

International VIEWPOINT

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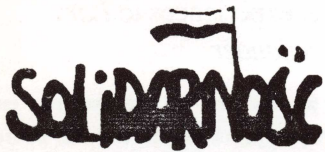
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International VIEWPOINT

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GULF WAR

End the slaughter

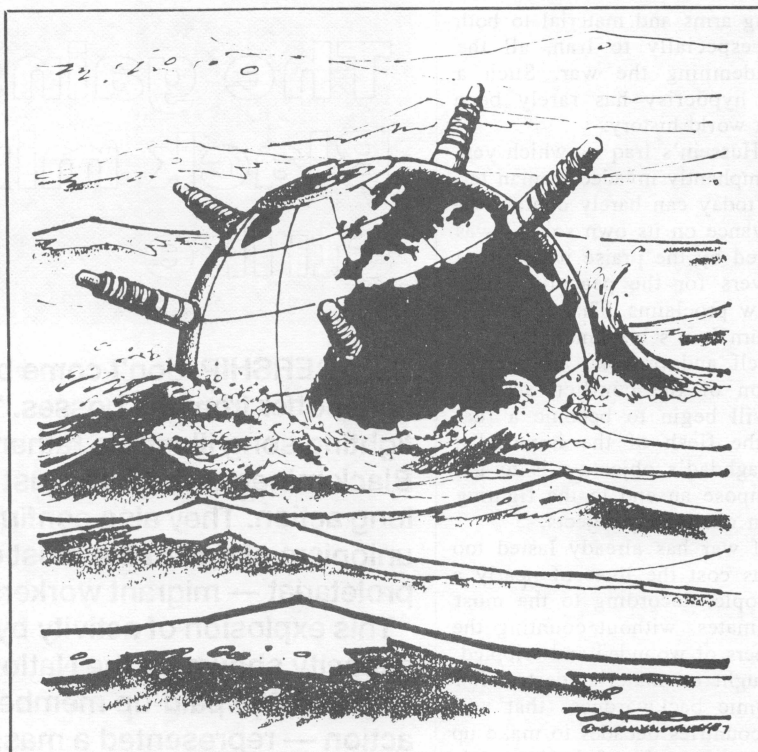
BY RESUMING its attacks on August 29 against Iranian oil installations and the tankers serving them, the Iraqi airforce provoked a new flare-up of hostilities on a vast scale in the Arab-Persian Gulf. Within three days, a dozen merchant ships of various nationalities had been hit by Baghdad's planes or Tehran's patrol boats.

SALAH JABER

THE NEW EXPLOSION of the Gulf war, and in particular of attacks on maritime traffic, followed a tacitly observed truce between the two belligerents that had been in effect since July 20. On that day, the UN Security Council unanimously adopted Resolution No. 598 demanding an immediate cease-fire between Iran and Iraq and the withdrawal of their forces to internationally recognized borders.

The adoption of this resolution came shortly before convoys of US warships in the waters began escorting Kuwaiti tankers flying the American flag. The discovery of mines in August provided a pretext for reinforcing the imperialist military presence in this part of the world, with British ships being sent to the Arab-Persian Gulf and French ships to the Gulf of Oman. This vast deployment of floating engines of war was to create a climate of relative security for merchant shipping in the seaway separating the Arabian peninsula from Iran.

Paradoxically, it was Iran that was the main beneficiary from this situation. Iranian oil exports rose spectacularly in August. This stepped-up flow of oil out of the country — plus the price rises resulting from the higher demand created by the military tension and the July 30-August 1 riots in Mecca — boosted Tehran's oil income by \$20 million a day over the 1986 level.



This windfall for Iran naturally bolstered the arguments of the "bitter enders" in the ayatollahs' regime, who favor "war until victory" against the Ba'athist regime of Saddam Hussein. In these conditions, it could not be expected that Tehran would accept the cease-fire called for by the UN. To keep the international organization off its back, however, Iran decided to take an evasive course. It was the continuation of this attitude that prompted Iraq to break the truce that had lasted through August.

Nerve center of Iran's war effort

Finding it more and more difficult to resist the Iranian offenses, and having lost all hope of turning the military situation to its advantage, Baghdad had no other choice but to try to force Tehran to end the fighting by cutting off its financial resources.

Since Iraq's meager outlet to the sea had long been blocked, Baghdad fell back on building pipelines. Today they enable it to export 2.5 million barrels a day, its total production, through Turkey and Saudi Arabia. Iran, on the other hand, remains dependent on maritime traffic in the Gulf, in particular from its Kharg Island terminal. So Baghdad began attacks in 1982 on this nerve center of Iran's war effort.

Tehran, however, has found an effective way to parry this move by threatening to block all navigation in the Gulf, which would penalize Iraq's Arab allies and severely affect oil supplies to the European and Japanese econo-

mies. Nonetheless, Baghdad decided in 1985-86 to brave the Iranian threats and the pressures of its allies. The Iraqi airforce stepped up its attacks, and extended them to all Iran's oil terminals.

In reprisal, Tehran started attacking Kuwaiti exports in 1986, picking on an ally of Baghdad that had no military forces of its own. Kuwait then demanded that the Western powers, above all the United States, protect its oil fleet. When they refused to "get involved" in a conflict with Iran, the emirate turned to the USSR, which put three Soviet tankers at its disposal.

In this way, Moscow sought to embarrass Washington at a time when the Reagan administration's stock was lowest in the eyes of its traditional Arab allies as a result of the Irangate revelations. What followed is well-known.

If there is a common denominator in the policies of the great powers toward the Gulf, it is their duplicity and their ignominious exploitation of the enormous market for arms of all kinds that it has offered.

United States playing both sides along

The United States has been playing both sides. Through the intermediary of Israel, notably, it has been arming the Iranians. The USSR and France have been Baghdad's main arms suppliers and at the same time have been trying to improve their relations with Tehran by "indirect" sales of military material. And even China has become involved in the game.

Britain, West Germany and Italy have

3

been selling arms and material to both sides but especially to Iran, all the while condemning the war. Such a chorus of hypocrisy has rarely been equalled in world history.

Saddam Hussein's Iraq — which yesterday triumphantly invaded Iranian territory and today can barely contain the Iranian advance on its own soil — was not mollified by the praise it got from world powers for the peaceful intentions it now proclaims. That is why it chose to turn Iran's blackmail back on Tehran itself and provoke an internationalization of the conflict, so that the war will begin to become a real thorn in the flesh of the imperialist powers. Baghdad's objective is to get them to impose an end to the fighting that Tehran obstinately rejects.

The Gulf war has already lasted too long. It has cost the lives of nearly a million people, according to the most recent estimates, without counting the huge numbers of wounded and crippled. It has brought on material destruction and economic backwardness that will take both countries decades to make up for, to the great profit of the imperialist exporters.

Chemical and biological weapons threatened

The human cost of this insane war threatens to mount still higher, with the threat by both belligerents to resume their bombing of civilian zones and to resort to chemical and bacteriological weapons.

But imperialist intervention will certainly not end this carnage — quite the contrary. Instead of adding their own arms to those of the belligerents, the world powers would be better advised to stop feeding this conflict by suspending the delivery of all sorts of arms to the two enemy states. This is all the more true because the present intervention of the imperialist powers in the Gulf carries with it the threat of increasing tension between them and the USSR. That is why Moscow has proposed the withdrawal from the Gulf of all warships from countries outside the region.

It is not simply out of an international duty toward the Iraqi and Iranian working people, victims of the war of extermination waged by their governments, but also in the interests of all peoples that the international workers' movement must today resolutely raise the following demands:

- For an immediate withdrawal of all foreign fleets from the Gulf and adjacent areas!

- For a total embargo on all shipments of arms to Iran and Iraq!

4 ● For an immediate and unconditional cease-fire! ☆

The gains of the Black miners' strike

“LEADERSHIP, don't come back to us until you have a better offer from the bosses.” These words from a strikers' fighting song illustrate rather well the determination of the Black miners, who have just waged a national three-week-long action. They also confirm the the commitment to trade-unionism of one of the most exploited layers of the proletariat — migrant workers.

This explosion of activity by the mineworkers — and the capacity shown by the National Union of Miners (NUM), with 260,000 paid-up members, to organize this strike action — represented a massive challenge to a wages policy that constitutes a fundamental feature of the system of capitalist exploitation in the mining industry.

TONY ROUX

LOW WAGES and dreadful working conditions are the characteristics of a system of exploiting Black labor that is more than a century old in the South African gold and coal mines. At the end of the nineteenth century, mining became a center for the spread of capitalist production relations. Immense profits were piled up on the basis of big foreign investments and extensive use of Black labor power.

Very quickly, a small number of financial concerns carved up the mining property among themselves. In 1887, they set up their organization for the gold mining industry — the Chamber of Mines — which enabled them to develop a coordinated policy for recruitment and labor management.

Around this primary industry, whose production was essentially destined for export, a mode of capitalist exploitation took shape that was distinctive in its brutality. It was based on super-exploitation of African labor. Its two chief underpinnings remain the same today — an annually contracted migrant labor force (42% of Black miners come from neighboring countries), and regimentation of workers through the repressive apartheid laws.

The two poles of this chain of exploitation have been the concentration of “unproductive” elements in the native reserves (today in the Bantustans);

and police control of the miners in closed “compounds” (nowadays single-sex hostels, in which 400,000 Black miners live).

The system of migrant labor makes it easier to keep the wages of Black workers to a minimum. The profitability of investments in mining has always involved keeping the material conditions of the Black miners at a miserable level.

Wage levels calculated for least profitable mines

There are many reasons for this. Given the conditions that determine gold prices, increases in production costs cannot immediately be passed on in the market price. Moreover, this primary export industry has no direct interest in increasing the buying power of Blacks. Lastly, the profitability of companies and consequently the setting of wage levels is calculated on the basis of the least profitable mines.

So the wages of Black workers throughout the industry are kept at a minimum that assures the viability of the least profitable mines. On top of this, for political reasons, the companies find it necessary to offer white workers wages three times higher.¹

The system of migrant labor fills a specific function. Importing miners

from rural areas (in the Bantustans or neighboring countries) where their families reside, and the isolation of these miners in single-sex dormitories during the life of their contracts, enable the employers to acquire this labor power at a minimum cost.

Over the years, the agrarian crisis of the African reserves reduced the contribution of the domestic economy to the reproduction of labor power employed in the mines. But the apartheid system established in 1948, and the creation of the Bantustans in the 1960s, were designed to prop up this system of super-exploitation by tightening police control on the movements of Black labor. This made it possible for the mines to get a steady and sufficient influx of labor at low cost.

The Bantustans became, in fact, reservoirs of labor power. The same is true of the neighboring Black states. For example, 60% of the workforce of Lesotho is employed in South Africa, most of it in the mines. The wages of these workers make up 52% of Lesotho's gross domestic product.

Ethnic division and repression

Confined to their single-sex dormitories for the duration of their contracts, Black miners are subject to the control of the company security forces and to maneuvers to divide them up along ethnic lines. (There is still a system of ethnic representation for workers, which is being challenged by the NUM.) Most of the mines have their own security forces, made up of former policemen or soldiers. This situation, and the brutal repression of past strikes, have long weighed heavily against organizing Black miners in a permanent way.

This special situation is characterized by terrible exploitation and repression, with the miners' families being rooted in sometimes backward rural areas, and they themselves being separated from the urban proletarian centers. However, in the general context of the politicalization of the oppressed masses in South Africa, this has not prevented the growth of class consciousness and unionization in this section of the industrial working class.

The effectiveness of this vast system of exploitation for the mine bosses is reflected quite glaringly in some statistics that speak volumes about the reality of South Africa. The great majority of Black gold miners (85%) are paid less than a living wage.

In February 1987, a South African

university research center estimated that the minimum monthly living wage for a family was 419 rands [1 rand = \$0.50]. At that time, underground miners in Category 4 earned 365 rands a month. More than half of the Black miners are in lower categories, and therefore get lower wages. According to the NUM, the minimum wage has been 238 rands in the gold mines and 225 in the coal mines. The Confederation of South African Trade Unions — Cosatu, the main trade-union federation — is demanding a living wage of 850 rands a month.

In most of the major mineral producing countries, workers in this industry get higher wages than those in manufacturing. Workers in the South African mines are worse paid (by at least 25%)

than workers in other industries.

Moreover, the South African mines are the world's most unhealthy and dangerous. They can be as much as 4,000 meters deep. Work goes on around the clock. And an average of 600 Black miners die in them every year.

What is more, the miners have watched their buying power being eaten away by inflation that rose to an annual average of 13.2% in 1973, and will probably reach 18% this year. From 1889 to 1897, Black miners' wages dropped from 78 rands a year to 58 rands, and then stagnated until 1970. This puts the 300% raise between 1970 and 1975 and the 30% one in the 1980s in perspective.

Taking into account the rise in inflation, the average wage of Black miners

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1. In an irony of history, it was in the midst of the Black miners' strike that the white parliament voted by 116 to 16 to abolish a 1911 law denying Blacks access to 13 professional categories in the mines.

was lower in 1986 than in 1983. The 30% raise demanded by the NUM would have only brought the average wage back to the level of 1984. And the incomes of the coal miners are still lower, making production costs in the South African coal mines the lowest in the world.

Enormous profits made by mining trusts

The contrast, therefore, is striking between these figures and the enormous profits made by the mining trusts. Marcel Golding, assistant general secretary of the NUM, noted that between 1975 and 1986, total profits in the gold mines went up by 44%. Dividends increased by 21%, capital expenditures by 106% and taxes by 38%.² For the year 1985 alone, profits increased by 37%, and dividends by 38%. In 1986, owners of gold-mine stock collected 2,545 million rands in dividends, a sum greater than the total income of the 485,000 Black miners in the industry, who earned 2,484 million rands.

Entrenched behind apartheid, huge mining monopolies built up their power and their wealth on the exploitation of the Black workers. They then went on to extend their activities to other industries, becoming the most dynamic sector of local finance capital. The Anglo-American Corporation (AAC) is a prime example. This trust employs 80% of the miners who went out on strike.

The AAC alone holds more than half of the stock quoted on the Johannesburg stock exchange. It owns 15.9% of the total capital of the 137 main companies active in South Africa (including foreign and state concerns). It controls 600 companies around the world, and employs a total of 800,000 people. But it gets 85% of its income in South Africa and Namibia, where it owns 12 gold mines, 4 uranium mines and 15 coal mines, and has interests in De Beers (diamonds) and in platinum.

"The net consolidated profit of the group increased again by 26% in the financial year ending on March 31, 1987, amounting to 1,500 million rands."³

A contest between the biggest union in the Cosatu and the mining trusts, the Black miners' strike took on an importance surpassing its initial economic demands. It became a full-fledged test of the social relationship of forces. The outcome for the moment is a stalemate.

The strike started on August 9, when the NUM called on its supporters to stop work in 28 gold mines and 18 coal mines. The membership was previously consulted, as the law requires, and voted 95% for this type of action

to back up their demands in the wage negotiations with the Chamber of Mines.

The NUM demanded a 30% increase in the minimum wage, while the bosses offered raises of only 13% to 23%, according to the various categories. In addition, the union called for a bonus for dangerous work, increases in death benefits to families of workers losing their lives in accidents from two years' to five years' wages, 30 days annual paid leave and a paid holiday on June 16 to mark the anniversary of the Soweto uprising. The union based its demands on the size of profits in recent years and the steady decline of miners' buying power in that period.

The involvement of 300,000 out of 530,000 Black miners in a three-week struggle is a clear indication of the extent of their combativity. Thousands of workers preferred to lose their jobs rather than give into the blackmail the bosses applied by closing pits. Mine production was halted or severely hampered in 44 out of the 46 mines where the NUM is recognized. The companies have kept their losses secret. But an independent body has estimated them at 17 million rands a day.

Longest strike in the history of Black miners' struggle

The strike was the longest in the history of the Black miners' struggles. By way of comparison, the big strike of 1946 lasted only five days. In recent years, conflicts in the mines have hardly lasted more than a few days. In most cases, repression and firings discouraged any inclination to continue the struggle.

This time there were sit-ins in the mines. In some places, workers' representatives took over miners' residences. "Take control of the hostels," was a slogan raised by the NUM to reinforce workers' self-organization and to challenge the bosses' control over the workforce.

In their strategy of taking a tough stand against the workers' demands, the bosses took the opportunity to close some of the less profitable pits. AAC's chiefs have been anxious to maintain their "liberal image." They presented the conflict itself as "an indication of the process made by South African society toward normality." Nonetheless, they took the lead in using this pit-closure tactic.⁴

Mass firings are, moreover, a time-honored tradition in the "social relations" practiced by all the members of the Chamber of Mines. This conflict once again demonstrates the limitations of the "liberal" bosses' commitment to "democracy," once workers' protests begin to affect their profits.

On August 31, facing the intransigence of the bosses, the firing of 40,000 workers (14%) of the strikers, the arrests of several dozen others and clashes with the repressive forces (police and company security forces) that had left about a dozen workers dead and dozens of others wounded, the NUM accepted the management proposals that it had rejected a few days before and issued a back-to-work call.

