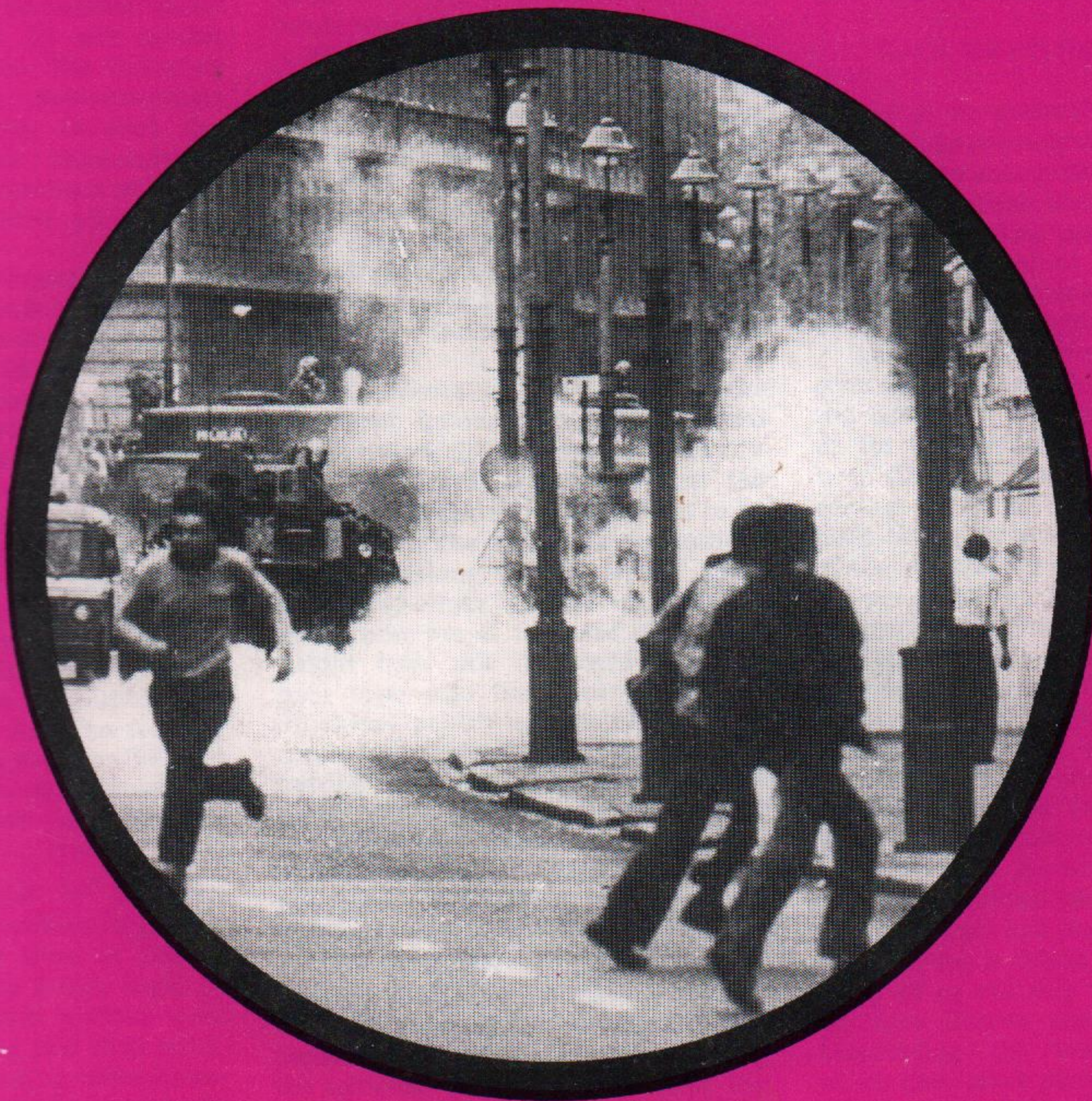


INTERNATIONAL VIEWPOINT

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ISSUE No 17



GROWING CONFRONTATION IN POLAND BETWEEN WORKERS AND WRON

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Outlawed by Jaruzelski

Solidarnosc prepares its answer

Jacqueline Allio/Claude Sevrac

The clandestine leadership of Solidarnosc has just clarified the call it made following the outlawing of Solidarnosc, hardening the tone. The national strike called for November 10 will be for eight, not four, hours. The following day there will be demonstrations throughout the country to mark the anniversary of Polish independence. Further street demonstrations will take place between December 13 and 17.

This statement is important because the strike in the Gdansk shipyards had brought to light the lack of national co-ordination, (See IV 16). The regional leadership of Solidarnosc supported the action of the shipyard workers, which began on the morning of October 11. But the TKK, Temporary Co-ordinating Commission — underground leadership of Solidarnosc — stayed silent while solidarity strikes broke out in several regions of the country, and the workers in the biggest enterprise in the country, the Nowa Huta steelworks in Cracow, decided to organise a support demonstration on October 13. The working class waited for a sign from the TKK on what to do: extend the strike movement? Organise other forms of solidarity action?

The belated appeal by Zbigniew Bujak calling on the workers to go into occupation-strike like those at Gdansk was ineffective because it only began to circulate as the shipyard workers went back to work, thinking that their struggle was isolated. The cut in communications and the decision of the junta to militarise the enterprises were impelled by the workers' determination.

In most of the regions the workers have expressed their disarray, and often their anger, with the lack of co-ordination in the underground union. They have their doubts about the possibility of success of an action of the scope of November 10 if the leadership shows itself as timorous and inconsistent as its directives.

COMBATIVITY MAINTAINED

It is not the combativity of the working class which is in question. The angry explosions which took place throughout the country, the massive attendance,

about 30,000 people, at the funeral of a young worker killed by the ZOMO on October 13 at Nowa Huta, have, on the contrary, shown the determination of the working population, their refusal to bend, and, very often, their wish to do battle with the security forces.

There was a qualitative leap in the consciousness of the workers after the delegalisation of Solidarnosc. Even the idea of 'national understanding' was put into question by more than one who had believed in it the very day before. How could one believe in 'understanding' with this minority of bureaucrats in uniform who only keep themselves in power by increasing repression and violence?

The breadth of the boycott of the new trade unions during the first two weeks following the adoption of the law has also shown definitively that the workers will not allow themselves to be intimidated. The 'tricks' of the authorities emphasising that in certain cases, like Nowa Huta, former members of Solidarnosc are at the head of the new unions have not impressed many. 'A poor type who has been got by the SB (secret police)' was the type of comments that came out spontaneously on hearing the television announce this 'great news'. Gales of laughter greeted the news that a woman activist of Solidarnosc, asked by a colleague to join the new union, had replied, beside herself, 'Get lost, you should rather be buying me new winter shoes.'

Everything indicates that the boycott will be massive, at least for the first few months, and that we are indeed seeing the national 'referendum' called by the TKK on October 9. A referendum where 'the government will not be able to falsify the results'. Moreover, the official press has shown itself uneasy with the first results. Side by side with apologetic articles vaunting by the column the new unions, so 'democratic' and so 'independent', some editorials, such as that of *Zycie Warszawy* October 15, 1982, allowed their concern about the editorial attempts to make believe that 'just as before, throughout the country, spontaneously, massively, and enthusiastically, founding committees for the new unions are being set up'. Such reports, 'often false, awake distrust, and can only irritate public opinion'.

