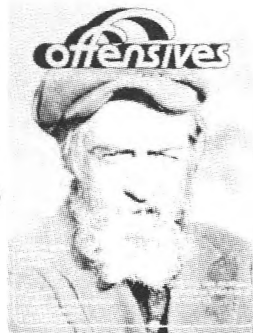
ticularly on the conflicts pitting agents against their superiors, civilians against the military within the RCMP itself, and different services against one another.

Sawatsky is also very clear on the fact that the RCMP is not the only one that operates in the shadows. On the federal level, there are also important sectors of the ministries of Defence, of Foreign Affairs, of Communications, and of Supplies and Services. There is also the Planning and Analysis Group of the Solicitor General of Canada which co-ordinates all these groups.

In other words, **Men in the Shadows** provides a lot of food for thought for any progressive activist. For example, the author clearly poses the question if the RCMP hasn't been overestimated in the past. It's true that it has important strengths in terms of budgets, men and techniques. Certain specialties like tailing, clandestine entry and mail interception are very sophisticated and, as the author stresses, only the failures of the RCMP are reported because talking about the successes would compromise the activities presently under way.

One of the book's strong points is that it permits the reader to understand the RCMP's real weaknesses in certain sectors. For example, the RCMP has a lot of difficulty analysing the political situation in Canada. It also has a hard time processing its gathered information. Its internal conflicts are quite sharp. It has difficulty finding support in the population and, at the same time, it has a marked tendency to link itself to the mafia. The facts are that the RCMP's role in society makes it paranoid. In the past, this fact has limited the Canadian bourgeoisie's control over the situation in our country. Even today, this remains a danger for the ruling class.

## Offensives culturelles et communautaires



**OFFENSIVES** is the name of a new community and cultural journal which began publication in November. Two issues have already been published and the third should be available for May Day.

The journal's open policy is quite original, as is stated in the first issue:

"Far from being a censorship board, the collective, without any pretensions, wants to promote debate by intervening, when necessary, to raise new questions, to point out certain subtleties or to promote the participation of organizations or individuals likely to favour the polemic."

Already the polemic began following the publication of an article by Réjean Mathieu (Community groups and God-The-Father-in-Quebec-City-Ottawa-or-elsewhere, *Offensives*, no. 1). In his reply, Henri Lamoureux, a writer and activist in community groups in Montreal, makes his contribution to the debate on the cause of the current demobilization in community groups. These two contributions, despite their differences, are very interesting. They are all the more interesting when they are compared with an article published in the journal *le Temps Fou* ("One step forward, two (three?) steps back", J.G. Lague, *Temps Fou* no. 5) or with certain chapters of the book *La conjoncture au Québec au début des années '80* (The Quebec conjuncture in the early eighties). The first two articles avoid placing the blame for this demobilization in community groups on the "MLs".

In the second issue there is an article on the theories of Henri Laborit. These theories are developed in the film *Mon oncle d'Amerique*, one of the most popular films currently playing in Quebec. Laborit claims to have made a scientific contribution to the assessment of the socialist revolutions which have taken place so far. However, as the author of the article, Daniel Hubert, clearly shows, Laborit is only promoting a new form of utopian socialism.

We should also mention the interview with le Théâtre des Cuisines which helps us understand the evolution of this feminist troupe and the place it gives to its plays.

There is also an article by Charles Rajotte on the origins of North American pop music. This is the first in a series of articles on the history of popular music in Canada and the U.S.

This new journal undoubtedly fills a gap in the fields of community and cultural work in Quebec. *Offensives* will fill this gap all the better if it becomes a genuine forum for debate and scientific criticisms in the cultural field, and in fact, it has already begun this. Must be read.

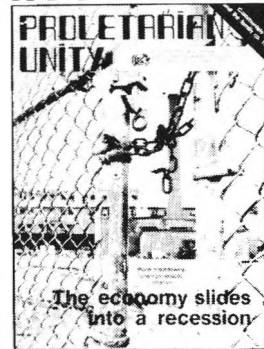
Regular subscriptions: \$7.00 (3 issues) — *Offensives*, C.P. 127, Station Rosement, Montreal, H1X 3B6. \$2.50 an issue. In French only.