The results of the strike for the workers, while not negligible, are meager. The mine bosses gave no ground on the central question of the higher wages demanded by the NUM. They agreed only to increase death benefits from two to three years' wages and to increase the pay for annual vacations from 55% of a month's wages to 65%.

The NUM leaders obviously accepted a compromise. But they do not analyze this result as a defeat. "The Chamber of Mines has not won, and we have not lost," NUM general secretary Cyril Ramaphosa declared, "This is not a retreat, only a tactical sidestep, a rehearsal for next year, an experience for the future."⁵ The relationship of forces remains so unstable and undecided that the mine bosses themselves are being careful not to crow over the outcome.

No doubt, a number of factors helped to determine the NUM's decision to end the conflict. This union was founded in 1982 and experienced mushroom growth. It had already engaged in many partial struggles and national days of action, as on the occasion of the accident at the Kinross mine last year. But this was still its first nationwide struggle for a major workers' demand against all the mine bosses.

A series of concrete, unifying demands

The union's first success was undoubtedly in managing to bring all of its forces into battle in a united way around a series of concrete, unifying demands — despite the differences in circumstances. But this success itself posed new problems for victory in the confrontation. In the last days of the strike, an uncertainty about the course of the conflict came out into the open, when Marcel Golding confessed to the press, "We are entering uncharted territory."

The mining industry is vital to the country's economy. Gold represents 45% of export receipts and coal 9%. So any prolongation of the conflict involved the possibility of a confrontation with the state apparatus.

2. *Weekly Mail*, August 14, 1987.

3. *Le Monde*, August 12, 1987.

4. *Marchés tropicaux et méditerranéens*, Paris, August 28, 1987.

5. *Le Monde*, September 1, 1987.

NUM leader Cyril Ramaphosa posed the question whether there was not a coordinated strategy by the Chamber of Mines "to smash the union at any cost, with the help of the state."

If the union had taken up that challenge, it would have meant a vast political and social confrontation with the state and the country's most powerful bosses. The perspective of a general strike in solidarity with the miners seemed hardly achievable in a situation in which, it should not be forgotten, the state of emergency is still in force.

Moreover, the NUM rapidly threw all its forces into the battle. All sections of the miners who could have been mobilized apparently were. It looked unlikely that other mines would join in. The NUM reportedly failed to extend the strike into the Gold Fields mines, a bastion of the most retrograde mine owners, where the union suffered severe repression at the time of a strike in 1985.

Growing opposition to totality of exploitation

Once the peak of mobilization was reached, it seems that the risks of erosion and massive firings impelled the union leaders to seek a way out of the conflict that would not compromise the gain for the miners that this mobilization represented.

This national confrontation between the Black miners, one of the most exploited sections of the industrial proletariat, and the mining companies, the most monopolistic section of South African capital, revealed the major tendencies at work in South African society. It reflected the increasing role being played by the trade-union movement as a catalyst of working-class and popular aspirations for change.

It is the growing opposition of the Black miners to the entire system of exploitation in force (migrant labor, low wages, bad living and working conditions, and racial discrimination) that explains why they rose up en masse in this fight for decent wages. Moreover, this is not the last that will be heard of this issue, because it is the campaigning focus of Cosatu for the current year.⁶

The intransigence of the bosses will reinforce the convictions of the growing numbers in the independent trade-union movement who are convinced that the fight against apartheid, with its full democratic implications, is inseparable from a struggle against the system that assures the omnipotence of the capitalist monopolies. ☆

6. In an article in *Cosatu News*, March 1987, it was stated that "the living wage campaign is a fundamental challenge to capitalism in South Africa."

Mass upsurge arouses fears in Washington

THE MASS upsurge unleashed on June 22 was more sustained and deep-rooted than anything in the modern history of Haiti. It was a continuation of the movement that forced Jean-Claude Duvalier to leave the country on February 7, 1986.¹

But, at the time of the dictator's departure, the army tried to take a position of neutrality. Today it is in the front line against the masses. And, unlike Duvalier, the National Government Council (CNG) presided over by General Henry Namphy is not isolated internationally.

ANDY BROCK

A STRIKE WAS called by the Autonomous Confederation of Haitian Workers (CATH) on June 19 against the anti-labor policy of the CNG. It was to take place on Monday, June 22. This action was in response to increasing military interventions against strikers, who in some places were demanding the resignation of Macoute officials [Duvalier's gangsters] and in others wage rises.

The section of the democratic movement grouped in the National Congress of Democratic Movements (Conacom) described the strike call "an irresponsible provocation apt to favor the anti-democratic designs of sections of the Macoutes." It was seconded by the United Party of Haitian Communists (PUCH), which judged the demands raised by the CATH to be maximalist, and declared that "the CATH wants to divert the minds of the people away from the important political problems that are posed today."

With the CATH isolated, on the morning of June 22 the army invaded and pillaged its headquarters, arresting several unionists — including three leaders of the organization — who were beaten up and tortured. The CATH was banned.

On the same day, the CNG decided to violate the constitution that had been approved by a referendum on March 29. It issued a decree depriving the Provisional Election Council — a nine-member independent body appointed a few weeks before — of the responsibility for organizing the local elections scheduled for August and the

general election scheduled for November. This was clearly unconstitutional. The minister of information declared, "Regardless of whether it is constitutional or not, the decree will be applied."

Already on the morning of Monday, June 22, it was clear that the strike was a great success, to the surprise of many people. Port-au-Prince and other cities were paralyzed by the transport strike, which was a response to the CNG's measures. This action was backed up by the growing power of the CATH, which claims about 150,000 members — blue- and white-collar workers and farmers — and by the confederation's militant image and methods. It was also based on a determination to fight "Duvalierism without Duvalier."

Tonton Macoute thugs are still armed

Sixteen months after February 7, 1986, the date of Duvalier's departure, the Tonton Macoute are still armed and remain as a reserve force of the state — that is, when they are not actually included in the repressive forces. Every day, the army and the Macoutes apply pressure. None of the demands of the masses, most importantly the demand for agrarian reform, has been met.

Despite the change of rulers on February 7, the minimum wage is still \$3 a day in Port-au-Prince and \$2.64 in the

1. See also *IV* 93, February 24, 1986; 94, March 10, 1986; and 102, June 30, 1986.

provinces. The labor code established by François Duvalier ("Papa Doc," the father of dictator Jean-Claude Duvalier) remains in force, severely limiting trade-union freedoms. The new constitution, which stipulates that "unions are essentially non-political," is also a basis for restricting the activities of the labor organizations.

Moreover, the minister of finance, Leslie Delatour, is hell-bent on wrecking agriculture and industry in the name of "joining in the international division of labor." Many local products are suffering from the tariff cuts made in February. Smugglers are doing their bit to push many other local products off the market, including crops essential for the survival of the farmers, such as sugar, rice and maize.

Drug trafficking and smuggling

All the sugar mills, both public and private, have been shut down. The main administrative services and public enterprises are "trimming down." The latter, when they have not been shut down, have been designated for reconversion and privatization, according to a timetable worked out in Washington and in the offices of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund.

In the society, nothing has changed. The ruling class continues to contemplate the unbearable poverty of the poor neighborhoods and the desertification of the countryside from its villas, night clubs, its "Parisian restaurants" and its diplomatic cocktail parties. One thing perhaps has changed. A broader section of the bourgeoisie is sharing the loot from the flourishing drug traffic and smuggling with the Macoute and military chiefs.

However, why did the CNG attack the democratic movement and the ambitions of the politicians on the same day as it did the mass movement represented by the CATH? It is hard to imagine that this was a tactical political error. The most likely hypothesis is that it was a deliberate provocation aimed at precipitating confrontation and maintaining a dictatorship after the November elections, or to do away with these elections altogether. That would explain the flutter in the Western embassies. After years of efforts to get rid of Duvalier and to divert the popular revolt into electoral channels, the old process threatened to start again.

In fact, after June 22, Haiti has experienced a chain reaction of strikes, demonstrations and other forms of struggle throughout the country demanding the resignation of the CNG: "*Rache manyok ou, bay tè a blanch!*" ("Pack your bags and get out!"), was the cry Bishop Romélus raised from

Jérémie on June 29. The demand for the CNG to get out has been the focus of major demonstrations in the past. Now it is becoming the central slogan.

The brutal repression carried out in the week of June 29 caused dozens of deaths and more than a hundred other casualties. However, under increased pressure within the country and from the foreign embassies, the CNG had to backtrack. The ban on the CATH was lifted; its leaders were released and the minister of information was sacrificed. But it was too late. The protests continued in other forms.

Strikes cannot be resumed indefinitely without directly endangering the survival of a population that is living from day to day. They regularly give way to other forms of struggle, before being touched off again by repression. These other forms include demonstrations, civil-disobedience actions, such as refusal to pay taxes, protests especially in the markets or in front of public services, forcing the closure of official offices and demanding the resignation of top functionaries.

On August 10 and 11, when people thought that the movement was marking time, we saw a powerful upsurge of civil disobedience showing the extent of popular rejection of the CNG. At this time, 90 per cent of students — all of them in some cities — boycotted their baccalauréat examinations. The boycott was accompanied by a sympathy strike, which in Port-au-Prince hit transport and stores the hardest. Then, the teachers' union decided to boycott correcting the exam papers.

During the strikes, barricades were erected at the entrance to certain neighborhoods to make it harder for the repressive forces to get in. At the same time, given the inability of the demonstrators to organize to defend themselves against the army, exasperated elements — sometimes manipulated by the CNG extremists — attacked symbols of wealth, especially luxury cars.

Such exasperation was all the greater because of the movement's incoherence. Still divided by the electoralist illusions and ambitions of the petty-bourgeois formations that had taken the lead, it did not develop an organization going from top to bottom. It failed to unite around a strategy and governmental alternative in conformity with its interests.

Taking advantage of the movement's lack of unity and strategic objective, the CNG mounted a counter-offensive. First, on July 17, General Namphy held a military ceremony of "pledging allegiance" to the constitution. To the great disappointment of the Western embassies, he gave a speech in the Macoute tradition.

Decked out in dark glasses and in consummate "gorilla" style, the gener-

al said, notably, that the Haitian people "deserve to be understood, organized, protected — sometimes even in spite of themselves." Along with this, he praised the "manly courage" of the military in "dealing with some manipulated groups."

Since the recipients of this accolade had opened fire at point-blank range against unarmed civilians, who had a kind of courage quite different from that of the general's "manly" Macoute soldiers, the speech was a clear warning.

Parallel to this, the army, which had remained in barracks for about ten days, began again to sow death in the streets of Port-au-Prince. Demonstrations of women, unemployed and students were deliberately attacked. On July 29, tension reached a peak. Under Duvalier this was the day of the "National Security Volunteers," that is, the Tonton Macoute.

The opposition organized an anti-Tonton Macoute demonstration. It was to fall into a fully-fledged ambush mounted by a military company. *The Militant*, published in New York, reported: "Several demonstrators wanted to walk along the sidewalk in front of the telephone company. They were brutally shoved back by a soldier. A few seconds later, this same soldier jumped between two cars and pointed his automatic rifle at young demonstrators. They dispersed.

"The soldier then turned his rifle around and fired a volley over the demonstrators' heads. Other soldiers then started shooting, this time into the crowd itself."²

Dozens of people were killed, and many were wounded. Serge Gilles, an opposition spokesperson, said that the soldiers aimed at his head and that he only escaped because some young people covered him with their bodies.

Radio stations machine-gunned

The following night, six radio stations were machine-gunned. The day after, the army general staff charged that there were phoney journalists about armed with stones and firearms. It also said "individuals trained in Cuba and pretending to be boat people in order to be repatriated are now at work, using arms landed clandestinely at certain points in the country or concealed in sacks of rice coming from abroad."

Moreover, disguised cars were spreading terror and carrying out kidnappings in the style of the Duvalierist death squads. Sometimes, to the great annoyance of the foreign diplomats, the CNG did not even bother to disguise the cars.

2. *The Militant*, August 7, 1987.

In the provincial cities, similar events were taking place, even though some major cities in the north (Gonaïves, Cap Haïtien) were little affected by the strikes. On July 28, a curfew was established in Jérémie.

It was in the countryside that the counter-offensive mounted by the CNG was most extensive. The government considers the rural areas, where three quarters of the Haitian people live, as its home base. Country people have been particularly hard hit by the effects of smuggling, and they have not been exempt from the general aggravation.

A large number of farmers are aware that there is a threat of returning to open dictatorship, and they reject the CNG. Relying on the Duvalierist networks, the government is trying to stamp out the first sprouts of an opposition movement that could prove very dangerous. The still fragile farmers' groupings are special targets.

Anti-communist campaign in full swing

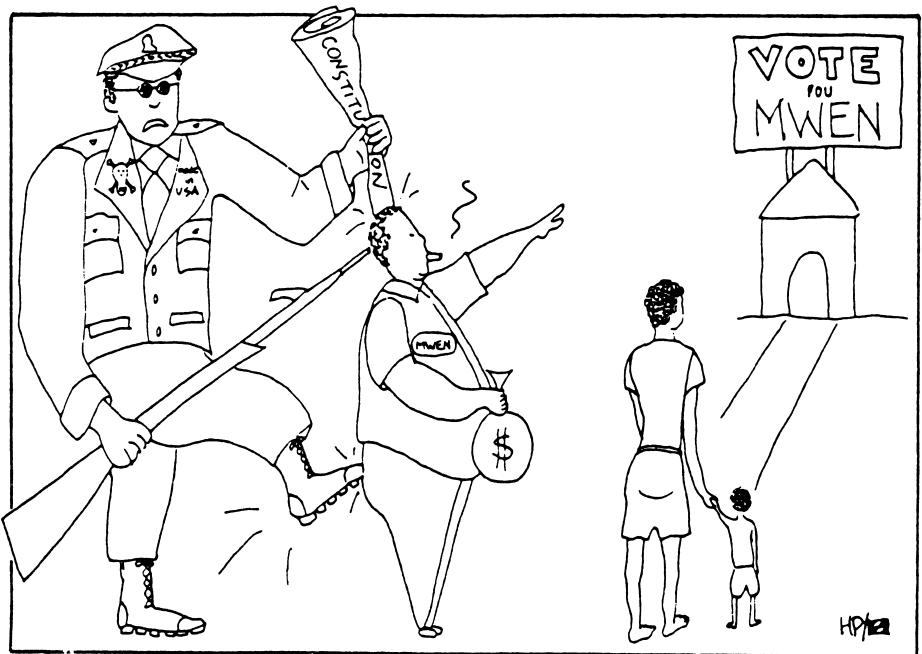
Every week, the paper *Haïti Progrès* cites cases of villages where ex-Tonton Macoute have been trying to intimidate the farmers. An anti-communist campaign has been in full swing. Helped along by statements from the churches, it is having a certain impact on the farmers. There has been an attempt to set some farmers against others. It was in this context that hundreds of farmers were murdered in Jean-Rabel. [See following article.]

Other bloody confrontations have occurred, as on Gonâve Island, or barely been averted, as in Gros Morne. In other localities, facilities set up by development associations have been destroyed in the name of fighting communism.

The activities of the Tonton Macoute have been reinforced by those of the army. This happened in Jean-Rabel. It also occurred in the Jérémie area, one of the most militant regions of the country.

According to *Haïti-Observateur*, "Although there was no government order for this, the department of Grande-Anse — and one might even say, the southern region of the country — is in practice living under a state of siege. Some military officers regarded as counter-insurgency specialists have set up their headquarters there. The top circles of the government have sent in their right-hand men." In several villages, farmers have been subjected to interrogation, threats and various types of coercion.

The army tried to kill two birds with one stone in this area. In fact, it claimed to be looking for Bernard Sansaricq, whom it accuses of setting up a



Why vote? Drawing from *Haïti Progrès* (DR)

guerrilla movement. Sansaricq had come to Jérémie to attend the preliminary hearings in the case of the 1964 "Jérémie Vespers," during which his entire family was massacred. The army tried to get its hands on him because he has accused General Regala, a member of the CNG, of being one of the organizers of the massacre.

According to Monsignor Romélus, the bishop of Jérémie, "Everyone knows what happened in 1964 in Jérémie, and 23 years later they want to start it all over again."

As the slogan calling on the CNG to resign caught on, the various components of the movement were obliged to offer governmental alternatives. The Group of 57 (essentially Serge Gilles' Patriotic Unity Bloc (BUP), which is supported by the French Socialist Party, and the organizations that came together in the Conacom at the start of the year in support of the draft constitution), was quite embarrassed by a strike it did not want and a movement that was going over its head.

Governmental proposals no real alternative

On July 18, the Group of 57 proposed at a press conference that the CNG be replaced by a CNG-II, made up of four civilians and "a military officer ranking just after generals Henri Namphy and Williams Regala." When you think that one of the tasks of this new CNG, and therefore of the officer in question, was supposed to be to "clean up and 'de-Macoutize' the state apparatus," you realize the people who concocted this "alternative" had a strong stomach.