However, the massive rejection, which the editorial of *Zycie Warszawy*

implicitly recognised, and the combativity of the workers are not sufficient to banish the scepticism of many of them about the ability of the underground union to really lead immediately, broad co-ordinated national actions.

LACK OF CO-ORDINATION

'One of our greatest weaknesses is the lack of links not only at regional, but at local or even enterprise level,' stated one activist of Solidarnosc the day after the delegalisation. This particularly explains why the number of activists sending regular dues to the union has fallen markedly since the beginning of the year.

Although the workers contribute generously for specific aims, such as for the families of the internees, or the ill, or for the payment of fines resulting from strikes or demonstrations, the percentage of those who understand the need to regularly finance the activities of the underground apparatus is hardly ten per cent in an area like Warsaw, and five per cent in Silesia.

'One of the big problems we face,' continued the same activist, 'is security. In Warsaw they are once again arresting about fifteen people a week who play a decisive role in the clandestine press and the inter-enterprise links. Everyone distrusts their neighbour because the SB has proved for months that it is doing systematic infiltration work and is able to weave a net and proceed to collective arrests when it thinks it has a network. Many of us will only work with people we have known since December 13. Considering the innumerable arrests which have taken place in the last while, this has much reduced the field of activity and complicates co-ordination.'

Without falling into the defeatist attitude of certain articles in the Western press, which give a more than sombre picture of the state of the resistance, because of this 'police obsession', it must be recognised that distrust is growing in certain circles of workers and intellectuals. This is not without implications for the ability of the movement to take action as a whole.

Thus, the initiative of the workers in the big enterprises to form an 'Inter-regional commission for the defence of Solidarnosc' (MKO), to set up organisational structures which would allow circulation of information and bring into line of the condition of struggle, appeared all the more important to try

to overcome the gap that until now has existed between the different regions. This commission, composed of activists elected at different regional or national occasions of Solidarnosc in 1981, explains that it does not want to substitute for the elected leadership of the union, but emphasises that it is necessary to change the methods of work, and to work out a programme of action which will take forward the struggle for the satisfaction of the workers' demands.

The declarations of the MKO have received some response in the underground regional press which has published them quite systematically. The setting up of this body, side by side with the TKK, which has received much criticism, answers an obvious desire of the workers for better co-ordination of their initiatives, convinced that they cannot win through dispersed struggles.

'If we go on strike just to be militarised the next day with no reaction from other workers it's just not worth it,' said one worker from the south. The majority of workers who express themselves in this way show that they understand that it is even more dangerous to take one-off actions, as the repression which follows costs dearly. Too dearly. Every strike results in tens or hundreds of sackings, as in Gdansk after the strike of October 10-11. Every demonstration leads to tens or hundreds of arrests, as in Cracow in the week October 11-17. Many of them are released after 48 hours. But with fines of ten to forty thousand zlotys.

How can such a fine be paid when the lowest wages are still this side of 6,000 zlotys? It has to come from the union funds, or the money sent from abroad to help the underground movement. But this means so much less for the daily functioning of the union, which is very costly. All the necessities; paper, ink, stencils . . . have to be bought on the black market.

And then, how many will not be released? Will they be tried and get several years in prison, swelling the ranks of those who have already been — more than two thousand at the end of August, perhaps twice that today. The conditions of detention are frightful. An incredible number of internees released this summer are ill — often gravely — after nine months 'only' of detention and undernourishment. Reports of cruelty and even torture are more and more numerous in the underground press.

Thus, one cannot treat lightly the consequences of the spontaneous actions which bear witness to the courage of the Polish working class and its absolute opposition to the present regime, but which has not yet led to a victory, even partial.

There has been no lack of workers arguing in the underground press that it is necessary to move to a higher stage of the struggle. The patience of the people is at an end. The pressure of poverty is



Solidarnosc demonstration (DR).

increasing, and giving rise to hope that we can finish with the regime. The events of the last few months show that passive resistance is becoming active resistance,' said one (1). 'The aim of the Solidarnosc trade union is written in the programme adopted at Gdansk: a self-managed republic. Only self-management will allow those who are not allowed to speak today, and who are not at their homes, to feel themselves masters in their own country, and begin to live in dignity,' said another (2). 'It is not by chance that the self-managed Republic is an object of attack for the Communists. It is about a struggle for power in the country, for power for society and not for a small group of ideologues. Such an objective immediately poses the problem of confrontation. When will society arrive at a sufficient stage of maturity? When will the enemy be weak enough? It is difficult to tell today. To judge the maturity of our people you have to ask this question: What is the weak link of this system, the point at which it should be attacked so that it finally collapses? Without a doubt, this point is the regime itself. The main threat for the Communists in the whole period since August is that power would escape their control, and the active strike represented open defiance for them. It's to defend their power that they use force. And the second point about the enemy, is exactly that they have force — on the economic as much as the military level.' (3)

PREPARE THE CONFRONTATION

These activists understand that it is necessary to *prepare* such a test of strength. Just as the worker quoted further above affirmed his scepticism on the effectiveness of fragmented strikes and demonstrations, and who added, 'But if we succeed in co-ordinating our actions, if the November 10 strike is not limited to a few places here and there, if we can show that we can bring the country to a standstill for several hours, then we must go on without hesitation. This would be a first step in creating a relationship of forces that would force the regime to concede what it refuses today.'

The recent appeal of the underground leadership, proposing a calendar

of initiatives to prepare a general strike next spring will meet their expectations inasmuch as it is coupled with directives and initiatives which give a real co-ordination to the struggle. Many workers are no longer satisfied with written declarations, and even the most radical often have a much more cautious appreciation of the rhythm of events than the TKK has in putting forward a general strike for the spring.

They are considering how far there is to go to establish, in a clandestine way, with all the problems that brings, regular union structures at the level of the enterprise; means of liaison between enterprises, towns, and regions. All things which are indispensable for the most important tasks just now; circulation of information, successful actions which give the least possibility to the military of arresting the 'leaders', the preparation of self-defence of the factories, work towards the army to win soldiers to the workers' cause, etc. Things on which there have been many questions in the underground press in the last ten months, but which have still not been very generalised.

These workers explain that, on the other hand, they are aware that economic conditions, already so bad for the working class, can only worsen during the winter months. This may create moods of desperation. But for the bulk of the working population the worsening in the standard of living is likely to have the contrary effect. The increase in understanding — that it is indeed the question of power which is at stake — brings even more cautiousness. To know that a strike 'is worth' a sacking, or some years in prison, cannot be disregarded by a father or mother of a family who earns six to eight thousand zlotys a month, and pays 25 zlotys for an egg, 300-400 zlotys for a kilo of meat, or three thousand zlotys for a pair of shoes on the official market (on condition that they have the necessary coupons, which is not the case most of the time) or six to seven thousand on the black

(1). *Druk*, October 6, 1982. Clandestine bulletin in Warsaw.

(2). *Kierunki*, No. 21, September 22, 1982. Clandestine bulletin in Warsaw.

(3). *Op. cit.*

market. The necessity of preparing oneself for a confrontation, to know where one is going, how, and with what in hand, is thus a question raised more and more frequently by the combative workers.

INTERNATIONAL SOLIDARITY

Another question which always comes up in the discussions is the international context in which the struggle is taking place. The threat of Soviet intervention, while it is present in every mind, is much less of an obstacle than in the past to discussion on the question of power and the perspective of a confrontation with the military junta. On the other hand, questions on the attitude of workers in other countries of Eastern Europe are very frequent. The feeling that the fate of the Polish revolution is in great part linked to the extension of their struggle and the support that the workers of these countries will receive internationally, is a lot deeper than in the past.

