

WORKERS' PRESS

THE POLITICAL ORGAN OF THE MARXIST-LENINIST COLLECTIVE

CIVIL WAR IN LEBANON

The Civil War in Lebanon has been raging since April, 1975. This small Middle Eastern nation of a little more than 3 million people has suffered tremendously from the war -- over 30,000 deaths, more than 100,000 wounded and injured, and vast destruction of homes, commercial buildings, farms and factories. Despite numerous ceasefires and outside efforts to stop the fighting, the war goes on.

Several points have to be made concerning the nature of this war:

- (1) the fighting is class warfare between the Lebanese bourgeoisie represented by the fascist Christian Phalangists (agents of USNA imperialism) and the Lebanese anti-imperialist united front which includes the Palestinian resistance;
- (2) the points of contention in the war are the ending of sectarianism, democratic and economic rights for the Lebanese masses, the status of the Palestinian armed resistance in Lebanon, and the role that Lebanon is to play in the anti-imperialist, anti-Zionist struggles of the Middle East;
- (3) the two superpowers, the USNA and the USSR, need and are pushing for continued influence over Middle Eastern affairs; the Syrian intervention must be seen as a tool of USNA imperialism and Soviet social-imperialism to insure such influence;
- (4) one of the major aims of the Lebanese bourgeoisie and now the Syrians is to weaken the Palestinian liberation movement in Lebanon, both politically and militarily.

RECENT DEVELOPMENTS:

By the early part of 1976, the anti-imperialist forces had been able to turn a primarily defensive struggle into an offensive one, taking control of nearly 80% of Lebanon. As this trend developed, the Syrian-controlled Palestinian Liberation Army (PLA) stepped in to force a 'peace' upon Lebanon. The Syrians supposedly were coming to the 'rescue'. But to whose rescue? The anti-imperialist forces saw immediately the new danger and worked hard to educate the Lebanese masses on the dangers of imperialism masked by a Syrian face. It soon became evident to all who Syria was rescuing. Objectively, the intervention came to the rescue of the Phalangists and their bourgeois and imperialist masters. It stopped the offensive of the anti-imperialist forces and gave time to the fascists. Concrete actions by the Syrians and Syrian-backed forces such as attacks on progressive newspapers, the attempt to blockade arms to the anti-imperialist forces while allowing the Phalangists to re-arm at will, and in recent months outright attacks on progressive Lebanese and Palestinian forces, all show the true colors of the Syrian intervention. As well, the Syrian mediation 'efforts' have been aimed at minimizing political reforms and limiting the Palestinian armed presence in Lebanon. Their plan is enthusiastically supported by the Lebanese bourgeoisie, while the anti-imperialist forces see it as a total sell-out of their program.

The nature of the Syrian intervention must be studied by analyzing the roles of the superpowers. Both the USNA and USSR have supported the Syrian intervention, materially and politically. They

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recognize the dangers that a victorious Lebanese revolutionary force would present. Such a victory would give the Palestinians a stable 'base area' in their anti-Zionist struggle. The superpowers fear that their Palestinian 'mini-state' plan would be sabotaged once the Palestinian movement had this stable base area and reliable ally. Along with this, a more radical, independent Lebanese regime would surely disrupt the 'no war, no peace' strategy favored by both superpowers in their Middle East meddling.

Working people must denounce the intervention of Syria into Lebanon and condemn and expose all superpower interference. The civil war in Lebanon involves the just revolutionary struggle of the Lebanese masses for democracy and freedom. It also is a reflection of the anti-Zionist, anti-imperialist struggle of the Palestinian people to regain their homeland. These two struggles are united and must be supported by all working people in the USNA and worldwide.

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OVER POPULATION — BOURGEOIS PROPAGANDA

"We must have population control at home...by compulsion if voluntary methods fail. We must use our political power to push other countries into programs which combine agricultural development and population control."

— Dr. Paul Ehrlich, Population Bomb

Try to explain this to an Indian mother whose child died of starvation the day a dairy company in Los Angeles dumped 20,000 gallons of milk down a sewer!

Millions of people will starve to death this year in Africa, India, and elsewhere. Malnutrition will plague tens of millions more. The earth's population of over four billion people threatens to double in 35 years. But is the earth overpopulated?

Thomas Malthus first popularized this claim of 'overpopulation' in 1798. He wrote that Man's propensity to reproduce would soon outstrip Earth's capacity to provide, and that the poverty of the masses was inevitable because of their sheer numbers. Today, neo-Malthusians, like Ehrlich, echo these thoughts, and capitalism propagates them in the most oppressive manner throughout the world.

In Brazil and Bolivia, for example, thousands of women have been sterilized through Peace Corps, AID and other programs. In India, over two million persons were sterilized between April, 1975, and March, 1976. In Puerto Rico, over 40% of all women of childbearing age have been sterilized! And still hunger persists. Is the earth really overpopulated?

The bourgeoisie has decided there are 'too many Puerto Ricans!' But Puerto Rico was once self-sufficient in food. Now that USNA corporations have taken over, 90% of the food has to be imported, and unemployment is 50%. USNA imperialism can no longer cope with the Puerto Rican people.