Not surprisingly, the announcement of this proposal provoked unrest in the

hall. One of the participants demanded who in this council was supposed to "represent the people."

After negotiations with a rival coalition, another "alternative" of the same ilk was proposed on July 13. It was supposed to be made up of "a high-ranking military officer prepared to respect the 1957 constitution" (who apparently had not been found); Claudette Werleigh, general secretary of Caritas (a Vatican-sponsored organization), who was supposed to represent the rural people and women; Gérard Duclerville, a member of the Christian base communities; Pauris Jean-Baptiste, representing the Protestant churches; and Maître Félix Kavanagh, vice-president of the Supreme Court of Appeal, who was described by *Haïti-Observateur* as a "drinking companion of Namphy."³

The United Party of Haitian Communists has long had a governmental formula, which has been left on the shelf for months in expectation of the elections. It calls for a government of "the representatives of the nine departments," who it has sometimes been said should be elected by "people's committees." Since no such network of people's committees exists, the formula remains vague and abstract, and is of little use in mobilizing people.

In fact, the electoralist dreams of the petty-bourgeois sectors were disturbed when, despite the withdrawal of the CNG's electoral decree, the movement continued around the demand for the CNG to go immediately. At the time, Jean-Louis Bajoux, one of the leaders of the so-called Strike Coordinating Committee and of the Group of 57, told Associated Press: "We are practical people...We know that we have nothing to gain from anarchy." This com-

3. *Haïti-Observateur*, July 10-17, 1987.

mittee tried to ride and channel the movement that was forging ahead and which it claimed to represent. But it never took the measures needed to build a movement capable of bringing down the CNG and of resisting what was described as an attempted fascist coup. Its participants were counting instead on pressure from the foreign embassies.

According to the *Miami News*, Bajoux said that he wanted the United States to replace the CNG with civilians and to order the army back to barracks "and then in two days you would have peace in the country."⁴ But the foreign embassies turned a deaf ear.

Haitian army trained by US and France

In a press conference held after the CNG withdrew its electoral decree, Richard Holwill, US under-secretary of state for the Caribbean, described the opposition's demand as "a fairy-tale wish," saying that "any attempt to force the CNG to relinquish power will be met with the stopping of American aid."

The United States and France had put too much effort in training and equipping the Haitian army for over a year to let it be weakened in that way.

A week before this proposal was made by the Group of 57, the National People's Assembly, a grouping of radical activist forces including the CATH, put forward an alternative designed to be something other than a "new version of the CNG."

It proposed the formation of a government by Maitre Gérard Gourgue, chair of the Haitian Human Rights League; and Father Jean-Bertrand Aristide, a genuine mass leader, who has not hesitated in his sermons to call for "resistance" to "American imperialism," the "Big Blacks" (that is, the rich) and "the bourgeois army that is forcing the people to live with hunger." On August 24, Father Aristide was attacked by the anti-Communist groups mentioned earlier. They were armed with clubs and machetes.

It is true that there can be reservations about Gérard Gourgue. But nonetheless this proposal for an alternative government could have quite a different effect for mobilizing people than that of the Group of 57.

After the killing at the end of June, the Provisional Electoral Council (notably including representatives of the churches) was tempted to break with the CNG. But it quickly thought better of it. On July 14, it presented a new version of its electoral decree that had been rejected by the CNG, the new draft making some major concessions to the CNG.

Even the initial version had con-

tained some rather undemocratic points. For example, Article 103 stipulated: "Those who mislead the aforesaid voters to abstain by means of false news, slanderous rumors or other fraudulent maneuvers will be subject to a fine of 100 to 500 gourdes [\$20-\$100] and imprisonment of three months to two years." Moreover, these penalties could even be doubled.

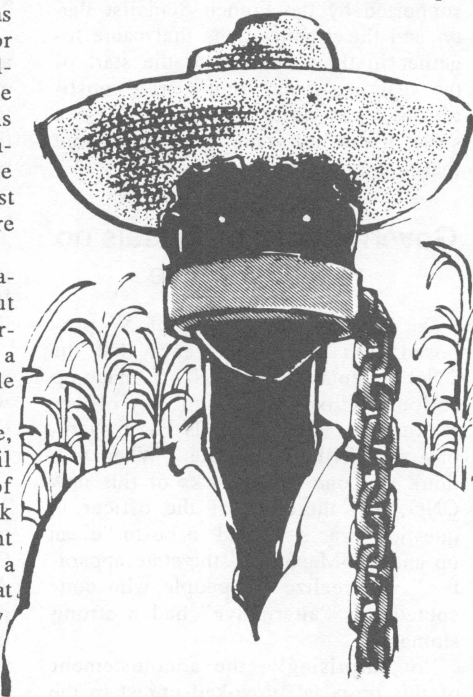
It took a month for the CNG to accept the Provisional Council's new proposal. In the meantime, the US had brought pressure to bear on the CNG. The Protestant Federation had condemned "mutual intolerance and rejection of dialogue." The Conference of Bishops had issued an appeal "to the Haitian people and all men of good will" to get the "concerned parties to sit down at the negotiating table."

The Provisional Council itself had proposed "a series of measures capable of putting minds at rest and restoring the people's confidence." Finally, Leslie Manigat, one of the main presidential candidates, called for a "truce." Moreover, referring to the CNG, he raised the pitiable slogan, "Help them to rehabilitate themselves!"

But, perhaps, in the last analysis, it was the boycott of the baccalauréat examinations that settled the matter by showing the extent of the rejection of the CNG — including by the bourgeoisie.

However, scarcely any political parties harbor illusions any more about the framework in which the elections scheduled for November 27 can be held, which are the only ones that are planned today.

Speaking of the murder on August 2 of Louis-Eugène Athis, chair of the Mouvement Démocratique



de Libération d'Haïti, Louis Déjoie, one of the candidates, raised the question: "Was this a deliberate conspiracy to scuttle the election campaign only four months before the elections? Will other leaders fall into other ambushes?"

Christian-democratic organizations have challenged the contents of the electoral decree and questioned whether they should participate in the elections. Even the very bourgeois Eugène Roy, one of the architects of the Constitution, has said: "We are definitively off the democratic road...I see three options: a military junta, civil war and a faint hope of achieving democracy."

In any case, the CNG is actively preparing the ground for the last two options. The weekly *Haïti Progrès* has even revealed a vast scheme for counter-insurgency Salvador-style under the pretext of "protecting the forests!"⁵

The documents that fell into the hands of *Haïti Progrès* announce a program of preparing so-called forest rangers in nine months of intensive training, including, among others things knife fighting, hand-to-hand combat and population displacement!

It is a good bet that the American organization USAid, which has granted \$9.6 million for "forestry works," would be delighted to help in the training of these new forest rangers!

Reagan administration prepares for the worst

The Haitian events — and in particular the televised military oath-taking ceremony at the time of the July 29 demonstration — have, however, raised some waves in the United States. Some senators have called for suspending military aid to the CNG. But the the Reagan administration has taken quite a different attitude. It is preparing for the worst.

It is rumored that the United States has made contacts for a possible intervention, including with the army of the Dominican Republic, which borders Haiti. According to *Le Monde*, Louis Déjoie asked the US ambassador what the United States would do "if the situation became untenable," and got the answer: "We would all go home, and maybe we would go back to the times of Vilbrun Guillaume."⁶

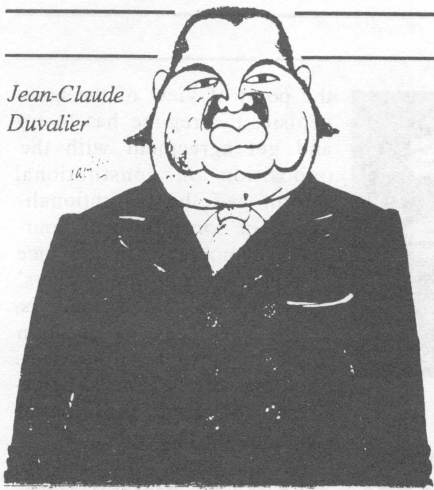
That was an ambiguous but very suggestive statement, referring to the landing of US Marines in Haiti on July 28, 1915. This followed the uprising of the people of Port-au-Prince, and the assassination of President Vilbrun Guillaume Sam. The US troops were to remain in Haiti until 1934. ☆

4. *Miami News*, August 5, 1987.

5. *Haïti Progrès*, July 22-28, 1987.

6. *Le Monde*, August 8, 1987.

Jean-Claude Duvalier



The Jean-Rabel massacre: a "mountain of corpses" for Duvalier

THE SLAUGHTER that took place on July 22-23 in the small town of Jean-Rabel is evocative of the "Himalayan mountains of corpses" that a backer of François Duvalier promised the oppositionists.

"In Haiti", he said, "blood will flow as never before. The entire island will go up in flames from north to south, from west to east. Their will be no dawn or dusk, but only a gigantic flame eating at the sky."

FILIP MARTENS

THE DUVALIERISTS were very frightened when Baby Doc left the country. Today, they are beginning to take their revenge. On July 22 and 23, hundreds of farmers coming from several villages near Jean-Rabel fell into an ambush. The massacre lasted several hours.

At least 200 farmers must have died. Some were killed by machete blows. Others fell into a precipice when they were chased. Most of those attacked belong to the Tête Ensemble [Heads Together] groups, which have about 10,000 members. They exist in a large part of the Northwest Department, and are especially strong in the Jean-Rabel area, where the first such groups were formed.

These groups were founded about ten years ago, and came out of the work done by several missionary teams in the department. They were made up of "leaders and technicians, lay missionaries engaged in organizing small farmers in various areas of work — agriculture, literacy, improvement of conditions for women, health, leadership."¹

In Jean-Rabel itself, several infrastructural projects were carried out — electrification of the town, reforestation, establishment of children's canteens in a period of food shortages. Discussion about society was mingled with development and consciousness-raising, and later with denunciation of the dictatorship. The Tête Ensemble groups were conceived as "associations

of small farmers helping each other with cultivation and thinking about their problems together."² As these groups grew in Jean-Rabel and the department, tensions increased between the landowners, notables and Church leaders on the one hand and the missionary teams and groups on the other.

"When February 7, 1986, came, the small farmers of Jean-Rabel — who had already been fighting under the dictatorship — wanted to take their demands further. So on May 1, 1986, a colossal demonstration was held, with the demonstrators carrying placards with their demands. This solidarity demonstration was not to the liking of the *grandons* [the big landowners], and they were so irritated that they decided to go onto the attack."³

Landowners attack peasant groups

Moreover, the *grandons* of Jean-Rabel are not just anybody. They are essentially two families, the Lucases and the Poiteviens, who monopolize economic power in the area and flaunt their friendship with the Americans. The patriarch of the Lucas family, a Duvalierist deputy for 26 years, is one of the founders of the neo-Duvalierist party, the Parti de la Réconciliation et de l'Entente Nationale (PREN).

The power of these families is founded on an alliance with President Sténio

Vincent, who was put in office by the American occupiers. One of the members of the family, who is Vincent's god-daughter, is today one of the officials of USAid in Port-au-Prince. These families enriched themselves through the organized traffic of Haitian "boat people," who in large part came from the Northwest.

The attacks against the peasant groups have been waged on two fronts. On the one hand, physical attacks and wrecking operations were started up, beginning on May 9, 1986, with a raid against a village. This was the speciality of Lucas' goons and the military in Jean-Rabel, who were totally devoted to the family. On the other level, an operation was launched to discredit the groups and the missionary team (which was stripped of its credentials by the bishop) through anti-Communist propaganda and forming church-linked farmers' associations to compete with the groups.

For this purpose, Cathlat, a union linked to the Christian Democrats, was brought into play. Members of the Catholic Church played an important role in this affair. Members of the Protestant churches linked to the United States were active on two levels — physical attacks and divisive work. For example, some of them tried to murder a priest who, like the Tête Ensemble groups, opposed the "*mangé sinistré*," that is, the distribution of US surplus food, which is helping to sink the local products and is providing the basis for lucrative "business" in the Northwest.

In mid-June, General Namphy went to Jean-Rabel and Môle Saint-Nicolas (where the US plans to build a naval base). He was accompanied by a PREN leader, and it is said that a lot of money was distributed on that occasion. His visit was followed by that of Bishop Colimon, who took a clear position against the Tête Ensemble.

After these two visits violent attacks and acts of destruction took place in several villages. The July massacre took place at a time when attempts at conciliation were underway. "Anti-group" peasant organizations, Tontons Macoutes, members of the Protestant sects and Lucas employees were mobilized to carry it out.

In the following days, survivors were killed or wounded. The army then came in under the pretext of "restoring peace." In fact, it went to aid of the big families, arresting people who had escaped from the massacre, intimidating farmers in the area and preventing any activity by the groups. ☆

1. *Haiti Progrès*, Vol. 4., No. 12, 1986.
2. *Haiti Progrès*, Vol. 5, No. 18, 1987
3. *Ibid.*

THESE STRIKES are often massive, like those of 24,000 workers at the shipyards of Hyundai in Ulsan or of 15,000 coal miners. Perhaps the most spectacular expression of the strength of the movement was the 50,000-strong demonstration on August 18 in Ulsan, an industrial town with only 250,000 inhabitants.

The struggles have been extremely combative, with occupations of factories and even management offices, blocking of railway lines and station occupations, attacks against executives' homes and rejection of management's lock-out tactics.

It is too early to make a detailed assessment of the experience of these conflicts. But in general they have resulted in wage increases and, above all, in the recognition of independent and democratic unions. For example, the management of the Hyundai *chaebol* has been forced to recognize a coordinating committee of independent unions representing half of its workplaces.³

Regime forced to retreat

South Korean workers are currently sweeping into the breach opened by the victory of the June 1987 mass movement, spearheaded by students who were joined by tens of thousands of workers and even by some middle

Working class takes over the fight

SOUTH KOREA has been shaken by an unprecedented wave of strikes this summer. From July 17 to August 25, there were 1,064 disputes, with nearly 800 strikes recorded on September 3.¹

Every sector of the economy has been affected, from automobiles and the shipyards to electronics, textiles, mines and public transport. Even taxi drivers and hotel and shop workers have joined the movement. The strikes affect mainly the *chaebols*, the massive conglomerates that dominate the South Korean economy: Hyundai, Daewoo, Lucky Goldstar and Samsung.²

DAVID CAMERON

layers.

This movement forced the Chun Doo Hwan regime — and its Democratic Justice Party (DJP) — to retreat considerably, to agree to the demand for direct presidential elections and to make a series of concessions that opened up a democratic space. And this space is growing. Through their struggles workers are in the process of imposing the right to strike and the recognition of their own unions by means of actions that are, strictly speaking, illegal.

Today, South Korea is at a crossroads.
From

the point of view of the bourgeoisie, the regime has to try and get agreement with the opposition on constitutional reform and the institutionalization of some form of bourgeois democracy. In the face of pressures from the workers' and mass movement there is, at the very least, a question mark over these objectives. Such pressure has forced agreement for direct presidential elections on December 20.

At the same time, the regime and the bourgeois opposition fear above all the risk of a link-up between the most radical elements of the student movement and the strength of the workers' movement.

Following the first big wave of mobilizations for direct presidential elections in Spring 1986, the regime timidly entered into a process of negotiation with the New Korea Democratic Party (NKDP), at that time the main opposition party. From the point of view of the DJP, the goal of these negotiations was to find a compromise solution on the question of democratic reform, but without giving way on the essential point — the method of election of the president.

The DJP was confident of winning legislative elections. Above all, it was sure of its ability to manipulate the electoral college that currently elects the president, thanks to its many links with the state apparatus and its better national implantation. This was particularly strong in the countryside where the rural development agency, *Saemaul Undong* — led by President Chun's own brother — has allowed the DJP to build up a clientelist network in the country's 35,000 villages.

Strict control of democratization

The DJP's attitude is not only shaped by the defence of its own party interests — a real enough motivation for all that — but also by a determination to have firm guarantees that any democratization of the regime would be strictly controlled from above. This is the reason why the DJP defended the idea of a reform that would essentially give power to the prime minister, himself responsible to parliament.

From the masses' point of view, and

1. Figures from the Minister of Labour, *International Herald Tribune*, August 26 and September 4, 1987.

2. See "A fragile 'miracle'", *IV* 109, November 24, 1986.

3. *International Herald Tribune*, August 20, 1987.



also that of the main opposition leaders, the opposite was also true: any democratization under the control of the DJP risked being only partial and provisory. The presidential election system was the hurdle that had to be overcome in order to win a real democratic space.

It was the relative intransigence on this question of the two main opposition leaders — Kim Dae Jung and Kim Young Sam — that provoked the toughening up of the regime in the autumn of 1986. This had two sides.