While it is impossible to predict today what will happen in the Eastern countries, we know nevertheless what we must do *within the Western workers movement*.

The impact of the demonstrations of 20,000 in Paris and 40,000 in Rome after the banning of Solidarnosc was immense in Poland. The call of the Italian trade unions to the European workers organisations to take up unified solidarity actions with the Polish workers — an appeal widely broadcast by Western radio in Poland — has also raised many hopes among those who know of it.

The appeal from the Co-ordinating Committee of the Big Enterprises in Warsaw, which we publish below, is addressed for the first time not only to trade unions, but also to the Western workers parties. We should do everything possible to circulate it and respond to those who have addressed us thus.

The dates set by the Solidarnosc leadership in the weeks to come should set the pace for our activities. They should be a lever we use to win the broadest solidarity, through actions from demonstrations to one-hour solidarity strikes, and taking up the proposal to give one hour's salary to the outlawed Solidarnosc, and the organisation of rallies and meetings that will inform Western workers of the true aims of the struggle of the Polish workers, the difficulties and the progress of the underground movement in its struggle against the minority in power.

On November 10 and 11, on December 13, 'anniversary' of the crackdown by Jaruzelski, the Western workers movement, and revolutionary Marxists in particular should show the Polish workers that they are at their side, and that they will support them in every stage of the struggle without respite in which they are engaged. ■

Open letter from the Polish workers

General Jaruzelski's junta is moving systematically to wipe out every vestige of the gains the workers made in the wake of the August 1980 strike. On October 8, 1982, following the directions of the apparatchniks and the Orgbureau of the Polish United Workers Party (PWUP), the deputies to the Sejm approved a law 'dissolving' the Independent Self-Managed Union Solidarnosc. By this action, the junta not only trampled on the August 1980 accords and all the agreements signed with the Independent workers and farmers organisations in the period from August 1980 to December 1981. It also dishonoured the pledge it itself made on December 16, 1981, that Solidarnosc and the other unions would be allowed to resume functioning in accordance with their charters.

Today, through such civilian mouthpieces as Rakowski, the junta is trying to convince a terrorized society and international public opinion that since December 13 Solidarnosc has not sought any dialogue or mutual understanding and therefore must now be liquidated in the interest of 'socialism' and 'world peace'.

We want you to know that these claims are abject lies. On many occasions, the members of Solidarnosc and their underground leadership, including our Solidarnosc Inter-Enterprise Committee in Warsaw, have demonstrated their readiness for discussion and dialogue. The only condition we posed was an elementary one, one that was humanitarian as we asked for the release of Lech Walesa and the other arrested and interned members of Solidarnosc. We were prepared to engage in such dialogue even in the circumstances of the state of war, under the threat of guns and tanks.

From the end of June to the end of August, we declared a moratorium on strikes and demonstrations throughout the country. At the start of July, in the statement entitled 'Five Times Yes,' which was distributed in hundreds of thousands of copies, the underground leadership of Solidarnosc officially said it was ready to engage in discussion and dialogue. Again, in a leaflet drawn up for the August 31 demonstrations, which were planned to be peaceful but were turned into a bloodbath by the police, the Solidarnosc leadership appealed to the junta for a compromise and a mutual understanding. Four days before these demonstrations, with the agreement of the underground leadership, five leaders of Solidarnosc, together with representatives of the Confederation of Autono-

mous Unions, addressed a joint letter to Jaruzelski, including an urgent appeal for dialogue.

The junta rejected not only the appeals issued by the underground Solidarnosc. It also ignored efforts by the Church to achieve conciliation. Appeals by advisors and individual leaders of the union for dialogue and compromise also ran up against a wall of silence. The memorandum of leading Polish intellectuals belonging to the study group 'Dosiadczenie i Przyslosc' ('Experience and the Future') and the theses of members of Solidarnosc contained in the work *The September Following December* — all these ended up in the generals' trash baskets.

These facts show that in this dramatic moment of our national history the workers movement organized in Solidarnosc displayed political maturity and patience. The junta, on the other hand, was and still is prepared to sacrifice anything to maintain itself in power — the lives of workers, the economy, and national sovereignty. This, in fact, has been avowed in an open and cynical way by the junta's press spokesman Urban, 'the government can always feed itself.' It should not be forgotten either that in the sixteen months in which it operated openly, the most notable show of force by a union of ten million workers was the removal from a factory in a wheelbarrow of two bosses of the corrupt old unions. But what sort of a record has the junta accumulated over the past ten months — dozens of workers murdered, hundreds tortured by the police and imprisoned, thousands sentenced to long years in prison for their trade-union activities, hundreds of thousands subjected to terror in the militarized factories.

If you hear the junta's mouthpieces telling you about 'bloody plots' supposedly being hatched by our union, remember that they are the representatives of murderers whose authority is based precisely on this record of violence and terror.

In Poland today, the authorities see the unions more as a police problem than as a means for the political and economic emancipation of the working class. To prevent any misunderstanding, we should point out here that the military junta is not fighting to defend socialism. It is fighting to protect its rule and its privileges. It is for this reason that it has no interest in dialogue with Solidarnosc. If there are any who still believe that what is at issue in Poland is defense of



'people's power' or 'collective ownership of the means of production,' they are, if we may be permitted to speak plainly, 'hopeless idiots.' The junta in Poland is endeavouring to maintain at any cost a 'socialism for idiots,' a socialism based on the whip, terror, corruption, prisons, despotic factory managers, military commissars, police agents, and apparatchniks. The Polish workers have already had quite enough of this kind of 'socialism' and 'people's power.'

The junta thinks that it has 'dissolved' Solidarnosc. So, some of you may be wondering whether there is still any point today in talking about Solidarnosc and supporting it. You should know that Solidarnosc cannot be 'dissolved,' since the Polish working class cannot be 'dissolved.' It can be crushed, but that would mean the physical smashing of Polish labour. This is no exaggeration on our part. You say 'Solidarnosc' we say 'freedom.' You say 'socialism,' we say 'justice and self-management.' Ask yourselves, can the workers' aspirations for freedom, justice, a decent life, and control over their workplaces be confined within prison walls? Since they cannot, Solidarnosc has not been, and cannot be, 'dissolved.' Even driven underground and with many of its leaders and activists jailed, and itself 'dissolved,' Solidarnosc still strikes fear into the generals and the apparatchniks.

Friends,

We are hoping for joint statements and mass actions by the unions and workers parties in the West in defence of the Solidarnosc leaders persecuted by the junta. We hope that you will call the military 'gorillas' to account before world public opinion on every possible occasion for their record of violence and terror. We

hope that you will focus attention on the fact that the so-called trade-union law passed on October 8 is in violation of the convention of the International Labour Organization and that it in fact puts recognition of new unions in the hands of the secret police. The sort of trade-union movement the junta is projecting for the coming years is nothing but the 'model' followed by Pinochet in Chile. The application of this 'model' involves the transformation of the entire state administration into a kind of 'army of overseers' endowed with special rights and privileges, on the model of the old Czarist 'Table of Ranks' (the Nomenklatura).

We are convinced that the unions and the workers parties in the West are prepared to take up a consistent struggle in

support of the rights of labour in Poland. We are convinced that in supporting Solidarnosc you will also find an effective way for defending the fundamental interests and rights of workers in the West. For today and the days that lie ahead, we are depending on you for help and solidarity. That is what we look for most of all from you. From us, there is one thing you can count on — that we will fight on against the junta.