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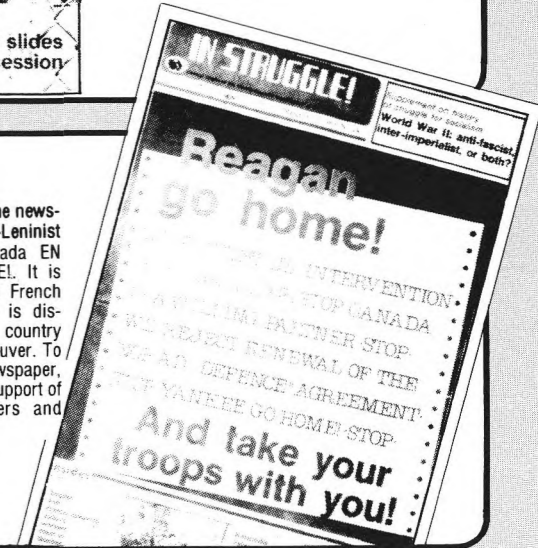
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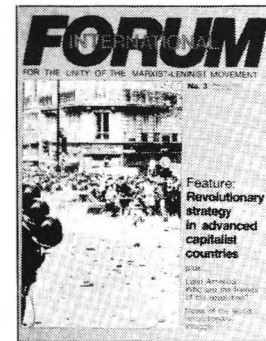


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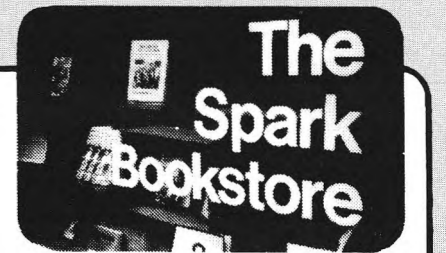
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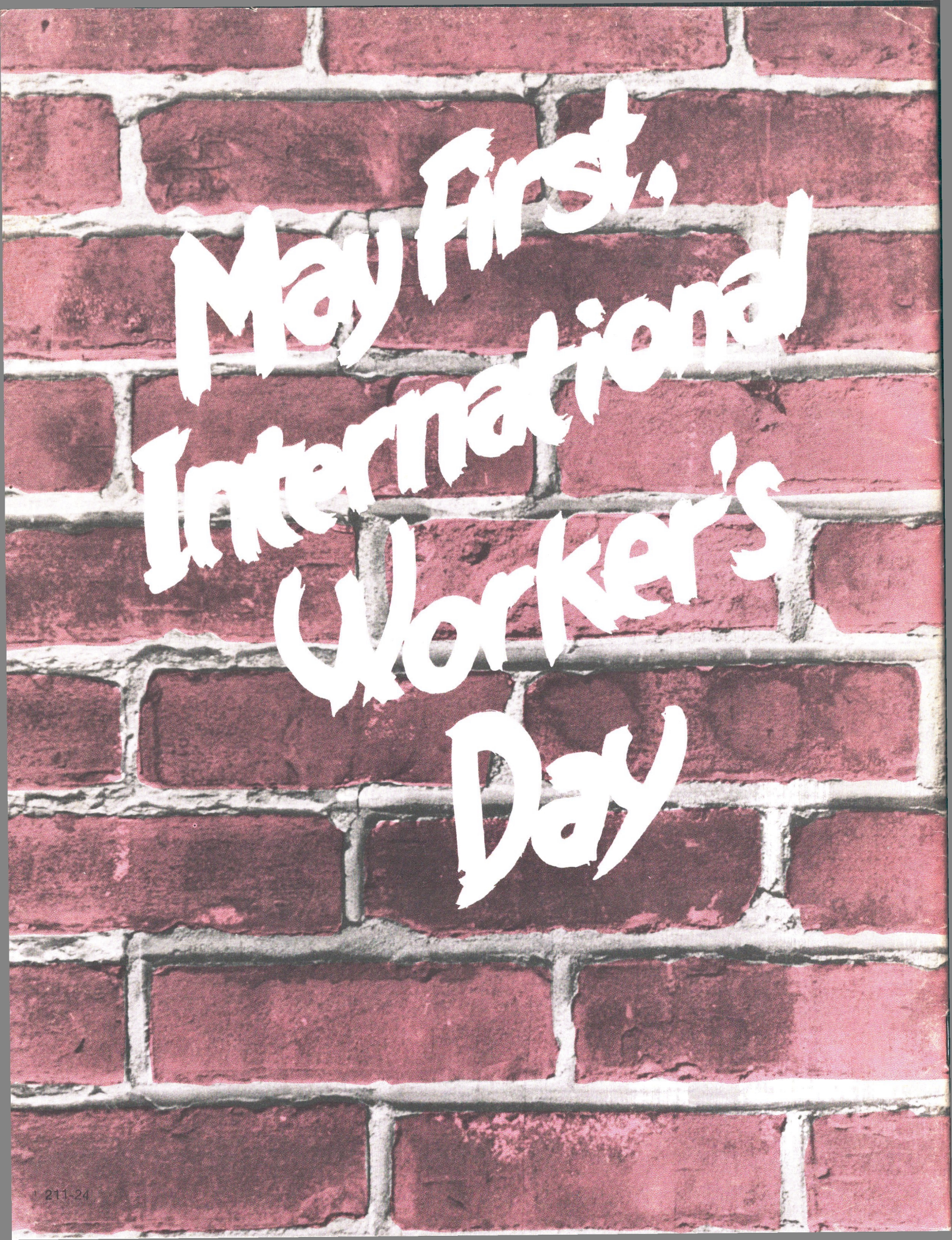
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