Offensive against independent unions

First, everything to the left of the NKDP, everything that represented the mass movement, no longer had the right to exist. This policy was demonstrated by the storming of the Konkuk campus on October 31, 1986; by the three year-long prison sentence given to Moon Ik Hwan, the president of the Mintongnyon coalition of popular organizations (the Popular Movement for Democracy and Unification), and by the dissolution of this movement; and, finally, by an offensive against the embryonic independent union movement, which was weak but whose existence had been tolerated since 1984-85.

The second aspect of the regime's repressive policies consisted in applying sufficient pressure on the NKDP so that it would give way on the central question, allowing a consensus electoral reform and the election of a new president before the Olympic games in Seoul in 1988. The games represent highly symbolic stakes for sanctioning the South Korean regime in the eyes of the international community. Included in this strategy was the necessity, if the situation arose, to split the NKDP — for example between the "moderate" Kim Young Sam and the "extremist" Kim Dae Jung. This line was taken until the explosion of June 1987, and even seemed to be having some short-term results.

During these months, the regime consciously used the force of the state against the opposition. The hard line taken against the NKDP began in a spectacular way on November 29, 1986, when the regime sent 50,000 police into Seoul in order to prevent the party holding a rally. The two Kims were put under house-arrest, and at the cost of taking 2,000 people in for questioning, the rally was effectively banned. With the student movement on the defensive and the NKDP exposed to repression, it did not seem impossible that the latter could be brought to heel.

However, this policy has failed. The basic reason for this is that, in spite of all the strengths of the state and the

DJP, the regime presides over the destiny of a country whose economic and social structures have been profoundly modified over the last 25 years, and even since Chun Doo Hwan's arrival in power in 1980.

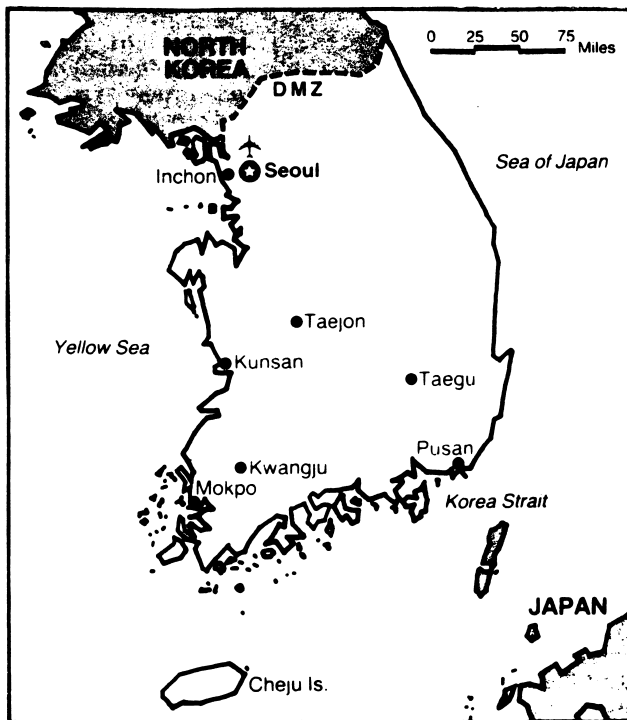
The South Korean people have already shown their readiness to struggle for democracy during two periods: in 1960-61, between the Syngman Rhee dictatorship and that of Park Chung Hee; and again in 1979-80 between the assassination of Park and the consolidation in power of Chun. The period 1979-80 in particular saw mass mobilizations and a wave of workers' strikes. And it should not be forgotten that Chun's power was "consolidated" by the bloody crushing of the Kwangju rebellion in May 1980.

In spite of the violence of this repression against the mass movement it had already begun to raise its head in 1983-84. In fact, the modifications of South Korean society — the growth of the working class, the appearance of urban middle layers, expanding numbers of young students — made the maintenance of the dictatorship increasingly difficult. Proof of this could be seen in the extent of the repression. Under the Park regime, from 1961 to 1979, 750 people were imprisoned for political reasons. In seven years of Chun's regime, 7,000 people were detained.⁴

In fact, a profound will to fight on democratic questions existed in the society — against censorship of press and publications, against torture and arbitrary policing, for liberating political prisoners, for the right to meet and organize freely, and above all for the right to choose representatives in non-rigged elections.

Resignations follow student's assassination

These demands met with a broad consensus. For middle layers, it was a question of adding democratic rights to their material prosperity. For workers, who felt excluded from the benefits of growth, the perspective was rather to give themselves the means to advance their interests. At least a section of the students wanted the right to raise the real problems facing South Korean society.



But beyond the differences, it is the existence of this groundswell that allowed the NKDP to resist pressures from the regime, and that even made it understand the necessity of resistance, that the country's situation demanded bold measures to restore legitimacy to state power.

The situation began to turn in favour of the opposition in January 1986, after the death of the student Park Chong Chol in a Seoul police station. Undoubtedly, this was not the first time that an opponent of the regime had been murdered, but thanks to a courageous press campaign it was the first time that the regime was forced to acknowledge it, and accept the resignations of the Minister of the Interior and the Chief of Police in Seoul. This did not stop violent repression at Park Chong Chol's funeral on February 7, but the affair continued to weaken the government.

Following new revelations around Park's death and attempts to protect those responsible, on May 26 — the eve of the June 1987 explosion — it was the turn of the prime minister, Lho Shin Yong, to resign, along with the national chief of police, the director of the Korean CIA and six other high-ups in the government.

Spring 1986 was marked by persistent anti-government agitation that the regime never managed to completely quell. In this context, the DJP succeeded in dividing the NKDP, but not exactly as foreseen.

Instead of isolating the extremists in the opposition, Chun succeeded in isolating the moderates. Confronted with the initiative of the NKDP's president, Lee Min Woo — who wanted to pro-

4. *Far Eastern Economic Review*, February 19, 1987.

pose a compromise to the government that would have given way precisely on the question of the presidential election — the two Kims maintained an intransigent attitude. The tensions that this triggered off led the NKDP to split.

On April 8 the two Kims announced their break with the party and the creation of a new formation, the Reunification Democratic Party (RDP), that was to bring together around 70 of the 90 NKDP deputies and 90 per cent of its local sections.

Regime on collision course with mass movement

In reaction to the NKDP split — which effectively put an end to any possibility of compromise with the opposition — Chun Doo Hwan announced on April 13 the definitive breaking-off of negotiations, and that the presidential elections at the end of 1987 would be held under an electoral college system.

From this point on the bridges were burnt, and the regime was on a collision course with the mass movement and the whole opposition — moderates, radicals, the lot.

This perspective immediately unsettled Washington. On April 18, Chun was forced to lift a ban on an interview between Kim Dae Jung and Stephen Solarz, president of the House of Representatives Commission on Asian and Pacific Affairs.

While tensions were building up to the June 1987 explosion, the regime, although resorting to repression, gave the impression of hesitating, while at the same time the opposition was increasingly going onto the offensive. On various pretexts, the regime initiated persecution against several deputies who had followed the two Kims in creating the RDP, and sent gangs of thugs to the first public meetings of the new party. It exerted pressure to make it difficult for the RDP to find a room for its launch congress, without actually forbidding it.

When the congress was held, on May 1, the "moderate" Kim Young Sam made a speech comparing the presidential election system to that in North Korea, and the Olympic games in Seoul to those held in Berlin in 1936.⁵

Pressures grew on the government. The Catholic Church, in the person of Cardinal Stephen Kim Sou Hwan, came out against the regime. Battles broke out between the police and students in Seoul on May 13 and 14, as well as in a series of towns, notably at Kwangju on May 18, on the seventh anniversary of the 1980 massacre.

The opposition — the RDP and other forces, particularly religious and student organizations — regrouped in the

New Coalition for a Democratic Constitution (NCDC). The government reshuffle on May 26, provoked by the consequences of the Park Chong Chol affair, was to underline the weakness of the regime at this time.

In this situation June 10 — the date of the special conference that was to name Chun's heir apparent, Roh Tae Woo, as the DJP's presidential candidate — took on the character of a confrontation between the opposing forces. The NCDC called for demonstrations against Park Chong Chol's murder and for democratic reform.

The confrontation had already begun the day before. The police detained 3,000 people, put 140 opposition leaders under house-arrest and deployed tens of thousands of riot police in Seoul and its provinces. But this time the repressive apparatus was not sufficient.

There were massive confrontations on June 10, with 25,000 students in the streets of Seoul that the regime's repressive forces could not get under control. In the days to follow, demonstrations and confrontations spread from the capital and set all the country's large towns alight. The mass mobilizations rapidly grew to such a level that the regime was faced with a choice: either to make concessions and try for agreement with the bourgeois opposition, or proclaim martial law and send in the army to restore order.

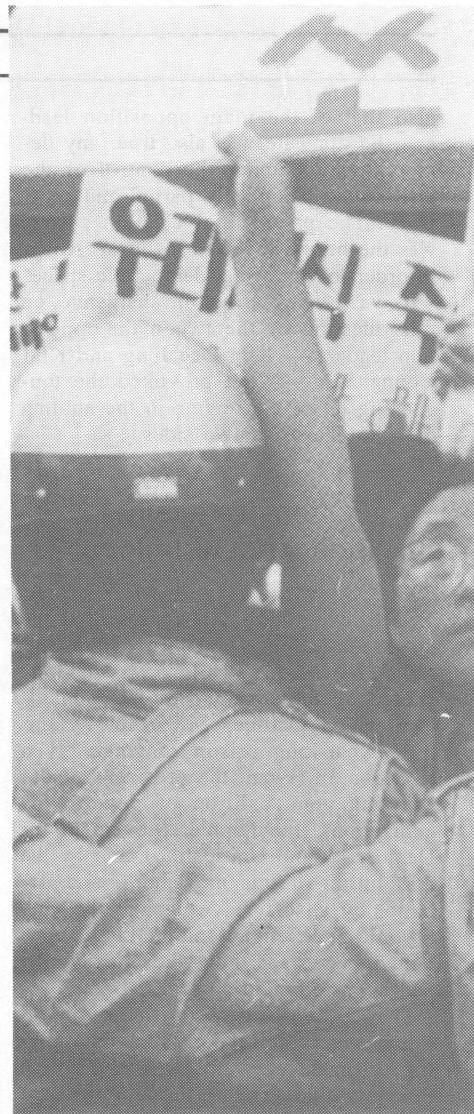
It seems that the latter solution was seriously contemplated between June 19 and 21. On the 19, the prime minister, Lee Han Key, was to speak of an "extraordinary decision", but the risks of such a solution were evident to everyone.⁶ As Kim Young Sam said, "The military is less likely to intervene because the social structure has been changed so much that the people would not accept such a situation."⁷

This was also the prevalent view in the DJP leadership and even, it seems, in the army. Washington's special envoy, Gaston Sigur, made it understood in an interview with American television that "Washington did not want to see the military mixed up in the troubles....The institution of martial law would not be an appropriate method."⁸

US loses patience with South Korea

Senator Edward Kennedy was even more explicit: "Patience vis à vis South Korea is beginning to run out. The time has come for a transition from dictatorship to democracy."⁹ As for the president of the US Olympic Committee, he had made it known that his country could withdraw from the Olympic games in Seoul.

So the regime began to retreat, as the demonstrations became even more mas-



sive. An unusual consultation was held with DJP deputies on June 21, a historic meeting between Chun and Kim Young Sam took place on the 24, and on June 29 Roh Tae Woo made his famous declaration accepting direct presidential elections.

Among the other points of his declaration figured the restoration of Kim Dae Jung's civil rights, freeing political prisoners, the extension of democratic rights, freedom of the press and the creation of elected local councils. Roh specified: "This does not mean a change in my belief that a parliamentary cabinet system is the form of government best suited to enabling democracy to take hold in our country."¹⁰ But the about-turn was evident to everybody. And Chun himself had to back up Roh's declarations two days later.

Evidently, the direct or non-direct election of a president is not in and of itself a fundamental question. What is essential is that the democratization of the regime did not come about in a

5. Speech reported in *Far Eastern Economic Review*, May 14, 1987.

6. *Far Eastern Economic Review*, July 2, 1987.

7. *Ibid.*

8. Cited in *Libération*, Paris, June 22, 1987.

9. *Le Monde*, Paris, June 20, 1987.

10. *Far Eastern Economic Review*, July 9, 1987.



controlled way through a consensus between the government and the opposition, even an imposed consensus, but by the intervention of the mass movement. It was the masses who forced the government to retreat, which will be important in the future.

First, it will be more difficult to withdraw the concessions that have been given, and the government will have reduced room for manoeuvre. Next, the mass movement will be more disposed to help itself to its new rights, and even to win new ones. This is in fact what is happening in the strike wave.

In the new situation brought about by the democratization there are two unresolved problems, which could affect agreement on the constitutional reforms and the holding of presidential elections. These are the problem of the strikes and the growth of the workers' movement, and the problem of the political prisoners.

Behind the first question lies the difficulty for the South Korean bourgeoisie of finding a way of dealing with the new, strengthened working class — architect and product of the economic "miracle" — now that it has begun to forge union structures and to fight for its demands.

The second question raises the problem of the limits of the democratization process, and of the exclusion of those who not only question the dictatorship or the worst manifestations of a brutal capitalism, but also raise questions about the economic and social system, the domination of South Korea by the US and Japan and the reunification of the country. These views come mainly, but not solely, from currents inside the student movement.

The central demands of the strikes that are shaking the country are around wages and the right to organize independent unions. Concerning the wages question, the extent to which the South Korean economic "miracle" has been realized at the cost of starvation wages and terrible working conditions should not be forgotten. No minimum wage exists in South Korea, for example, and a number of studies have documented the gravity of the wage situation.

To take only one example, according to statistics of the Christian Institute for Justice and Development in February 1987, 13.2 per cent of male workers and 63.9 per cent of female workers receive wages less than the vital minimum established by the Federation of Korean Trade Unions (FKTU) — a pro-management union.

South Korean workers have longest hours in world

The same study showed that although 75 per cent of total wage earners had a living wage in 1970, this fell to 53 per cent in 1981 and only rose to 57 per cent in 1983. The average wage of women workers, who make up 6.5 million from a workforce of 16.1 million, is \$1.07 an hour against \$2.26 for men. As for working hours, with a 54.4-hour average working week in 1984, South Korean workers have the longest hours in the world.¹¹

Outlining these facts on the exploitation of South Korean workers should not lead to simplistic conclusions on the complete inability of the South Korean economy to grant wage rises and improved conditions. For sure, workers' advances in these areas will cause problems for the bosses, particularly in sectors hit by the crisis, such as shipyards, or in those labour-intensive industries, like textiles. This is particularly true for small and medium businesses and for the "informal sector", which often hire workers on a daily or part-time basis, especially women.

But the dynamic sectors of the economy should be able to concede wage rises that could even have beneficial effects on the internal market and stimulate increased productivity, although at the cost of creating increased unem-

ployment. A lot depends on the rhythm and the scale of modifications in labour costs.

Anti-Communist union set up by Park Chung Hee

The main trade-union organization, the FKTU, was set up by the Park Chung Hee dictatorship in the 1960s, to "work in the interests of national security by getting rid of all pro-communist elements...and establishing a system of industrial unionism to overcome organizational confusion and prevent unofficial work disputes".¹²

The FKTU has around a million members today. Though a lap-dog of the regime, even this union had to be normalized after the 1979-80 strikes. After Chun came to power in 1980, 100 local sections of the FKTU were dissolved, 191 fulltimers sacked and 20 or so sent to camps.¹³

A revised work law limited union organization in the workplaces and forbade unions in places with less than 30 wage earners, thereby excluding a good chunk of the textile industry, a traditionally combative sector.¹⁴

Since July, a small opposition current has developed in the FKTU, bringing together 50 out of the 2,300 workplace unions.¹⁵ But it appears that in the main South Korean workers reject this organization and prefer to create new unions.

Already at the beginning of the 1980s, a series of independent unions — albeit a small minority — were formed and managed to keep going, often with the help of Industrial Urban Missions, which are fairly politicized Protestant structures. But these unions were hit by the toughening up of the regime in the autumn of 1986. Fourteen were dissolved, the most important being the Seoul United Union Movement (SLMU). Fifteen SLMU leaders were persecuted in September 1986 for having set up an "anti-state" organization, whose activities "served North Korea's interests".¹⁶

But, since the beginning of July, a number of independent unions have been set up, with around 50 being recognized by the minister of labour during the month of July alone. New union structures are set up daily, following the rhythm of development of the strikes that has accelerated since the beginning of August.

11. Figures taken from *Le Monde*, August 12, 1987, and *Far Eastern Economic Review*, August 27, 1987.

12. Cited in *International Labour Reports*, No. 7, January/February 1985.

13. *Far Eastern Economic Review*, August 27, 1987.

14. *International Labour Reports*, No. 17, September/October 1986.

15. *Far Eastern Economic Review*, August 27, 1987.

16. *International Labour Reports*, No. 19, January/February 1987.

Another important development is that the widespread system of "blacklists" of militants is beginning to collapse, with strikers often demanding the re-hiring of sacked unionists. The process of establishing a new union movement is only in its infancy, but the process is well under way.