Solidarnosc Has Not Perished.

signed: Miedzysakladowy Robotniczy Komitet
Solidarnosci Warszawa
Solidarnosc Warsaw Inter-Workplace Workers Committee
October 17

British Labour Party leader supports Solidarnosc

To
Zbigniew Bujak
President of the Regional Executive Commission of Solidarity, Warsaw

From
Ken Livingstone
Labour Leader of the Greater London Council, London

Dear Friend,

To you, and through you to all the members of Solidarity in Warsaw I send my cordial greetings and warmest best wishes. I wish you victory in your struggle to defeat the martial law regime of General Jaruzelski and to reinstate your union rights and all the other democratic conquests of the Polish working class.

As a representative of the labour movement in the city of London I will do all I can to develop links between the labour movement in this city and your free trade union in the historic city of Warsaw. This is in the interests of our common struggle for human, civil and workers rights and for democratic socialism.

The consolidation of the reactionary military dictatorship in Poland threatens us too because it would strengthen the reactionary political forces in our country who today are energetically attacking working class rights, union freedoms and the right to strike.

Your struggle against the martial law regime and for the establishment of peace in Poland unites with the struggle of our labour movement for peace, nuclear disarmament and against the danger of war in Europe and the world.

We are nearing the second anniversary of the historic victory of the Polish workers, the registration of your free trade union in Eastern Europe. I am sure that through the struggle of the Polish workers, in which you are a prominent leader, Solidarity will be able to return to legal activity and defend efficiently the rights, the dignity and the interests of the workers.

I am giving this letter to another of your union leaders, Mr. Zbigniew Kowalewski, whom I have had the pleasure to meet at our annual Labour Party Congress in Blackpool, with the request that he transmit it to you. I would be very happy for you to publish this letter in your Solidarity underground press.

friendliest greetings,
Ken Livingstone

"We will not be fooled a second time"

Letter from a Polish worker

The following letter was written in October by a Solidarnosc activist to the Polish language Imprecor, which is published in Paris but circulates widely in Poland.

The working class is the basis of every society and the means of production belong to it by right. The means of production have never and can never belong by right to bureaucrats or capitalists.

In our country, the bureaucracy, a monster that grew by feeding on the work and sweat of the strata that are the foundation of society, has denatured the idea of socialism by violating the basic principles of democracy in the way it runs the state.

Mouthing socialist slogans, the bureaucracy got the workers in our country to lower their guard and then reduced them to the role of human robots, whose only right is the right to work.

In the constitution of the People's Republic of Poland it specifically says that in our country power is exercised by the working people of the cities and the countryside. It follows from this clearly that power should not belong to a small group of people whose only link with the people is that they were born in working-class or peasant families.

So, it is essential that the working class struggle to realize the ideas of socialism, because no one is going to hand it power voluntarily. We have to recognize that *what is essential for the genuine development of socialism is a combative working class that, whenever the government established by it fails to rule in accordance with its will, can throw out that government and establish another.*

For this, it is necessary that the workers understand that we have to win freedom, democratic rights, equality and justice ourselves and that victory is possible by building a mass movement. An example of this is our struggle in August 1980.

At that time, we were united by a common grievance. This led us to put aside antagonisms arising from different philosophies and political views.

Today, we have to unite. Any division in our movement weakens us. In order to take up building the general strike, we have to eliminate divisions. We should be united by a common aim, getting the state of war lifted, getting those jailed and interned released, regaining the right of the trade unions to function.

Reactivating the unions is a fundamental goal, but it cannot be the only one. We have to work out, starting right now, a plan of action for the future. A general problem now is the lack of coordination and letting ourselves get locked in to the life of conspiratorial circles is limiting the circulation of the independent trade-union press. This state of affairs is promoting confusion among a significant section of workers.

Printing facilities are limited, but the possibilities for the spreading of independent publishing are not, and these possibilities should be exploited to the maximum.

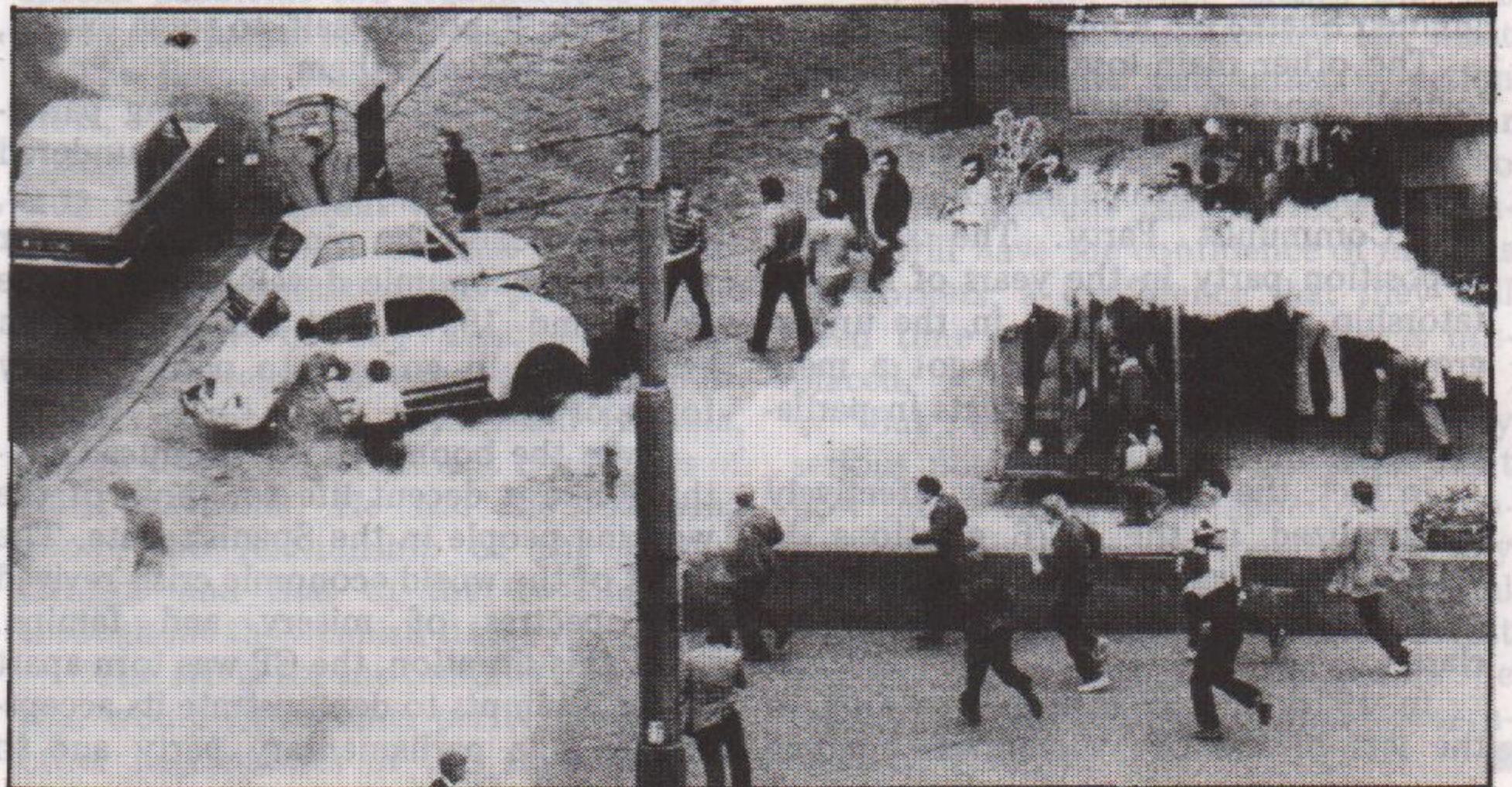
One worker said: "OK, the next apple has started to ripen. To be a good one it will need a lot of sun. If it gets that it will be big and sweet. But it will not fall on ground gently as the one did in August. It will fall with a loud noise."