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The People's Republic of China was once a semi-feudal, semi-colonial country. While a handful of parasites lived off the masses, the masses were one of the most oppressed in the world. Starvation and disease were rampant. The people revolted; they waged revolution for over 20 years. In October, 1949, they founded a socialist state, which exists today, where the exploitation of man by man was ended. Today there is no hunger in China. Because it is a socialist country, unemployment and inflation have been eliminated. "Food prices in China", says the SF Chronicle, "have remained stable for some 20 years." (9/4/73) This is a country with a population of over 800 million -- the largest in the world. Can we speak of overpopulation as the cause of hunger when the most populous country on earth has eliminated hunger?

The more the bourgeois theory of 'overpopulation' is examined, the more holes are discovered. The United Nations says of the food problem: "Food production has been growing 1.75 times as fast as population since the mid-50's... the food problem in the near future is more likely to be surpluses than starvation."

Millions are starving, yet there is a surplus of food. This is capitalism. Why dump milk in a sewer? Because it is profitable to do so. Why pay corporate farmers millions of dollars a year not to grow food? Because it's profitable. Capitalism is dependent on profit. It can't survive without it. It's aim is to maximize profits. Everything else -- work, health, life, etc. -- is subordinate to this end.

Starvation, poverty and unemployment are inherent to capitalism. When the bourgeoisie argues that there is an 'overpopulation problem', it only confirms what is known: the capitalist system cannot provide for peoples' most basic needs. The solution is not compulsory population control. The solution is for the masses of people to overthrow the capitalist state and establish a socialist one. Until capitalism is abolished there will be a surplus population, but it won't consist of the masses of working people. Frederick Engels wrote, "the workers...with their busy hands, are the necessary, and the rich capitalists, who do nothing, the surplus, population."

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FREE CHILDCARE -- ONLY UNDER SOCIALISM

A BRIEF HISTORY

The need for public childcare services developed with the industrialization of Europe during the early 1800s. The new relations of production were marked by the introduction of machinery and the setting up of factories. This industrial revolution led to a fundamental transformation of society. The process initiated by the expropriation of the peasants' land and the elimination of artisans continued with the migration of thousands of working men, women and children to the cities to sell their labor-power to the capitalists at a low price. They began forming the army of wage-laborers as it exists today.

The steady development of capitalism in the USNA in the early 1900s required more women workers. Thus, women no longer participated primarily in domestic production but in large-scale commodity production. To enable women to leave the home, childcare centers were set up -- first, at churches and private homes

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run by petty bourgeois women from charity and community organizations, and later at factories and work places when women filled industrial jobs vacated by men gone to war.

During World War II years, the capitalist class funded daycare for 1.6 million children. Six months after the war was over, however, these childcare programs were totally dismantled, and hundreds of women were forced out of the labor force. Similarly, during the Vietnam War years, the resolute struggle of Black people and other oppressed national minorities in the USNA won governmental concessions such as Head Start, Get Set, Upward Bound, Model Cities, and general daycare funding in public schools and in national minority communities. Today, because of the sharpening of the general crisis of capitalism (chronic mass unemployment, inflation, overproduction, loss of superprofits from nations oppressed by USNA imperialism), the USNA ruling class is no longer able to make these concessions.

CUTBACKS

In this light, the root cause of the current attacks on day care -- Title XX, President Ford's veto of a \$125 million childcare bill, the failure to implement childcare Proposition M (SF, 1973), the SF Board of Supervisors' campaign against childcare Proposition I -- should not be seen as the misguided policy of one particular administration, but as a result of the capitalist system itself, which moves women in and out of the workforce according to the dictates of corporate profits.

Today, 33 million children need childcare in the USNA -- more than 35,000 in SF alone -- yet there are only 4.3 million spaces available. At the same time, the number of commercially operated daycare centers is growing: there are more than 13,000 nationwide. Considering that the average annual salary of a woman in this country is \$7,124, of which more than 28% must go to pay for childcare, little is left for the basic necessities of life. The effects of this worsening situation are longrange: women are forced onto welfare rolls and in the position of having unwanted sterilizations and abortions. Furthermore, working class children are denied the quality education to which they are entitled.

SOCIALIST ALTERNATIVE

It is clear that a capitalist government cannot offer daycare and other social services that benefit the masses of people on a permanent basis because capitalism is designed to serve the interests of the rich. It's aim is to maximize profits for the capitalists, at the expense of the working class. In socialist countries such as the People's Republic of China and Albania, daycare is free, and is provided in both urban and rural areas for all children between two months and seven years. Twenty-four hour residential care is also available for children whose parents travel away from home in connection with their work. Centers are subsidized by public funds from the city or workplace. This is possible because China and Albania are socialist countries run by the people; the state and the means of production are controlled by the masses of laboring people under the leadership of their Communist Party, and the wealth is distributed among the masses who produce it. For them, quality childcare is a priority since children are not only an integrated part of their present society, but their society of tomorrow.

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