The question of political prisoners is potentially a time-bomb for any perspective of installing a stable "democratic" order in South Korea. It should be noted that on one thing there is unanimity between the government, the two Kims and the churches — to exclude communists from the democratic process.

For example, the National Council of Churches of Korea (NCCCK), which has led an ongoing action on the question of political prisoners for some years, defends the position that only those detainees who freely proclaim their communist convictions should stay in prison. This position is shared by Kim Dae Jung, who adds: "A true communist will never say that he is not a communist".

Over 200 detainees still in prison

In spite of this unanimity on the exclusion of "true communists", problems remain between the opposition and the government on over 200 detainees still in prison, who have been condemned under anti-communist laws but most of whom proclaim their innocence. A conflict around these prisoners could create problems for relations between the government and the RDP. Moreover, neither arrests nor prison sentences have stopped since the announcement of "democratization". On August 25, six student leaders were imprisoned, among them Woo Sang Ho, the president of the Yonsei University Student Council. He risks being found guilty of "defamation of the state", which could incur a heavy prison sentence.

Only the more radical fringe of the student movement demands the liberation of all political prisoners without exception. August 12 saw battles between the police and 1,500 students demonstrating around this demand in Seoul. The student far left is active on other issues as well. On August 15, a procession of 3,000 students demonstrated against the US presence at the end of an opposition meeting held to commemorate the anniversary of the end of Japanese occupation in 1945. But the most important task facing the students today is to link up with the embryonic workers' movement.

It is difficult to outline precisely the evolution of the main far left currents that emerged in 1986 at the time of the Inchon riots in May, and the Konkuk

campus battle in October. The Chamintoo (Autonomous Student Committee to fight for Democratization, against the US and Fascism), which appeared at one time to give critical support to the RDP in the name of giving priority to the struggle against US domination, has now gone back on this position. Today, this organization has apparently dissolved itself and participated in the creation of a broad organization, the Association of Seoul Universities (Sodaehyop).

During a press conference for foreign correspondents, leaders of Sodaehyop distanced themselves from the two Kims, declaring themselves for "democracy, unification and independence", speaking positively but cautiously about North Korea and discussing the Korean war. In conclusion, they declared: "We believe that North Korea wants peaceful reunification and that if US troops pull out we have the capability of sorting out these problems".¹⁷

As for the other organization, the Minmintoo (Committee of National-Democratic Struggle against Imperialism and Fascism), whose leaders are still underground, it fights for the calling of a popular constituent assembly, for a provisional revolutionary government, an eight-hour working day, radical agrarian reform and a series of democratic rights. On July 20, 12 student militants were found guilty of having tried to overthrow the government and establish a revolutionary popular assembly and draft a new constitution, and were sentenced to prison sentences stretching from 17 months to seven years.¹⁸

For the moment, the mass student movement is demobilized, waiting for the new term in September. It is probable that the students will profit from the increased democratic space and be able to act more freely, and that the politicization process will deepen.

The new term is already being prepared. On August 19, thousands of militants from 95 universities (there are 103 in the country) met at Chungnam University in Taejon to set up a new national student federation. Afterwards the students demonstrated in support of striking taxi drivers in Taejon, shouting slogans in favour of independent and democratic unions and confronting the police.¹⁹

A very significant event took place on August 23, the day after the death of Lee Sok Gyu — a young striker at the Daewoo shipyards on the island of Koje — when a joint demonstration was held between workers and students on the Yonsei campus in Seoul, ending in a confrontation with the riot police.

Today, the Chun Doo Hwan regime is faced by an emergent independent workers' movement, a society that has

won a democratic space and an election that it could very well lose. Once more, it hesitates between repression and concessions, or, rather, it tries to reconcile the two.

In mid-August Roh Tae Woo was able to declare: "In the past, the government put the stress on growth to the detriment of spending that would benefit workers. Now, we have reached the point where we must support workers' demands for higher wages."²⁰

But ten days later, the same Roh Tae Woo said: "There is no denying that some people are worried that renewed campus disturbances by radical leftist activists, coupled with the ongoing labour disputes, might bring about a chaotic situation, irreparably damaging the political schedule...."

"Nowadays, even some ranking officials in the government and the party are said to be sceptical about the prospects of the projected elections being held....Should extreme disturbances be triggered and every one of the citizens want it, then the mobilization of the military might be considered."²¹

On the one hand conciliatory declarations, and on the other threats to postpone the elections and even military intervention, two measures whose consequences would be incalculable. Here there is undoubtedly a certain incoherence, but also perhaps the relaunching of an old strategy: to isolate and suppress the most radical elements (already the national police have launched a veritable witch-hunt of "leftists"), while trying to integrate the masses and "responsible" leaders. It was Chun Doo Hwan who said: "Every citizen must keep their eyes on leftists who...hide behind the banner of democratization".²²

General strike call from opposition

It remains to be seen if the regime will manage to separate the wheat from the chaff this time. Nothing could be less certain. The funeral of the murdered striker has become a major political issue, and the NCDC — the biggest regroupment of opposition forces — is calling a general strike and rallies around the country. The days, the weeks and the months to come in the run-up to the December election threaten to be difficult for the Seoul regime. The South Korean working class is far from having spoken its last word. ☆

17. *Far Eastern Economic Review*, August 6, 1987.

18. *Far Eastern Economic Review*, July 9 and August 6, 1987.

19. *Le Monde*, August 21, 1987 and *International Herald Tribune*, August 20, 1987.

20. *Le Monde*, August 15, 1987.

21. *International Herald Tribune*, August 26, 1987.

22. *Libération*, August 22 and 23, 1987.

A year of debates in Solidarnosc

SEVEN YEARS after it came into being, as a result of the most powerful upsurge of strikes and workers' self-management ever seen in Poland, and five and a half years after it was banned, the Solidarnosc social movement and union is today in the grip of a deep-going identity crisis.

The most evident signs of this are the divisions that have been appearing publicly in its leadership since September 1986, when most of the political prisoners were released, as well as the reorientations expressed in the documents most recently made public.

At the heart of these debates is the economic debacle the country is experiencing and the means for alleviating it, for getting out of the crisis that has thrown the population's standard of living into a tailspin.

As a result of this economic crisis, thousands of people are leaving Poland every year to try to their luck in the West European countries. Here, they often swell the ranks of those working in the "black economy," since these states do not tend to welcome this wave of "economic refugees" with open arms.

CYRIL SMUGA

THE RELEASE of most political prisoners in September 1986, and the change in the methods of repression used against independent activists, gave rise to hopes within the Polish opposition of a political "relaxation" on the part of the regime — in particular in the circles of the historic leaders of Solidarnosc.

Responding immediately to this perspective of "liberalization," some of the most prestigious of the former leaders of the clandestine union, with the support of Lech Walesa, set up a Provisional Council of Solidarnosc (TRS),

which was supposed to serve as a public leadership of the banned union.

At the same time, the underground regional leadership of Solidarnosc in Warsaw (RKW) decided to carry on its activities above ground. And following this decision public regional leaderships popped up in many areas.

In the meantime, the national clandestine leadership of Solidarnosc (TKK) had announced, in a communique

countersigned by Lech Walesa, that it would remain underground. But two of its main leaders — Jan Andrzej Gorny and Marek Muszynski — found themselves released from their posts. Thus, the TKK lost its last "real-name clandestines" (that is, people using their real identity).

Finally, the regional leadership of the union in Lower Silesia — a region where Solidarnosc had succeeded in rebuilding a particularly strong organizational network underground — announced that it could not see the advantage of the regional leadership coming out into the open and acting with an public face.¹

Discussion reveals sharp organizational tensions

Following these events an intense debate opened in the underground press, a debate that brought on some tensions and some political realignments in the Solidarnosc movement. Evidently, it is the questions concerning the orientation of the Polish opposition that are at the center of this debate.

But what is new — at least on this scale — are sharp organizational tensions, both between the public and clandestine leadership structures, and within them. This situation inspired the following disillusioned commentary from Julia Laseczka, the editor of the Warsaw journal *KOS*:

"It is no longer the opinions themselves, but knowing who is behind them, that is beginning to determine whether they are accepted or rejected. In the divergences of positions over any given question, one senses more and more the signs of complicated personal intrigues....Competing ambitions are beginning to determine not only relations between various groups, structures, milieus, regions and towns, but are also increasingly entering into the relations between individuals making up

1. See *IV* 107, October 27, 1986 and 111, December 22, 1986.

the same group....

"Greater police activity may not be necessary to put an end to the six-year period of building an 'independent society'. It may be that we will wind up this period all by ourselves."²

A general weakening of Solidarnosc, and in particular of its workplace structures, is the backdrop to all these debates. "There are no longer clandestine union commissions in the workplaces" writes an editor of the main oppositional journal in Warsaw, *Tygodnik Mazowski*.³

"A nation in which hope is dead"

In another Warsaw journal, *Wola*, Jan Szymanowski speaks of a "nation in which hope is dead," and considers that Solidarnosc "after its death," is leading "a symbolic life."⁴

Tomasz Litwin, one of the leading personalities in the Warsaw Inter-Factory Coordinating Committee (MKK), writes: "Perhaps Solidarnosc has no more trumps, perhaps the game — in which the stakes are the public way of life in Poland — is being played out partly without its participation. Perhaps the silence is not a sign of reflection and preparation but of helplessness..."⁵

While clandestine press and publishing remain one of the jewels of the movement with nearly 1,000 regular titles according to some estimates, their distribution has run into some problems.

One of the distributors recounts: "In 1984, I distributed up to 100 issues of each title; today, within the same milieu, I have managed to sell only ten issues, and even then just the most interesting titles....Independent distribution is ceasing to play its role of linking and mobilizing people. On the contrary, it is putting them off the opposition."⁶

Dawid Warszawski, a well-known editorialist on the clandestine journal *KOS*, notes: "Solidarnosc has not managed to remain an important factor in determining the situation in the country. But — despite their claims — the authorities have not been able to eliminate it from the Polish political scene either."⁷

Another *KOS* journalist, in an article in which he writes "I have tried to be a journalist who listened to what people say about their own movement, that they have created and which without them would quite simply never have existed," draws a gloomy picture of Solidarnosc:

"The 'masses' increasingly feel that they have no influence either over what happens underground, or what happens aboveground. The majority of the soc-

iety who take no part in the activity are being treated as a 'human raw material' that can be used for political activity on a bigger scale sometime in the future....

"Something has been turned upside down. The concept 'us and them', used previously as a substitute for 'society and the authorities', is being more frequently used to mean 'us, the members of Solidarnosc and them, the members of the national commission and its agencies'....

"Symbolic of the movement's inauspicious evolution is the change in the 'social communication within it.' At the beginning, information was circulated through the press or directly in meetings and via personal contacts, through the social activity of the masses.

"Today, information moves in one direction only. We receive all the wisdom of the leaders and their journalists, or sometimes also of journalists independent of the leaders. None of them even tries to find out what we are thinking. Do the appeals, the directives from 'the higher ups,' correspond even partly to the expectations and aspirations of 'those further down'?"⁸

The account of the meeting between Zbigniew Bujak, chair of Solidarnosc in Warsaw, and the members of the Warsaw MKK held in November 1986 in a way confirms such a pessimistic judgment. Bujak "stressed that in the immediate future Solidarnosc needs spectacular actions that will testify to its base in the factories, and that if there were no such actions, the entire movement would be weakened."

The activists wondered: "After almost five years of underground work, are we still fighting for the union, and relying on the union? Aren't our objectives broader, do we still need the union mask? In fact, today, the underground is not just the union."

Solidarnosc: "the most powerful weapon"

Bujak's answer was to reaffirm forcefully the need for the union, "the most powerful weapon." But it has to be noted that he proved unable to show how this tool can be used and limited himself to asserting "that even in the most pessimistic perspective, it will be necessary to maintain at least a symbolic continuity and the forms of Solidarnosc. That will be enough to ensure", he said, "that in a situation of social crisis people will turn toward Solidarnosc, toward what is left of it, and will act as an organized social subject."⁹

Some reports that have appeared recently in the underground press testify to attempts by worker activists to

find instruments other than simply Solidarnosc's underground commissions in order to be able to act in defence of workers' interests.

For example, in the PONAR mechanical instruments factory in Ostrzeszow, Solidarnosc activists took control first of the self-management council; then of the factory circle of the Democratic Party [a Communist Party front organization designed to give the appearance of a two-party system — and, in the context of the Stalinist notion of people's democracy — to represent the progressive petty bourgeoisie]; and finally the "new union" set up by the regime after the banning of Solidarnosc.

In the spring of 1987, this "new union" called a strike and won the promise of a substantial wage increase (7,000 zlotys for everyone), to be given in several stages. This was an exemplary action, if there ever was one.¹⁰ But what is most significant is that these events were taken up several times in the Solidarnosc press, while the union continued to uphold its call for boycotting the government unions.

Clandestine activity continues in the factories

It would be wrong to conclude that Solidarnosc's underground commissions no longer exist in Polish factories, or even that their activity is only symbolic. All observers agree that they have become weaker, especially in those regions where the Solidarnosc leadership has paid only scant attention to this sort of work (as is the case in Warsaw). But the underground press also reports significant examples of clandestine activity in the factories.

This is particularly true in Lower Silesia, where the Regional Strike Committee (RKS), the underground regional leadership set up in December 1981, has always endeavored to serve as a coordinating body for the factory commissions and has given constant support to the efforts of the activists in the factories.

In an editorial in the bulletin of the Lower Silesian RKS, *Z Dnia na Dzień*, Jozef Turzyna wrote, "The Wrocław leaders know that the region's strength is based on unspectacular and difficult work in the factories. Brilliant groups of café dissidents may be all right in the capital, where it is easy to find yourself under the spotlight of the

2. *KOS*, No. 5/113, March 9, 1987.

3. FF, "Elephantiasis," *Tygodnik Mazowski*, No. 199, February 18, 1987.

4. *Wola*, No. 12/218, March 30, 1987. 5. *Ibid.*

6. *Tygodnik Mazowski*, No. 203, March 18, 1987.

7. *KOS*, No. 114, March 30, 1987.

8. *KOS*, No. 3/111, February 8, 1987.

9. *Wola*, No. 37/203, November 24, 1986.

10. *Tygodnik Mazowski*, No. 189, November 26, 1987, and No. 209/210, May 6, 1987.

Western TV stations. But in Wroclaw, this would be ridiculous and totally useless. Today, looking back, we can see that unspectacular activities have borne fruit, and that Wroclaw is the brightest spot on the map of the Polish opposition."¹¹

In fact, while in other regions Solidarnosc factory journals are rare, there are several in Wroclaw, in particular in the FAT, Fadroma, Hutmen, ELWRO, POLAR, Pafawag enterprises, among others. The 1986 financial report of the ELWRO factory commission showed that 400 of the 4,500 people employed there regularly paid dues.¹²

However, the fact remains that a high level of underground trade-union membership is not synonymous with a capacity for action in defence of workers' interests. The March 28 price rises and the ensuing strikes are an illustration of this.

Although the TKK had announced its support for the strikes that might break out then, but without issuing a call for a general strike — and Wladyslaw Frasnyski, the chair of the region union, did the same — the attempts to launch strikes at ELWRO, Pafawag, Hutmen, FAT, Fadroma and Dolmel came to nothing.

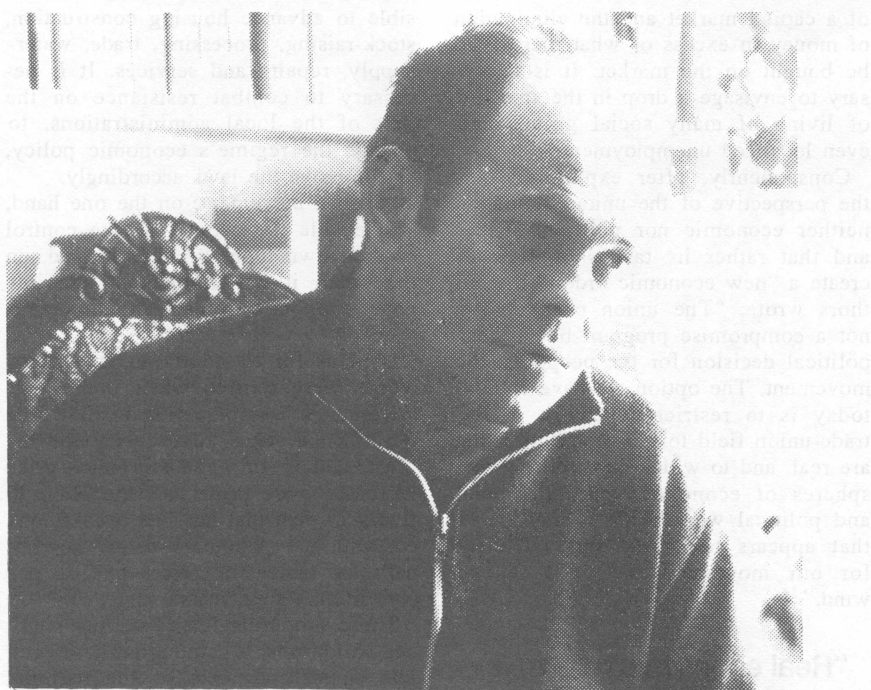
On the other hand, in a number of other plants — including some where there was no regular activity by Solidarnosc structures — the strikes were successful in winning substantial wage increases.