If we are ready for a struggle, we cannot play around with trying to reach an understanding with the bureaucracy, because there can be no understanding with people who have driven us into destitution. They must go. And they will go. No one can fool us about that.

In the debate over orientation that is going on today, Jacek Kuron suggests that we should seek an understanding with the Soviet bureaucracy. That is a false idea. What we need is an understanding with the working class of the USSR. The working masses of the USSR have the same problems as we. It is logical for us to unite our forces in a struggle against the totalitarian rule of the bureaucracy, although this is a long and difficult road.

The power that we are fighting against in Poland oppresses many peoples. What

Police teargas demonstrators on second anniversary of Gdansk accord (DR).



is called for is uniting this struggle, because the working masses all over the world want the same thing — equality, justice, freedom, and democracy. The world workers movement is watching our battles against injustice attentively. But the mass media in Poland are blacking out the support of workers in other countries for us. Nonetheless, news of it still reaches us. And the knowledge that we are not alone gives us strength. It lifts our morale. We are grateful for everything the workers in other countries are doing to make it possible for us to win.

Although we have many problems, we are confident that we will win, although it is hard for us to reassemble our forces after the blow the bureaucracy dealt us on December 13, 1981.

Every demonstration supporting our struggle for our union, Solidarnosc, reinforces our confidence that we are on the right road and we are going to follow it to the end.

Working people united in the fight for their rights cannot be defeated. Even if the parliament voted laws every day denying Solidarnosc legal status, it could not expell Solidarnosc from our minds and hearts. That is why we are confident of victory. The fact that we have lost a battle does not mean that we are defeated. Having learned from experience, we will get rid of what was wrong and rise again.

We will not let ourselves be fooled a second time. We will take our fate in our own hands, and we will not surrender it to anyone. We ourselves will determine what is good and what is bad for the working people. ■

Signed: Wiktor

Absolute majority for the workers parties in Spain

Gerry FOLEY

The results of the October 28 Spanish elections confirmed the dramatic class polarization that has been shaping up in the country.

Since this is a process going on in the society as a whole, the vote count produced no surprises. It was almost exactly what all the informed observers expected.

The great majority of the working-class voters backed the only immediate alternative they saw for a working-class government, the Socialist Party. The SP got 201 seats, an absolute majority, and 46% of the popular vote.

The next largest party, the Alianza Popular (People's Alliance) got only about half as many votes as the SP, 25.3%. But it was the second biggest winner in the elections, increasing its vote from a mere 6.1% in the last parliamentary elections in 1979.

The Alianza is the party of the hard right, politicians directly compromised by their relationship with the Francoist dictatorship. It is not too unfriendly to the putschist sentiment in the military.

In the first bourgeois democratic elections in Spain since the civil war, in June 1976, after Franco's death, the AP represented Francoism and was swamped. The bourgeois politicians who stood for parliamentary government and liberalization won.

In this election, the alternative of 'normal' bourgeois parliamentary rule was reduced to rubble. The governing Democratic Center Union had already split before the election. The two pieces together got barely 10% of the vote.

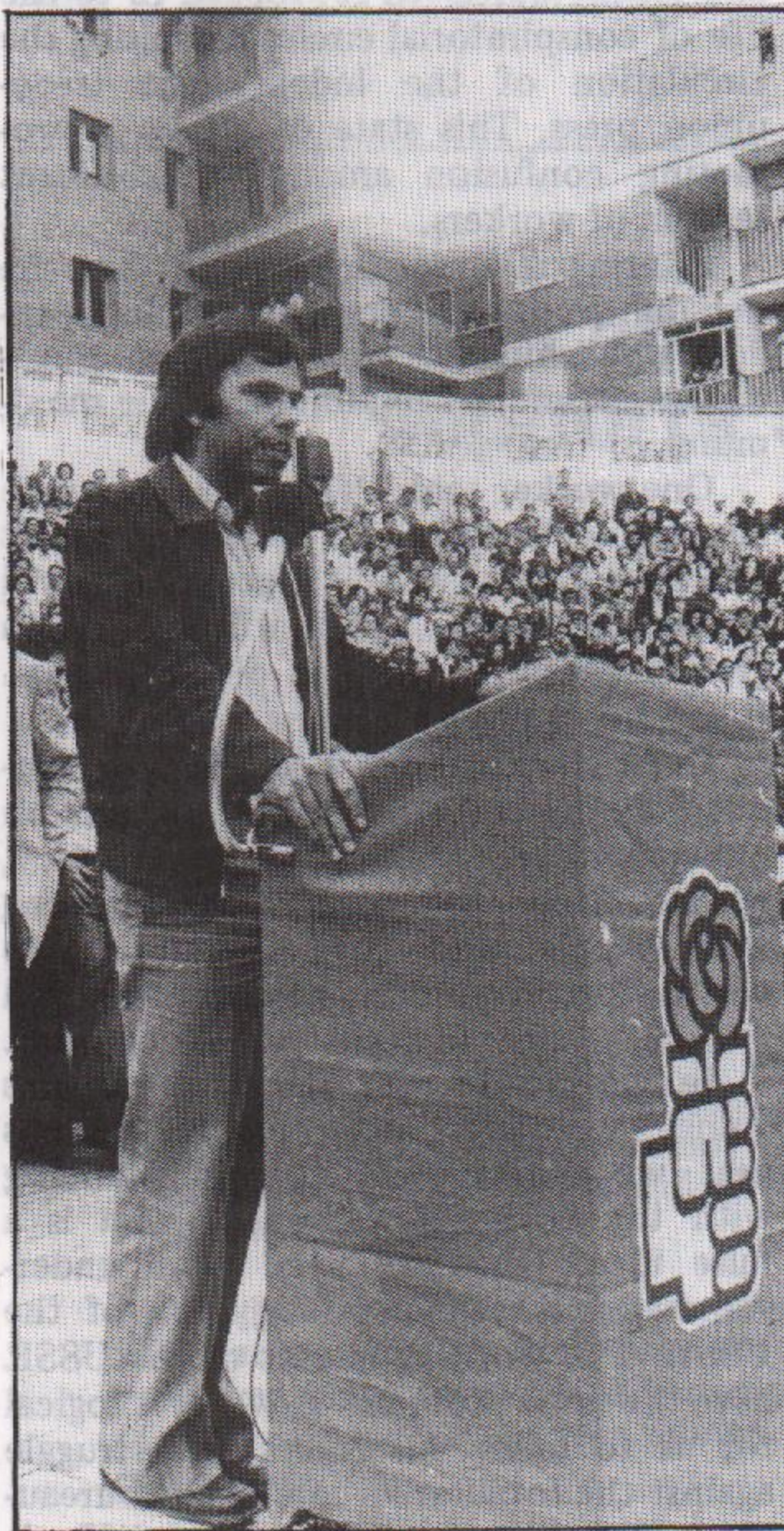
The larger group that maintained the old name got 7.2%; the Social Democratic Center, headed by the first post-Francoist premier Suarez got a mere 2.2%.