This pattern obviously reflected the stepped-up activity of the political police where Solidarnosc structures are regularly active. But it was also a consequence of the forms of action employed by the factory union commissions. Henryk Wujec, one of the Warsaw Solidarnosc leaders who clearly expresses the importance of factory work, wrote:

"The underground union commissions and Solidarnosc activists in the factories have been limited until now to distributing the press, collecting dues and demonstrating their presence during patriotic holidays. Such activities have generally concerned a rather small group, whose existence is important but which has not grown."¹³

Disenchantment with activism

Recognition of the ineffectiveness of the actions carried out until that time by Solidarnosc, and in particular of the independent union's inability to be an effective tool in the struggle to maintain living standards, has been reflected in particular by a disenchantment with activism among many workers and an accompanying "withdrawal into private life." This has led many Solidarnosc



Solidarnosc leader Jacek Kuron (DR)

leaders to wonder about what forms of action to push in the future.

In the autumn of 1986, *Tygodnik Mazowsze*, the main underground journal, opened up its columns to a debate on this question, publishing a series of positions by leaders of the movement. This debate was pursued in the columns of many other independent journals. It brought a great diversity of proposals, but the most important thing undoubtedly was that most of the protagonists tended to close the book on underground union activity in the factories.

For example, in a document widely reprinted in the underground press, Anatol Lawina, Maciej Poleski and Maciej Zalewski asked "how is the Solidarnosc movement operating today? Its base is made up of factory circles grouped in underground trade-union commissions. These are small, informal groups with clearly defined activities (distribution of the press, attempts to assure a financial base, meetings in the inter-enterprise structures, sporadic propaganda actions, a declining role in providing social assistance and performing the statutory functions of unions).

"In general, these groups do not have the means for undertaking actions of a trade-union character. The next level above them is inter-enterprise groupings, conscious of their limitations, but also of their achievements. They consider the program of restoring the union as unrealistic and incapable of eliciting a mass response in the present situation of ebb and stagnation. This loosely coordinated underground structure is led by regional and national leading groups.

"The leading groups, speaking in the name of Solidarnosc and forgetting

about the underground structures, address themselves to everyone, that is, to no-one in particular. Alongside the Solidarnosc structures, political circles operate, which may be more or less linked to the union but which recruit their members in it (Fighting Solidarnosc is the best example). These include the circles of Workers' Chaplains, the self-management councils, other social initiatives along the lines of Peace and Liberty, and finally political circles whose tradition goes back before August 1980....

"Solidarnosc breaking up into clearer currents"

"In the situation of general helplessness, these initiatives offer an example of activity and growth. They are not responsible for the common failures, they are building something new and attract Solidarnosc people. Solidarnosc is breaking up into clearer and clearer currents of different ideological hues."

On the basis of this observation, the authors conclude that Solidarnosc was wrong to think that it was possible to raise general living standards, not only because of the unfavorable relationship of forces with the bureaucracy, but also because the economic crisis is so grave that "society as a whole has to pay" the costs involved.

"An economic miracle in Poland involves not only structurally changing the economy and releasing human energy, but also budget cuts, the creation

11. *Z Dnia na Dzień*, No. 2/426, January 12-18, 1987.

12. *Solidarnosc ELWRO*, No. 163, January 26, 1987.

13. *Tygodnik Mazowsze*, No. 192, December 17, 1986.

of a capital market and the elimination of money in excess of what there is to be bought on the market. It is necessary to envisage a drop in the standard of living of many social groups and even localized unemployment."

Consequently, after explaining that the perspective of the union should be neither economic nor political strikes and that rather its task should be to create a "new economic order," the authors wrote: "The union needs today not a compromise program but a clear political decision for the people in the movement. The option we have to take today is to restrict our work in the trade-union field to those activities that are real, and to widen our work to new spheres of economic, cultural, social and political work. This is the option that appears necessary and sufficient for our movement to get a second wind."¹⁴

"Real economic reform is indispensable today"

Jacek Kuron also sees the implementation of economic reform as the main axis of the union's future activity: "The proposition that says you have to accept a lowering of your standard of living in the name of economic reform is unacceptable today. But it is just as hard to imagine a program consisting only of demands. It seems that a market economy reform carried out in the framework of a broad social movement — with social insurance for the weaker groups — is the focus of the aspirations of Poles today, both those that have to do with the standard of living as well as their social and political aspirations. This can, therefore, be an immediate goal for the Solidarnosc movement...."

"A big movement that will impose a real economic reform is indispensable today. All the activities of such a movement have already been taken up within society, although in a limited way. They have to go on to a larger scale. It is necessary to enter the existing self-management councils, activate those that are not functioning and create new ones. On the one hand, this has to be done through coordination among self-management councils, to bring pressure to bear on the regime for a total market reform; and, on the other, by undertaking actions in the factories aimed at bolstering the economic activity of the largest possible number.

"The same orientation should be adopted outside the state enterprises, in the local self-management councils, in particular in the countryside and in the small cities, but not only there. Through cooperatives, various associations and private enterprises, it is pos-

sible to advance housing construction, stock-raising, processing, trade, water-supply, repairs and services. It is necessary to combat resistance on the part of the local administrations, to change the regime's economic policy, and improve the laws accordingly.

"Such a movement, on the one hand, will enable the people to take control of their own living conditions; and, on the other, it will implement and impose economic reform at the same time."¹⁵

It is useful to point out that these words were written when the Polish government was preparing to introduce the "second stage" of its economic reform, and in this context major price increases were projected (the 1986-90 five-year plan that has just been adopted, with the customary delay, notably calls for increasing prices by 128 per cent in only four years).

These proposals for a "readjustment" of Solidarnosc's concerns have run into opposition. One of the regional leaders in Warsaw, Henryk Wujec, published an article co-signed with Maciej Jankowski, with the significant title: "If we want to remain trade unionists." From the outset, they set the tone: "There has been a lot of talk recently about elaborating a new program for the union, and in particular about supporting independent economic initiatives. While appreciating the importance of these things, it must not be forgotten that Solidarnosc's main field of activity is the state enterprises. Unless Solidarnosc has a real presence there, an active influence on the situation of the workers, all general proposals are apt to be left hanging in mid air."

Wujec and Jankowski proposed that union activists concern themselves with the labor contracts, which, as they noted, after the decree-law of November 1986 have to be ratified by general assemblies of the self-management delegates.

The involvement of Solidarnosc activists in the self-management councils, they explained, must enable them to utilize all the prerogatives of these councils to unite the workers around their most urgent demands. "On the most important question, it is even possible to have recourse to referendums."

As regards the organization, they proposed flexible forms: "These actions should be directed by underground trade-union commissions where they exist. If they do not exist, it would be enough to have a few Solidarnosc activists who would set an example; there would not necessarily have to be many of them.... This does not have to be done under the banner of Solidarnosc. The objective is to win even small successes and not to frighten the more

timid, or to provoke resistance by the party and reactions from the political police. Our attention has to be concentrated on solving the problems and not on proving how useful we are. If we win a success, everyone will know anyway how it was achieved."

They also proposed where it was impossible to use the forum of the self-management council to try to set up other forms of representing the workers: "For example, the workers in a shop could sign a statement in which they mandated certain people to deal with concrete problems in their name. The management might not recognize such a mandate, but they would have to take account of it."

To conclude, Wujec and Janowski dotted their "i's" by going back over the method that in their opinion the union should adopt: "The actions proposed here unite and do not divide. Since Solidarnosc acts in the name of all the workers, it is necessary that all those employed in the enterprise be concerned, without excluding members of the party or of the new unions. It is even possible to conduct certain actions together with the 'new-unionists,' but it needs to be clear that the initiative has come from Solidarnosc. Likewise, if the latter undertake an action that is really in the interest of the workers, we must support it and insist that it be carried through to the end."¹⁶

A critical picture of the union's activities

The same concerns motivated AG Rawicki. In an article published in the Warsaw journal *Robotnik*, he drew a critical picture of Solidarnosc's activity: "The pattern of activity of the opposition often comes down to a group of 'armchair politicians' meeting and producing a thick and high-priced journal. They write about Jaruzelski, about Reagan, about geopolitics and the 'premises of conceptual reflection,' about 'neo-conservatism in the USA,' and so on and so on. And then they say, 'Walenty, go distribute that in your factory.'

"Few people still take an interest in the work of the underground trade-union commissions, in ways of helping the activists who, fighting against their own fatigue and the passivity of the workers, are continuing Solidarnosc activity in the factories.... Are we really incapable of developing new forms of activity in the factories? In our opinion, we are not! We can and we must do so. And the key to that is to get it into

14. *Tygodnik Mazowsze*, No. 195, January 21, 1987; also published in *Wola*, No. 3/209, January 19, 1987.

15. *Tygodnik Mazowsze*, No. 191, December 10, 1986.

16. *Tygodnik Mazowsze*, No. 192, December 17, 1986.

our heads that what is important is not personal battles for a seat in the leadership but the strength and effectiveness of the factory organizations."¹⁷

The same author developed his proposals in a Szczecin journal, *Robotnik Pomorza Zachodniego*. He called for forming "statistical commissions" in the factories with the aim of calculating "how the so-called secret price increases affect the workers' lives." This is very simple, he explained:

"All you have to do is to select among the workers some people living in different conditions, for example an unmarried person living in a dormitory, a father of two children living with his wife and in-laws, for example. All these people note down their expenses every month, their own expenses and those of those families, expenses for daily consumption as well as for durable goods. And so for example in January a worker spent 26,000 zlotys, and in February for the same thing, 28,000. This difference indicates clearly the raise that we have to demand to maintain our standard of living."

He also proposed setting up "self-supply groups," ("nothing is easier — All you need is for one person to collect money, go out into the country and buy meat"); "trade-union funds" ("which must be used to finance social aid, not the press"); and organizing vacation colonies in collaboration with the peasants.

Finally, AG Rawicki criticized the union press in the factories: "Of course it exists. But...it should have a lot more information on the life of the factories....Reading the factory press, you get the impression that its editors are not at all interested in the problems of their factories, in the possibilities for increasing production capacities, in safety and working conditions, in wages."¹⁸

Kuron's proposals criticized

The proposals by Jacek Kuron and other champions of "realism" were also criticized by the leader of the Fighting Solidarnosc Organization (OSW), Kornel Morawiecki: "I do not agree with the thesis advocated by Lech Walesa and Jacek Kuron, among others, that now is not the time to put forward wage demands, that it is necessary to tighten our belts. Poverty is growing, and people are working harder and harder, up to 12 hours a day. It's better to clench our fists than tighten our belts."¹⁹

Likewise, the chair of Lower Silesian Solidarnosc, Wladyslaw Frasyniuk, has taken his distance from the champions of a "refocusing" around schemes for economic reform. In an interview given

to *Tygodnik Mazowsze* in December 1986, he said: "We have to take up the essential questions, and these are food, housing, and the length of the work-week. Everyone knows that in Poland today people are working up to 10, 14 and even 16 hours a day. After doing

most urgent problems, those that can be taken up immediately, are beginning to reach us."²⁰

Despite all these concrete proposals and criticisms calling for Solidarnosc to devote itself to the problems of defending living standards and working

"It's better to clench our fists than tighten our belts"

their legal eight hours, everyone worries about finding an extra job to survive."

The editors asked: "Do you think that it is impossible today to unite people around the slogan of economic reform, but that it is possible, on the other hand, to organize a movement for demands that could impose a reform if such a movement were strong enough?" Frasyniuk answered: "That is our duty as a union. Moreover, getting back to the nitty-gritty questions is the only chance to remobilize people. When a trade-union commission asks me what has to be done, I ask them what people are grumbling about.

"Every factory has problems that seem insoluble, and so workers say to themselves that it is not worth taking a beating for that. But if they manage to win on small questions, such as better ventilation or toilets, then maybe you can bring together 10 to 15 people. To go back to activities around reform, this is quite a difficult task, because for the average citizen economic reform is synonymous with higher prices and greater poverty.

"To put it plainly, for whom should the union smoothe the way for the reform, if it has no means for carrying it out? Polish society does not consider itself master in its own country. The workers are not masters in the factories. Therefore, they take no interest in any reform. To get the essential rights of a citizen, people are not going to agree to tighten their belts, even in a reasonable way."

Asked about union activity in Wroclaw, Frasyniuk said: "We hold dozens of meetings with the factory commissions and the representatives of various milieus in the region....We have turned to them to ask them to elaborate demands, in accordance with themes, like the Gdansk 21 demands [which were raised in August 1981] directed at various centers of decision-making, beginning with the government and extending even to the underground (for example, with regard to what school teachers expect from the government, the inspectors and finally from the underground structures). Such lists of the

conditions, the union — or, more accurately, its leading circles — once again failed to respond to the test of the price rises. A general statement on prices and wages was indeed adopted on January 26, 1987, and countersigned by all the top authorities: Lech Walesa, the Provisional Council (the public TRS) and the Provisional Coordinating Commission (the clandestine TKK). It repeated all of Solidarnosc's traditional demands. But little, if anything, was done to mobilize the union's activists and, more generally, the workers, to build a national action against the price increases."

Producing for people

Furthermore, while the statement reaffirmed the need for a sliding scale of wages and social benefits, as well as for "shifting materials and investment from production for production's sake toward producing for people," it went on immediately to assert that all this would be impossible without a market reform of the economy. The statement added: "People cannot make sacrifices unless these are accompanied by a perspective for a better future."

Finally, the statement pointed out: "The effectiveness of our defence depends on the emergence of a broad movement for changes in the economic and socio-political system." What changes were meant? A "real economic reform," whose "premises should be based on the principles of the market economy," which involved "the need for de-monopolizing the economy, eliminating the economic bureaucracy from the industries and changing the criteria for selecting leading cadres."

Furthermore, "a real equality of all sectors of the economy is necessary, as well as the submission of the state sector to self-management control. Such an economic reform should be accom-

17. *Robotnik*, No 116, December 18, 1986.

18. Quoted by *Tygodnik Mazowsze*, No. 200, February 25, 1987.

19. *Biuletyn Dolnoslaski*, No. 8, 1986.

20. *Tygodnik Mazowsze*, No. 196, January 20, 1987.

panied by setting clear and simple principles for creating and doing away with economic units, elimination of the banking monopoly and creation of the institutional bases for a capital market."²¹

In this context, the concluding appeal to fight to defend wages and to protest against the attempt to force society to pay for the costs of an economic policy that was leading nowhere could not have any impact. The Solidarnosc leadership had only too clearly explained that the conditions for such actions to succeed had obviously not been assembled.

This statement was evidently the result of a compromise among different, if not opposing, political and trade-union orientations. In the spring of 1986, in an interview published by the underground journal *Kultura Niezalezna*, one of the main leaders of the Warsaw RKW, Wiktor Kulerski, without beating about the bush explained that there were two opposing currents in Solidarnosc. Moreover, the sharpness of the tone he took suggested that the stakes in this debate, like the differences, were serious.

Parallel and opposing processes

In Kulerski's opinion, "circles outside the factories, the local and inter-enterprise coordinating bodies, the cultural and educational centers, the publishing operations and the circles of their clients have become the main centers of social activity. This has led, by the logic of things, to a growth in the activity of the social committees that operate in the arena of human and civil rights, culture, education, science, health and so on. It has also led to a growth of the clientele of these activities, if I may use this term, and to more funds being allocated to them. I might venture to say that parallel and opposing processes have appeared in regard to the union."²²

This view appears to fit the situation in the region Kulerski represents, Warsaw, but not those regions whose leaders have given priority to building trade-union activity in the factories since 1982-83, even at the price of voluntarist exertions. The attempts by the Warsaw regional leadership to build non-union opposition activities aroused discontent in many other regions. And, in this context, accusations were not long in emerging about the peculiar conceptions the Warsaw leaders were supposed to have about sharing out the aid received from foreign union confederations. This happened first in private conversations, and then increasingly they came out into the open.



This is witnessed by a statement attributed to the TKK (which Kulerski says came from a leader and not from the body itself), which was published in the New York Polish paper *Nowy Dziennik*: "The TKK calls on donors, where possible, not to make suggestions about the specific use of various contributions. This will help prevent a chaotic allocation of donor's funds to Solidarnosc's various spheres of activity."²³

According to Kulerski, there have been two lines in Solidarnosc about the form of the movement from the outset. He describes them in the following way (since he is the principal author of one of them, what he says about the opposing line cannot be taken as a faithful representation):

"One of them is the orientation giving priority to the independent self-managed union Solidarnosc, which is seen as a hierarchical, centralized and monopolist structure, which at most might have offshoots in the form of agencies, ad hoc commissions, etc. and marginal groups that cannot be integrated in any way....Among the champions of this orientation, I see some national leaders in recent years, such as those coming from Wroclaw and Szczecin, and also the leaders in Brussels.

"The other orientation is the one that gives priority to the social movement Solidarnosc, organized as an independent, pluralist and decentralized society made up of very different independent, self-managed structures united by the common ideals of Solidarnosc and by common goals, such as democracy and independence. In this view, Solidarnosc occupies only one place, a very important one, perhaps essential, but still only one place in the movement as a whole....

"On the national map of Solidarnosc, the Warsaw region is the center that has the greatest potential. Warsaw is the biggest city, the most important concentration of the intelligentsia, the most vital center of political and social thought, the place that has the greatest possibility for foreign con-

tacts, the largest number of independent publishing houses and journals, the greatest diversity of independent structures.

"It was more or less in the nature of things that it was here that the idea would germinate and take root of a pluralist Solidarnosc movement that has made it possible to develop this potential to the extent that this is possible today....It is a humanist conception. Perhaps for the activists of a more paternalist — not to say authoritarian — tendency, trained in the communist system, such a conception is mildly revolting. Maybe it is because it robs them of the feeling that they are in control of the situation that they see a danger in it. Maybe something manifests itself in them that might be called their ego. Whatever it may be, it has to be admitted that at the level of the national leadership of Solidarnosc there is a difference of opinion over the structure of Solidarnosc.

"Do we need a pluralist Solidarnosc?"

"Do we have to have a hierarchical, centralized Solidarnosc and then for a long, long time nothing, and finally insignificant marginal groups? Or rather do we need a pluralist Solidarnosc movement, one of whose components — an essential one — is the union Solidarnosc...?"

"Today the Warsaw region remains an avowed champion of the real — not just verbal — pluralism of the Solidarnosc movement. That is, of total independence, not only for our union, but for all the other structures. (I am thinking here of the social committees, the operations for publishing books, sound cassettes and video cassettes, of journalists, but also of others). In practice, but without saying so, the representatives of two other regions in the TKK — those of Wroclaw and Szczecin —

21. Quoted from *KOS*, No. 3/111, February 8, 1987.

22. Quoted from *Kultura*, Paris, No. 475, April 1987.

23. *Ibid.*

have opposed this, and the others have an ambivalent, wavering or neutral attitude."²⁴

A journalist on *KOS*, Jerzy Krzewina, portrays the differences in quite a different way: "Struggles and debates in leading groups are natural and normal. But those that go on for months and months exceed this 'norm.' Sadly it has to be recognized that we are faced with a phenomena typical of groups isolated from society, typical of an organization that has lost sight of its goal, which has lost sight of its long-term idea...."

"It seems that in September our leaders regained hope in a new 'relaxation' by the regime, in a new formal 'accord,' that they wanted to get in tune with the situation that would follow this 'accord.'

"An analysis of the statements, of the positions of our leaders, of the interviews that they have given, of the 'corrections' that have been made, leads to very interesting conclusions about who these declarations are addressed to. This is, first of all, a discussion, or more accurately, a struggle among the leaders themselves.

"Secondly, there is an attempt to start a dialogue with those on the other side. The theory of 'an accord without an accord' [an allusion to the positions taken by the Warsaw leaders — Jacek Kuron in particular], the successive attempts to define a social compromise and so on are, in reality, a dialogue with the regime in which the social base of Solidarnosc is not participating, because it is preoccupied with quite different problems...."

"Our leaders, including the experts of the intellectual circles, have begun to look for a 'lesser evil' formula. On that ground, we cannot win the slightest success, as long as we are incapable of defending the living standards of workers, retired people, nurses, school teachers.

"In fact, on this question precisely the obliging economists have slipped us the notion that the evil — that is, the impoverishment of people — is protecting against a still greater evil, the collapse of the economy. And we had begun to forget that this economy was supposed to be for people; we had forgotten what was said clearly in August 1980. Confrontation was imposed on us. The discussion is continuing around the question of how to transform a situation of confrontation into one of compromise. The problem is that compromise can only be the result of confrontation, it cannot replace it."²⁵

Because they reduce the union Solidarnosc to one element among many, the "pluralist" positions upheld by the Warsaw leaders leave room for the dangers that Krzewina pointed to. They

lead to forgetting that the power that enabled the Solidarnosc movement to emerge was the struggle of the Polish working class, which began around material demands and the defence of the dignity of the working people.

On the other hand, the positions held by the regional leaderships of Lower Silesia and Szczecin, even though they are not exempt from all sorts of confusion, can enable Solidarnosc to regain ground because they are based on the spontaneous demands of workers. By the same token these positions can also help to achieve the necessary — even if not sufficient — conditions for the survival of Solidarnosc and the various components of the social movement that have emerged in recent years.

Confusion of ideological positions

However, while it is impossible today to assess the relative strength of the main currents that have appeared in the Solidarnosc leadership, it has to be recognized that the positions supported by the Warsaw leaders seem to predominate. This assessment is based on the documents that have been made public recently in the name of various national structures of the movement, which are clearly the result of compromises.

This may be owing to the relative weakness of the champions of the "trade-unionist" line (Wroclaw and Szczecin), as well as to the confusion of their ideological positions. In fact, beyond their insistence on the need to concentrate efforts on workers' material demands and their declared desire to center the structure of the union around factory union commissions, the "trade-unionists" have not produced more general programmatic documents.

The document entitled "The position of the Solidarnosc union on the situation and the avenues of transforming the Polish economy" — which was made public on April 9, 1987, by the national spokesperson of Solidarnosc, Janusz Onyszkiewicz — sums up the positions of this current on economic reform. The conclusion states:

"We demand a deep-going reform, one that will introduce equality of all sectors of ownership and reject dogmas; a reform that will limit the role and function of the state in the economy, giving the fundamental role to market mechanisms; a reform that will achieve a decisive democratization of economic life and which, through the growth of self-management and stock ownership by workers, will aid the process of the socialization of economic life...."

"This is a vision of hard work and saving, but for yourself and with a per-

spective for improvement. The major part of the national patrimony has to be at the disposal of socio-economic associations, self-management structures, cooperatives, various mixed companies, and private initiative should have extensive possibilities for development.

"This is a vision of an economy capable of innovation and taking risks, in which the interests of workers and weak social groups will be protected by independent unions and by a rational social policy, conducted by the state and by various social institutions.

"The only possibility for real and consistent implementation of reform is a strong social pressure, a courageous and determined policy by the regime, and the development of broad popular support for the reform. The longer this is delayed, the greater will be the cost and the more difficult the reform...."

"Our proposals are based on the achievements of contemporary economic science and in accordance with the Church's social doctrine. They also express the feelings of the great majority of society...."

"At its congress in Gdansk in 1981, Solidarnosc declared itself in favor of a social pact around reform in order to get the economy out of crisis. We repeat these words today, despite everything.... This is a chance for the regime, but it also demands that it have a sense of responsibility, courage and imagination. In view of the dangers that threaten us, in order to avert the coming catastrophe, everyone must put the supreme interest of the country and of the nation first."²⁶

The difference of approach from the economic and social proposals Solidarnosc adopted in October 1981 is noticeable. In 1981 it called for "associating the plan, the market and self-management," paid little attention to the private sector (except in agriculture) and put self-management at the center of its demands, for which it demanded a national representative body (a "second house of parliament") endowed with legislative powers.

The new document, on the other hand, puts self-management on the same level as stock ownership by the workers, and presents a vision of "socialization of the economy" in which group and individual ownership would predominate.

This document has been subjected to biting criticism by the economist Ryszard Bugaj, who was one of the main authors of the economic part of the union's program in 1981. He writes: "The main impression you cannot help get-

24. *Ibid.*

25. *KOS*, No. 3/111, February 8, 1987.

26. Quoted from *Solidarnosc — Biuletyn Informacyjny*, Paris, Nos. 169/170/171, July 8, 1987.

ting after reading the 'Theses on the Second Stage of the Reform' presented by the government, and the 'Position of the Solidarnosc union on the situation and the avenues of transforming the Polish economy', is one of a very clear coming together of the conceptions of both parties. This concerns above all the establishment of market mechanisms in the economy....A certain meeting of ideas has taken place on the question of workers' self-management.

"In the government's 'Theses,' you no longer find generous — even general — statements about this similar to those contained in the 'Orientations of the Reform' in 1981. The present document reveals the strategy of a slow retreat, the disappearance of certain elements of self-managing controls. Solidarnosc, for its part, has taken a much less determined stand on self-management than in the resolution of its congress....

"The most disturbing thing is the question of social protection. I do not share the optimism of the two documents as regards the results of a radical 'marketization' of the Polish economy....In the 'Position of Solidarnosc,' you find nothing on this but the sliding scale. If it were not for the stamp 'NSZZ Solidarnosc,' no reader would imagine that this was the position of a union....

A departure from the spirit of the 1981 reform

"To sum up, I think that from both sides we are seeing an evolution that represents a departure from the spirit of the 1981 reform. The new conception is much more one-sided. It puts the stress on the market and private property, on individual competition, increasing material differences. It favors absolute economic constraint to the detriment of social cooperation....

"In my opinion, this evolution is more in the way of thinking of the elites than of the social base. It does not leave much chance for reform. Every compromise in this framework will be fragile, if it is not accepted by the main social groups. You can see looming up the dramatic problem of the renewal of the social mandate of the Solidarnosc structures. Until this is done, documents such as the 'Position of Solidarnosc' will reflect the opinions of elite groups selected more or less by chance."²⁷

These debates in Solidarnosc testify to the latent identity crisis that the movement has been going through for years, and also reflect an essential pre-occupation of the Polish workers. ★

4 NEWS FROM THE FOURTH INTERNATIONAL

WESTERN EUROPE

International youth camp

THE FOURTH summer camp of youth organizations in political solidarity with the Fourth International was held in July in the mountains of La Verna, Italy, 60 kilometers from Florence.

The camp followed the student mobilizations in Europe last winter — notably in France, Spain and Italy — and proved to be a big success, with over 800 participants. A good number of these were not members of the youth organizations involved. The camp was therefore an occasion to bring together young people only recently involved in politics.

The camp lasted a week, and its programme included forums and exchanges of experience in the recent struggles, as well as commissions where more emphasis was given to information and political elaboration.

The South African revolution was a central theme, including discussions

led by an Italian representative of the African National Congress (ANC), as was the subject of Central America, with participants from the Sandinista Youth and the Salvadoran FMLN. Among the many commissions, one was also held on the Middle East with Palestinian militants from the occupied territories. The questions raised by the oppression and struggles of women were also a central feature of the discussions.

A morning was given over to problems of sexuality and AIDS, a subject that particularly affects young people given the moral crusades being led by some governments.

The camp was particularly successful for the Italian youth organization, Rivoluzione, who had one of the biggest delegations with nearly 200 participating. The work that these comrades did in constructing the camp site and the facilities out of practically nothing was exceptional. The success of the camp will undoubtedly help to build Rivoluzione and the other youth organizations that participated. ★

OBITUARY

Emile Van Ceulen (1916-1987)

OUR BELGIAN comrade Emile Van Ceulen, aged 71, died on July 28 this year. He was one of the Fourth International's longest-standing militants, who played a very important role in the history of the POS/SAP, the Belgian section of the FI.

From the time of his joining the Trotskyist movement in 1934 to the present day, Emile Van Ceulen fought for the ideas that gave a purpose to his life: the struggle against exploitation and oppression in all their forms and the fight for a world-wide socialist revolution.

Emile Van Ceulen belonged to a generation that became involved in revolutionary politics after the experiences of the October revolution, the rise of fascism and the consequences of the capitalist economic crisis. It was after Hitler came to power, and in its turn Austria "fell" in 1934, that Emile Van Ceulen began his life as a militant. At that time, there were few in the left who understood the worrying evolution of the Soviet Union, the "homeland of socialism". Our comrade belonged to those conscious militants who did understand, disgusted by social democracy but refusing to blindly follow the Comintern. They therefore became members of Trotsky's Left Opposition.

From 1944 to 1971, Emile played a major part in the Belgian section. Around him was built the JGS (youth organization of the Belgian Socialist Party), a left wing that was to win a majority against right social democracy in 1954.

The formation of the Ligue révolutionnaire des travailleurs (Revolutionary Workers' Party) after the youth radicalization of the late 1960s — later to become the POS/SAP — fused three generations of revolutionary militants, workers and students from socialist or Christian origins.

So the militant continuity, that was an "obsession" with Emile, was assured. The existence of the Belgian section today is due in good part to the role played by Emile Van Ceulen. ★

Lesbians and gays mobilize for second march on Washington

IT IS NOW eight years since the first march on Washington DC for lesbian and gay rights. Since then, the lesbian and gay community has been under ferocious attack, both from the state and from right wing religious and moral organizations.

Planning is now underway for a second national demonstration and a series of events aimed at challenging these attacks, which will be organized this autumn in an attempt to turn the tide of homophobia.

PETER DRUCKER & ANN MENASCHE

IN 1979 over 100,000 lesbian and gay people and their supporters marched through the streets of Washington DC. Although the country had already begun to turn to the right, the thousands gathered for this historic first march were militant and confident.

They attacked then-President Jimmy Carter for his failure to ban anti-gay discrimination in the federal civil service and military; they demanded a national lesbian/gay rights law, though no such bill had even been reported out of a congressional committee; they demanded a repeal of all anti-gay laws and an end to anti-gay violence. The success of the march propelled the movement forward across the country, spurring new militancy and organizing efforts.

Eight years later, the lesbian/gay community, decimated by AIDS and driven onto the defensive by Reaganism, is mobilizing again to turn back the tide. Organizing is already under way in virtually all 50 states for the second March on Washington for Lesbian and Gay Rights, which will take place on October 11, 1987. The march has taken as its slogan, "For love and for life, we're not going back!" In fact, the march shows signs of starting the movement on a new course forward.

Organizing for the 1979 conference was hampered by serious divisions, first because of the initial reluctance of more moderate organizations like the National Lesbian and Gay Task Force to support it, and later because of the angry debates over the issue of sex between men and boys. (The final compromise call for rights for lesbian/gay youth led to walkouts from the coalition on both sides of the debate.) This

year the issue has barely arisen.

By contrast, organizing for the 1987 march began early, was broadly representative from the beginning, and has had extraordinary success in reaching working agreements. Because of this unity the 1987 march is likely to mobilize many thousands more people than in 1979.

This show of unity does not mean that the march is based on a watered-down, lowest common denominator program. On the contrary, organizing has shown a definite tilt, both nationally and in several major cities, toward the movement's left wing.

The crucial early push toward the left came from

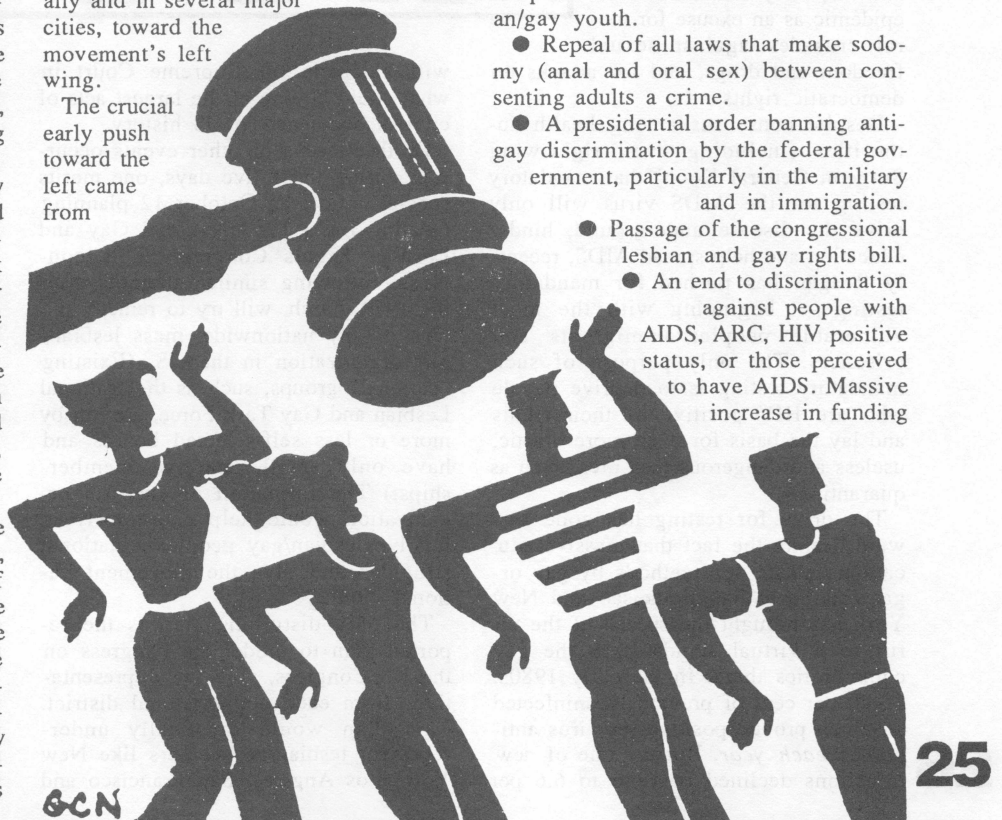
organizations of Black lesbians and gays, and other lesbian/gay national minorities. Thanks to their insistence, the march has strongly linked the struggle for lesbian/gay freedom with battles against racism and sexism, and included lesbian/gay national minorities in leadership roles at all levels. Women make up half the national steering committee, with 50 per cent representation on all leadership bodies.