The other main loser in the elections, logically enough, was the party that had put the biggest stake on the stabilization of normal bourgeois parliamentary rule — the Communist Party. The strongest opposition party in the years of the dictatorship, the main force in the underground workers movement, got a mere 3.8% of the vote and five seats in parliament.

In fact, the CP was already effectively marginalized in the 1976 elections, in which the SP gained a commanding lead as the main electoral party of the working class.

In 1976, the SP managed to look to the left of the CP, which was bending

over backward to prove to the Spanish bourgeoisie that it could be trusted as a housebroken parliamentary party. The CP stressed the need to support the bourgeois politicians leading the democratization.



Felipe Gonzalez, leader of the PSOE (DR).

The SP, however, was more concerned with competing with the bourgeois parties for a stronger role in parliament. Therefore, it posed itself, to some extent, as an alternative to them.

The perspective of stabilizing parliamentary democracy essentially foundered on the international economic crisis, which knocked the pins out from under the rapid economic development of the 1960s and 1970s that led the Spanish bourgeoisie to go over to parliamentary forms of rule.

Even the boom had not produced anything like a decent life for most of the working people in the Spanish state. The onset of the world economic crisis revived the spectres of misery and famine.

In this situation, the CP was torn apart by its attempts to demonstrate its acceptability as a parliamentary party and to

take its distance from Moscow. The Euro-Communist leadership gave up their traditional dogmatic armor without being able to offer the ranks of the party any gains or credible perspective to replace it.

The one place that the CP had major electoral strength, in Catalonia, it suffered an important split in the year preceding these elections, with the formation of the PCC last spring.

In fact, the party fell so deeply into disarray that the Workers Commissions, the country's largest labor confederation, which it built and almost totally controlled, did not back the CP's campaign. The prostration of the CP, for the moment, has created a new situation of relative political fluidity in the Workers Commissions, and this is likely to be a factor in the recomposition of leadership in the factories in the coming class confrontations.

The CP leaders explained their rout at the polls by saying that the voters subordinated all other considerations to getting a different kind of government and therefore voted for the SP as the biggest opposition party.

But in a parliamentary system, the eclipse of the CP was not an automatic result of the fact that it could not offer any credible perspective of forming a CP government. It was big enough to offer a political alternative by voting for an SP government in parliament and then putting pressure on it. But there was no point in complicating things by voting for the CP, when it did not offer any proposals substantially to the left of those of the SP.

In its November 5 issue, *Combate*, the central organ of the Liga Comunista Revolucionaria, the section of the Fourth International for the Spanish state, commented:

"The CP's disaster followed a campaign in which the party activists gave everything they had, the last peseta, the ultimate effort, with an enthusiasm deserving of a better cause. What is more, the ultramoderate policy of the SP left a lot of space on its left that the CP did not try to fill, although it certainly could have...."

"In reality, the CP's electoral disaster is another demonstration of its crisis of strategy and leadership. It has lost all credibility as a party of struggle, even among broad sections of its own ranks. Very few people thought that a strong CP would be a 'guarantee that the SP will not move to the right.'"

The Partit dels Comunistas de Catalunya (PCC — Party of Communists of Catalonia), which was formed in April on the basis of about half the CP members in Catalonia, got 1.3% of the Catalan votes. This new formation represented a combination of conscious left currents in the CP, Moscow loyalists, and a confused combination of both. It was generally identified by the mass media as a "pro-Soviet" party.

Commenting on the results of the PCC's first electoral campaign, *Combate* said:

"This was a poor result for a party that includes the most militant sector of the Catalan workers movement. We imagine that there will be a discussion in the party on the balance sheet. We hope that the outcome will be a strengthening of the commitment to struggle and mobilisation that gave rise to the PCC, not a step backward, nor a reinforcement of the line of claiming that it is *the* party, which has been coming from the leadership.

"The result of these elections, as well as the experiences and struggles in the most recent period strengthen our conviction that a revolutionary alternative able to compete with the reformists can only be built in Catalonia and in the rest of the Spanish state on the basis of the unity in action of all revolutionaries.

"Even a united-front campaign in Catalonia would probably not have elected any deputies this time. Such a campaign would have been overshadowed by the polarization and the pressure to 'make your vote count.' But it still would have been a very important help for continuing the struggle after election day, which is the important thing."

The LCR participated in far-left coalitions in Madrid and in Catalonia. In both cases these united slates received only a token vote, 5,000 in Catalonia and 3,700 in Madrid.

As for Madrid and Catalonia, *Combate* commented: "The results are not very different from what we expected, but we still cannot say that we are happy with them. In any case, whatever the limitations of these campaigns, they were valuable experiences. We hope those who participated with us will draw the same conclusion and continue and strengthen this united front.

"Our general conclusion from the campaign is that even in those areas where there was a coalition or where we stood alone without asking people to vote for us, this approach of unity in action must be extended and strengthened in the coming months." (In a number of areas, the LCR alone or with other forces ran token campaigns in order to get its ideas out and then withdrew shortly before the vote.)

In Valencia, the LCR participated in the Esquerra Unida del Pais Valencia coalition which got 10,000 votes, or 0.5%.

With respect to the results in Valencia, *Combate* said: "The Valencia United Left is a very specific case because a united-front of action has been established there for some time. It was a campaign whose

importance went beyond Valencia as a test of the possibility of such fronts and the usefulness of such campaigns. The campaign was obstructed by the severe floods that hit the region. So, the results were modest but they have to be seen in comparison with these difficulties."

In the Basque country, the LCR called for a vote for Herri Batasuna (the People United), the Basque revolutionary nationalist party. The HB increased its vote significantly from 192,000 in the elections for the new Basque local authority, in which it could be expected to do better than in an all-Spain general election, to 206,700.

Although the opposition to the institutions of the Spanish state is greatest in the Basque country, the pressure of the demand for a general alternative was also felt there.

The big winners were the PNV, the traditional nationalist party, and the SP. The first increased its vote from 365,420 in the local assembly elections to 406,804. The latter from 178,800 in the assembly elections (as opposed to 247,700 in the last all-Spain general election in 1979) to 463,200. For the first time, the SP managed to outdistance the PNV to become the first party in the Basque country, even though it went out of its way in the campaign to convince the Spanish bourgeoisie that it would not make any concessions to the Basque nationalists.

Nonetheless, the nationalist parties together still have a much larger vote than the SP, and the revolutionary nationalists have half as many votes as the broad moderate nationalist party. The total vote in the area for the centralist bourgeois parties was 257,000.

The vote for the CP was only 22,000. In the period before the election, most of the local CP joined a moderate left nationalist formation, Euzkadiko Ezkerra. The EE got 98,000 votes, exactly the same as its score in the assembly elections, while the CP vote was nearly wiped out.

Radicalized nationalist groups exist among nearly all of the oppressed nationalities in the Spanish state, but they are more or less grouplets outside of the Basque country. That is the only area where the national question occupies center stage in politics, and this creates special problems for organizations active on an all-Spanish state level.

The Basque sister organization of the LCR, the Liga Komunista Iraultzailea (LKI) ran candidates in four constituencies. But throughout the area, it backed the Herri Batasuna because of the role that this organization has played in the development of the Basque struggle.

In its preelection issue, *Combate* published an interview with Inaki Esnaola, one of the most prominent candidates of Herri Batasuna. He said the following about the relationship of the Basque struggle and that of the working class throughout the Spanish state:

"The HB is for the building of a nation that would fit together perfectly with the other nationalities in this state. And of

course, this process must be led by the working class. From the all-Spanish state left parties we ask solidarity in this struggle, and we will reciprocate.

"For us, what the LKI has done here is a principled approach to the problem of the nationalities, and we are pleased with it."

The results for the individual LCR-LKI candidates are not yet available as we go to press.

The tensions created immediately after the elections by the assassination of General Victor Lago Roman, commander of the Madrid garrison, the politically key unit of the Spanish army, indicate that the pressure created by class polarization is continuing to rise sharply after the vote. During the funeral, a crowd gathered outside army headquarters shouting, "the army to power."

As cravenly pro-bourgeois as it is, the SP leadership will be the first leadership to hold office since the civil war not directly controlled by the bourgeoisie. This will be the first government in more than forty years that the masses expect to represent them, a government in which the authoritarian institutions of the Spanish state, in particular the police and military have no confidence. It is also a government taking office in a period of growing economic and political turmoil.

In its concluding comment on the election results and their implications, *Combate* said:

"In the coming months there will be no lack of occasions to demonstrate that it is both necessary and possible to build mobilizations to force through the process of change against the opposition of the right. In the struggle against putchist blackmail and the civilian warhorse of the putschists, Fraga (leader of the AP). In the fight for jobs for all and in combating capitalist sabotage and capital flight. In forcing through withdrawal from Nato and demanding that the government set the date for a referendum on this question. In fighting to advance the recognition of the right of peoples such as the Basques to self-determination.... In exposing the hypocrisy of those who defend the 'right to life,' while they accept a flourishing illegal abortion business. In winning public schools and putting an end to private business in education.

"In these and other battles that are shaping up, the revolutionary left must take the initiative and unite in action with many of those who have voted for the SP. It would be a grave error not to take into account that the new government will have the confidence of millions of workers, a confidence that they will need time and experience to see is misplaced.

"But we would make an equally serious mistake if we did not stress right now that without the weapon of independent mobilizations, independent of any 'compromise' with the right, this electoral victory can be transformed into a lost opportunity, a mere interlude before the return of a still more reactionary government of the right."

The stakes in the Brazilian general elections

Elections for all levels of government will take place in Brazil in November, in a situation in which the dictatorship has been rapidly losing ground and the other dictatorships in the region are decaying or tottering. These elections come, for example, only a matter of weeks after the Bolivian military dictatorship was forced to turn the government over to a civilian regime by a general strike. Furthermore, a major factor in the Brazilian elections will be the first mass workers party that has emerged in Latin America since the 1930's, the Partido do Trabalho (PT), the Workers Party, a party that has elements of a socialist program and in which revolutionary socialist currents are influential.

Sao-Paulo — In May 1982, General Tulio Chaga Nogueira, commander of the Third Army, made an urgent appeal to the Brazilian bosses:

"The heads of businesses should pick their candidates for the November elections on all levels. If they fail to do so, they will run the risk of seeing this country which was born and will die democratic, suffer from the impact of socialist designs."

The general's wishes are being satisfied and his predictions are being borne out. The bosses are putting up their candidates and pouring money into the elections. But on the other side, the Workers Party (PT) is running a lot of working-class and socialist candidates. It is campaigning in 21 out of the 23 Brazilian states.

This is the most important aspect of the coming elections for the federal and state legislatures, state governors, mayors and city council members. For the first time since 1946, the workers have a chance, thanks to the PT's campaign, to vote for their own candidates. Moreover, the PT's national electoral platform, "Land, Work, and Freedom," calls in no uncertain terms for a struggle against the military dictatorship and for socialism.

THE MILITARY POLITICAL MANUEVERS

In a famous speech to the general staff of the armed forces, the man behind the Brazilian "liberalization," General Goldbery Couto e Silva, clearly defined the objective of the reform planned by the dictatorship. It was to stabilize the regime



Partido do Trabalho (DR).

by creating the appearance of a multi-party system. In fact, it would be a two-party setup, offering a choice only between the dictatorship's party (the Social Democratic Party, PDS) and "the only viable opposition," the Brazilian Democratic Movement (PMDB).

In pursuance of this perspective, the government carried out certain maneuvers. For example, it promoted a phantom party, the Brazilian Party of Labor (PTB), headed by Ivete Vargas (the daughter of the 1940s populist caudillo Getulio Vargas) and former president Janio Quadros, also a successful populist politician. This was a means of countering the Democratic Labor Party (PDT) of Lionel Brizola, former governor of the state of Rio Grande do Sul. Brizola's party is linked to the Second International.

The government also engineered the unification of the People's Party (PP), a small party representing some bankers, with the PMDB in order to push the latter further to the right.

But the most important maneuvers were successive changes in the electoral laws in order to smooth the path for the dictatorship's candidates.

Some of these changes speak for themselves. In July 1982, barely four months before the elections, the constitution was drastically overhauled. Representation of the small states in the federal legislature was increased. The requirement that

parties get a minimum of 5 per cent to be represented in parliament was abolished. This was so small parties such as the PTB could get into parliament and serve as pawns in building coalitions.

The presidential elections were postponed to the beginning of 1984. An individual constituency system was set up to replace the present system of proportional representation. A two-thirds vote in congress was made necessary to amend the constitution. The makeup of the electoral college that selects the president was altered, with the state elections getting an increased weight, regardless of the population of the states concerned.

Fearing the possibility of electoral coalitions among the opposition parties, the government even before these other changes established the system of the "tied vote," according to which no split ballots are to be counted. Unless all the marks on a ballot are for the same party, it will be thrown out.

This means that voters have to write on ballots drawn up by the government six names in order for the posts of governor, senator, member of the federal parliament, member of the state legislature, and member of the city council, and that all these candidates have to belong to the same party. It is impossible to predict what the result of such a procedure will be.

A test carried out among functionaries of the supreme electoral tribunal showed

that more than 50 per cent made mistakes, thereby invalidating their ballots. Some sections of the opposition are accusing the government of trying to effectively cancel the elections by organizing them in such a way that more than 50 per cent of the votes will be thrown out.

DICTATORSHIP IN DISARRAY

Nonetheless, these heavy-handed maneuvers and their sometimes contradictory character are a symptom of the disarray among the dictatorship's strategists. The reason for their confusion is the difficulty, we might even say the impossibility, of averting defeat of the PDS in the elections.

It is likely, in fact, that the dictatorship is going to find itself still more acutely isolated in the electoral arena. Its isolation has, indeed, been steadily growing since the beginning of the 1970s.

In the vote for the senate, the vote of the Alliance for National Renewal (ARENA, the predecessor of the PDS) dropped from 47.3 per cent in 1970 to 35 per cent in 1978. In the congressional elections, in the same period its vote dropped from 48.4 per cent to 40 per cent.

The final blow to General Goldbery Couto e Silva's scheme was the emergence of the PT and prospects of a strong vote for its most militant candidates (the polls predict that Luis Inacio da Silva, "Lula," will get 15 per cent to 20 per cent of the vote in Sao Paulo).

The possibility that the PDS may end up in a minority position in the main states, and even in the federal legislature puts the dictatorship in a still more difficult position and is forcing it to prepare new moves to coopt the opposition forces.