The most hotly debated issue so far has been the call for an end to US intervention in Central America. Over strong protests from leftists and national minorities, the national organizers finally voted not to include that call among the demands of the march. They did call for cutting the war budget in order to fund health care. They also allowed local coalitions to raise their own demands, and organizers in both New York and San Francisco have called for the US to get out of Central America.

Key demands for the march

The initial organizing conference resulted in a pages-long list of demands. Organizers have since managed to settle on a shorter list of key demands for use on march literature. These demands are:

- Legal recognition of lesbian and gay relationships. The same rights for lesbian and gay partners as for married heterosexual couples, including rights to child custody, foster parenting and adoption. Increased services for lesbian/gay youth.
- Repeal of all laws that make sodomy (anal and oral sex) between consenting adults a crime.
- A presidential order banning anti-gay discrimination by the federal government, particularly in the military and in immigration.
- Passage of the congressional lesbian and gay rights bill.
- An end to discrimination against people with AIDS, ARC, HIV positive status, or those perceived to have AIDS. Massive increase in funding



for AIDS education, research and patient care. Money for AIDS, not for war.

- Reproductive freedom, the right to control our own bodies and an end to sexist oppression.

- An end to racism in this country and apartheid in South Africa. "None of us will be free until we are all free."

Instead of relying on the October 11 march alone to educate the US about all these demands, the movement is planning five days of events (October 9-13) that will mobilize people around these specific issues and others as well.

AIDS used as excuse for moral crusades

The issue that rouses the most anger and anguish among gay people in the US now is AIDS. Tens of thousands have already died from the disease in the US alone, and hundreds of thousands of deaths are projected by the early 1990s: in large majority gay men, and disproportionately national minorities. The Reagan administration and Congress have increased funding for research and health care only slowly, inadequately and under intense pressure, while military spending has skyrocketed. They have resisted efforts to educate people about how to have sex in ways that will substantially reduce the risk of spreading AIDS (e.g. using condoms). Instead, they have used the epidemic as an excuse for moral crusades against sexual freedom and drugs, and for attacks on democratic rights.

Despite consensus among health authorities (including even right-wing Surgeon General Koop) that mandatory testing for the AIDS virus will only drive the disease underground, hinder education and help spread AIDS, recently Reagan has pushed for mandatory testing — beginning with the most vulnerable people: immigrants and prisoners. The only purpose of such mandatory testing is to deprive people who are HIV positive of their rights and lay the basis for even more drastic, useless and dangerous measures, such as quarantine.

The drive for testing has gone forward despite the fact that massive education on safe sex methods by gay organizations in San Francisco and New York has brought the spread of the virus to a virtual standstill in the gay communities there. In the early 1980s, 15-20 per cent of previously uninfected gay men proved positive for virus antibodies *each year*. But the rate of new infections declined in 1986 to 6.6 per

cent in New York and 4 per cent in San Francisco, and to only 1 per cent this year in both cities.

March organizers are responding to attacks, among other ways, with a creative AIDS Memorial Project. Panels 2 square meters in size, each with the name of someone who has died from AIDS, will be woven together into an enormous quilt that will be displayed on October 11 on the Capitol Mall, an event that should shake the country's conscience. For 40 hours beforehand, protestors will hold processions in front of the Capitol and the White House carrying names of people killed by AIDS or by anti-gay violence.

Another event will protest against the Supreme Court's recent *Hardwick* decision, which affirmed the constitutionality of laws against "sodomy". (In a striking display of hypocrisy, the court upheld such laws' enforcement against homosexual couples, while refusing to rule on their use against heterosexual — including married — couples.) On October 13 protestors



will blockade the Supreme Court in what could be one of the largest acts of civil disobedience in US history.

Of the dozens of other events occurring during these five days, one merits special notice: an October 12 planning meeting for a 1988 National Gay and Lesbian Rights Congress. This congress, following similar attempts after the 1979 march, will try to remedy the lack of any nationwide, mass lesbian/gay organization in the US. (Existing "national" groups, such as the National Lesbian and Gay Task Force, are run by more or less self-selected boards and have only small, inactive memberships.) The formation of such an organization would help enormously to involve lesbian/gay people in national struggles and give the movement national clout.

The only disturbing sign is the reported plan to model the congress on the US Congress, with two representatives from each congressional district. This plan would drastically underrepresent lesbian/gay centers like New York, Los Angeles, San Francisco and

Boston, and skew the gathering to the right.

The lesbian/gay mobilization is relying on the weakening over the past year of Reaganism's base, beginning with the Republicans' loss of their Senate majority in 1986, and accelerating this year with the Contragate scandal. But the movement still has to reckon with the consequences of several years' offensive by the right wing and ruling class.

The Democratic Party, to which many radical as well as moderate lesbian/gay activists have ties, has responded to this offensive with large-scale capitulation. Especially after Walter Mondale's defeat in the 1984 presidential elections, in which Reagan succeeded in labeling the Democrats as the party of "special interests" (particularly the labor movement), the Democrats have worked energetically to dissociate themselves from progressive movements.

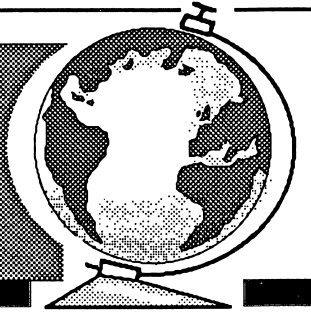
Last year, the Democratic Party stripped its lesbian/gay caucus of its right to representation on leading party bodies and financial support. Despite Democratic control of both houses of Congress and many state legislatures, only one state — Wisconsin — has ever passed a lesbian/gay rights law.

Of the many contenders already in the race for the 1988 Democratic presidential nomination, only one of any prominence, Jesse Jackson, has been at all forthcoming on lesbian/gay issues. Despite Jackson's past history of religious reservations about the gay "lifestyle", many left-leaning activists are supporting him enthusiastically, partly from a desire for unity with Jackson's substantial Black progressive base. But in 1988, as in 1984, Jackson's Rainbow Coalition will be hamstrung by its commitment to staying inside the Democratic Party and accepting the verdict of its convention. That convention is likely to lean even further rightward in 1988 than four years ago. Once again, all the Rainbow activists' efforts will be wasted.

Mass actions provide the best hope

Mass actions like the march on Washington provide the best hope for creating a strong, militant movement to the left of the two bourgeois parties. Ultimately, the lesbian/gay movement will find its voice only in an independent party that unites it with national minorities, feminists and the working class. ☆

AROUND THE WORLD



USA

Warschawsky defence meeting

LEA TSEMEL, the well-known Israeli defence attorney who often defends Palestinian victims of Israeli repression, spoke to an audience of over 100 people, including many young people from Arab countries, at Columbia University on June 30. Tsemel was in New York as part of a delegation from Israel testifying at the United Nations. The week before she had participated in a panel discussion in Greenwich Village, attended by over 150 people.

Speaking at the Columbia meeting in front of a large banner that read "Defend Victims of Israeli Repression," Tsemel explained the plight of the Alternative Information Center (AIC), the legal translating and news service which was raided by Israeli security forces on February 17). In that raid, AIC personnel were arrested, and its doors padlocked. [See IV issues 115/6/7, March and April 1987.]

Though the other staff members were released within several days, the Center's director, Michel Warschawsky — a well-known Israeli left-wing figure and a leader of the Revolutionary Communist Party, the Israeli section of the Fourth International — was held in solitary confinement and denied access to reading and writing materials for two weeks until he was released on bail. His release was largely a result of an international campaign in support of Warschawsky and the AIC. No trial date has yet been set.

Tsemel and Berta Langston of the US Committee to Defend Michel Warschawsky and the AIC also spoke about the Center, pointing out that in spite of the confiscation of their printing equipment, the AIC newsletter *News From Within* has continued to publish. AIC activists are trying to raise the \$20,000 plus expenses they have incurred in legal fees and the cost of replacing equipment. They have appealed to all those who defend the AIC's rights to continue their activities to help this effort. Towards this end, those at the meeting donated \$187.

Tsemel also focused her remarks on the plight of Palestinians in Israel and the occupied territories 20 years after

the Israeli occupation of the West Bank of the Jordan River. She described how even the most elementary democratic rights were denied to Palestinians. ★

[From the September issue of the *US Journal*, Bulletin in Defense of Marxism.]

BRITAIN

Stop the deportations!

BRITISH immigration laws came under the international spotlight when over 50 Tamil refugees from Sri Lanka staged a protest by undressing at London's Heathrow airport in order to avoid deportation. Only the interference of the courts made it impossible for the Tory government to deport the Tamils.

After this, the Tamils were imprisoned on the ferry Weymouth. They have gone on hunger strike, not only in protest against the terrible conditions on the prison ship, but also to force the government to reconsider their plea for asylum. Recently, the government decided to deport five Tamils. But, once again, the courts decided that four of these should stay while their cases are reviewed.

The British government has consistently argued that it is safe for all Tamils and Sinhalese to return to Sri Lanka if they are not wanted for criminal offences. The argument is that the Sri Lankan government is a democratic one, and that it has given such guaran-

tees to Britain.

Since the so-called peace accord in Sri Lanka, the British government has been arguing that no refugee from Sri Lanka need be admitted to Britain. This is despite the riots which occurred in Sri Lanka since the accord, the assassination of a "liberal" Sinhalese member of parliament and an attempt to kill the prime minister. The peace accord has not brought stability to the island.

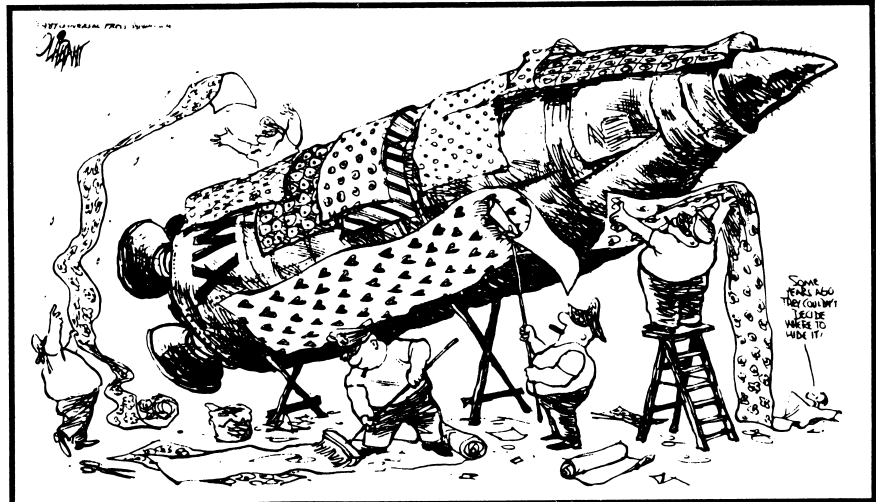
The same arguments have been used to justify the deportation of Viraj Mendis. A Sinhalese revolutionary who has been living in Britain for 14 years, Viraj Mendis took sanctuary in a church in Manchester in December this year to avoid deportation by the Home Office. [See IV 112, January 26, 1987.]

They are determined to deport Mendis because his case has become a national symbol of the fight against the immigration laws. The media have been forced to report on his case thanks to a nationwide campaign. On July 11, 4,000 people demonstrated in Manchester in support of Mendis.

The Viraj Mendis Defence Campaign has been able to mobilize support from the Church, including from the Bishop of Manchester. Such support has made it difficult for the Home Office to send police into the church to arrest and deport Viraj Mendis.

But since the June general election, moves appear to be underfoot to do just that. The Home Office and police have been intent on breaking the links between the defence campaign and the Church, using pressure, slander tactics and even physical attacks.

The defence campaign is continuing to build support for Mendis' right to stay. Letters of support are needed to step-up pressure on the Home Office to reverse their deportation decision. Send copies to the Bishop of Manchester, Bishop Court, Bury New Road, Manchester M7 0LE, GB; and to the Viraj Mendis Defence Campaign, c/o North Hulme Centre, Jackson Crescent, Manchester M15, GB. ★ Finn Jensen



"I believe in the next generation"

ONE OF the few surviving veterans of the peasant armies of the Mexican revolution, Don Felipe Ramos remains politically active at the age of 87 in the Partido Revolucionario de los Trabajadores (PRT), the Mexican section of the Fourth International. He was interviewed by Lars Kjellander, in an article published in the August 20 issue of *Internationales*, the paper of the Swedish section of the Fourth International.

Q *QUESTION. Could you tell us how you became a revolutionary?*

Answer. My mother was raped by a general, whose name was Andrés Castregon. That is how I came to be. To escape the shame, my mother set out on the roads and ended up in Chontajuatlan, near Taxco, in the state of Morelos. There, she married a man named Ignacio Ramos de Estrada, when she was already pregnant with me. He became my father. I was raised by him and took his name.

When I was six years old, I went to work with my father. He worked on a *hacienda* called Los Dolores. There, I saw the overseers knock down peasants when they faltered from fatigue, and just leave them lying there. When I saw my father beaten because he could not carry his load any more I cried.

The peasants had to carry everything on the *hacienda* on their backs — stones, sugarcane, everything that was grown there. "Why are you crying, you little good-for-nothing?" an overseer said to me. "If you don't stop blubbering, you'll get a thumping." Then I kept quiet. But I started thinking. "Someday, there has to be a way to show these bosses what is right," I thought.

And I kept on thinking on that until one day in March 1914, when I said to

my father, "Father, I am going to find this revolutionary named Emiliano Zapata, who is fighting for the land that has been taken from the poor people."

He did not want to come with me. Then I asked an older brother, who was 19 years old, but he did not want to come either. He did not want to make the revolution. I said to my father, "Why did you have so many sons, if they only grow up to be cowards? I'm getting out of here."

I took my bag, my old blanket and, since I was still a believing Catholic, I also took my holy picture of Santiago.

I went down the street and joined up with three other local people who were also going up into the mountains. "What are you going to do there, kid?" one of them asked. I said that I was going to look up Zapata and that I would join him and make the revolution.

"Do you think that bullets are pieces of bread, you snot-nosed kid?" he went on. But we started on our way, past Puente de Islas to Punto de los Hornos. There we found Emiliano Zapata.

The other three got guns and ammunition and everything from Zapata. At first they did not want to give me anything. Three times they asked me what I wanted to do. I answered that I wanted to get rid of the government that was beating the backs of the Mexican people. Then, I got my .44 and my cartridge belt.

We fought several battles in the lands around Quiramula and Tlapala. I spent two months with Zapata, four with Carranza and the rest of the time, up until April 1919, I fought under generals in Morelos.

Zapata was murdered, the revolution ended, and we had to work.

I got three scars in the revolution. I took a bullet in the leg, one in the stomach and one in the forehead. (Don Felipe took his hat off and showed me a deep dent in his forehead.) The bullet that hit my forehead bounced off a tree. That is what I have left from Zapata's revolution, three marks on my body.

Q. Why did the revolution fail?

A. I blame the leaders. They relied on the petty-bourgeois forces. Emiliano Zapata and Pancho Villa marched into Mexico City and took the presidential palace.

But after that Zapata did not try to take governmental power himself, nor did Pancho Villa. They wanted to go back and fight in the countryside so that the land would belong to the peasants. And, since they thought that the revolution had won, they turned over the power to the petty bourgeoisie.

Carranza had also travelled around in the countryside and promised the land to the peasants. They planned Zapata's

fall skillfully. Carranza told Zapata and Villa that he had taken the side of the revolution and that he would help them win. But he lied and arranged to have Zapata murdered in an ambush on April 20, 1919.

The government came into the hands of the bourgeoisie, and the same sort of government is in power today.

Q. Does Zapata's memory live on among the new generations of peasants?

A. Yes, I am convinced of that. All the parties say that they are revolutionary, all the parties swear by Zapata today.

But I do not see any political force in Mexico besides the PRT that really stands for what Zapata fought for.

There are a lot of people who talk a great deal about Zapata and the revolution. Do you ever see a government office where there is not a picture of Villa or Zapata or some other revolutionary leader? But in actual fact, they don't care a damn about us poor people.

I do not want to see the next revolution lost, to see millions of people risk their lives and their health only so the bosses can laugh at us and at the Zapatistas.

I have confidence in the new generations. I have written a song that ends with the following verse:

"I am old, and will soon lie in my grave,
but I believe in the next generation.
On the other hand, if I am wrong,
I will rise up out of my grave, and
scare the life out of all of you." ☆



Emiliano Zapata