Big maneuvers are already in the works. Some sections of the PMDB grouped around Tancredo Neves, the party's candidate for governor in the state of Minas Gerais; other former members of the PP; and the old right wing of the PMDB have met to work out a plan for forming a Liberal Party after the elections.

This party would then collaborate with the dictatorship and unite with the PTB in order to try to form a new majority coalition with the PDS. Moreover, as a result of such a split, the PMDB, which will probably remain the strongest opposition party electorally, would suffer a new blow and lose some of the forces that came to it as an opposition to the dictatorship.

This political wheeling and dealing is designed for a period when all sorts of difficulties are going to increase. The PT is going to get a substantial representation in parliament, and its electoral score will represent a step forward in consciousness and organization for a large number of workers. On the other hand, after the November 15 elections, the Brazilian



PT leader Lula addresses meeting (DR).

bourgeoisie is going to try to impose a severe austerity policy, involving a very drastic wage freeze and massive layoffs. And this could spark large-scale workers mobilizations.

DARKENING ECONOMIC HORIZONS

The Brazilian economy is sinking into a very grave crisis. In 1980, the growth of gross national product was still 8%. This year, it has fallen by 2%. It is possible that the annual rate of inflation will top its previous record of 113%. (In the first half of this year, the prices of cigarettes, automobiles, and electrical appliances have already increased respectively by 130%, 127%, and 133%).

Alongside this, the imperialist companies and some sections of finance capital are continuing to make fabulous profits. The profits of 178 companies in the financial sector have increased by 87.6% this year. This amounts to a sum equivalent to the minimum wage for 8 million workers, six times the national budget for education and culture, and 22 times the appropriation for public health.

At the same time, the ills of the Brazilian economy are worsening. The foreign debt is growing at a dizzying rate, and is expected this year to exceed the fabulous sum of 100 billion dollars. In 1974, the service on the foreign debt (repayment and interest) amounted to 33% of exports, in 1975 it was 41%, in 1976 47%, in 1977 51%, in 1979 62%, in 1980 68% and this year it will be 71%.

The chairman of the National Confederation of Industrialists, Mario Garnero, summed up the view of the employers in the following terms: "If this rate of inflation continues, it is going to break our backs, and break the back of the 'liberalization' too."

Former minister of the economy Simonsen made a public political comeback to call for an immediate, drastic pay freeze, which would mean an immediate cut in real wages. This is undoubtedly what the dictatorship is planning to do after the elections.

Even if the outcome of the elections is favorable for the dictatorship and its maneuvers succeed, this will not be sufficient for it to be able to impose such an austerity program. The regime will have

to resort to repressive measures as well, while these may not be all out.

We are already seeing some demonstrations of force that point in the direction of more repression. The clearest one, both by its severity and its choice of victims, was the sentencing of some priests and peasants in the state of Para to a total of 130 years in prison for taking part in land occupations.

Against this background, five parties are running in the elections. The PDS and the PMDB are campaigning in all states, the PT in 21, and the PDT and PTB, in only a few.

CROOKED ELECTIONEERING

The PDS campaign is based on the power of money, the state apparatus, and corruption. One need only cite a few outstanding examples. In the state of Cera in the impoverished northeast, one of the poorest states in the country, the governor has hired 16,000 new porters and drivers.

During the World Cup soccer matches, the rerunning of parts disputed by Brazil was interrupted by the governor's political propaganda. In the city of Amargosa, in Bahia state, where there is a severe water shortage, the trucks bringing water were covered with propaganda for the PDS candidates. In the state of Mato Grosso, the municipal employees were required to sign a pledge to support the PDS. Innumerable such cases can be cited for every state.

The PMDB campaign is focussing on the theme of "make your vote count," trying to capture the discontent against the dictatorship and to limit the electoral impact of the PT and the PDT, which may get good results in Rio de Janeiro and in Rio Grande do Sul.

In fact, within the opposition the PMDB and the PT are competing for leadership in the struggle for democratic rights. The involvement of the Brazilian Communist Party (PCB), as well as the Communist Party of Brazil (PC do B., a pro-Albanian group) in the PMDB lends the party a certain credibility as a militant opposition to the dictatorship.

The two Communist parties are the most intransigent of the PT's open enemies. Recently, Joao Amazonas, gene-

ral secretary of the PC do B, said "the PT and 'Lula' are the best allies the government has today."

The PMDB's political and programmatic pretences are creating a lot of confusion among workers about its real role and providing a left cover for its most right-wing candidates.

Nonetheless, many PMDB candidates cannot even pretend to be opponents of the dictatorship. For example, Miro Teixeira, the candidate for governor of Rio de Janeiro, is simply the political heir of the outgoing governor, Chagas Freitas, one of the most corrupt politicians in the country, who happens to be the only non-ARENA member appointed to a governorship by the dictatorship.

Then there is Camata, the candidate for governor of the state of Spirito Santo, who was an ARENA deputy for 16 years and even vice chairman of the government's parliamentary fraction when General Geisel was president.

A CRUCIAL TEST FOR THE PT

The quotations from interviews given by leading PT candidates published below will have an indication of the sort of campaign the party is running. But it should be stressed that this campaign is a crucial point in the development of the PT. First of all, the whole party has had to declare that it stands on the same militant socialist program, thereby unifying the campaign of the PT candidates.

Secondly, the PT has been impelled to take its distance publicly from the bourgeois parties, which were not content just

to use the "make your vote count" argument but resorted to less public operations, such as attempts to bribe candidates.

For example, it has come to light that in Minas Gerais PT candidates for mayor were offered a million cruzeiros (more than US dollars 3,000) to withdraw. In the state of Goias, the PMDB resorted to a similar practice, but offering only 300,000 cruzeiros.

But the most important thing for the PT, is that this campaign is giving it a chance to reach millions of workers, to publicize the PT's proposals, to build a base for the party and reinforce it.

At the same time, the elections are opening a new chapter in the history of the PT. It will have a large number of elected office holders at all levels, in the federal and state legislatures and in the city councils. It may even elect a few mayors. In all, it will have thousands of elected officials.

The PT will have greater possibilities for political action and a better organization and apparatus, as well as a better press. But it will also be exposed to the danger of parliamentarist corruption. This danger is increased by the fact that the right-wing of the party has the best chance of electing its candidates (thanks to its financial resources and patronage practices), and it will therefore emerge stronger from the elections, even if it is the more militant candidates today that are making the biggest impact in the campaign, including on TV.

Moreover, the PT will face more complex political problems after November

15. It will have to come up with answers to the big political and strategic questions in order to respond properly to the dictatorship's maneuvers, the PMDB's proposals to include the PT in some state governments, and to the fact that the PT has reached a point where it cannot continue to grow spontaneously.

Finally, after the general elections, elections are to take place inside the PT for its legal structures, that is, its city, state, and federation directorates. These elections will undoubtedly be the occasion for an intense battle among the various currents in the party, some of which are going to have important financial and parliamentary bases of support.

Already the PT right-wing is opening up a war against those currents that have a coherent class-struggle line. The various revolutionary socialist currents that exist in the PT will be tested in this struggle, and what they do will have an effect on its outcome.*

By going through the experience of these elections, the PT is going to face a new stage in its development in a more difficult political situation and with greater internal conflicts.

* Both the Moreno and Lambert currents, which have Trotskyist origins, have a significant following of activists in the PT and both have lines that will not help the development of the party and could damage it. In conformity with their sectarian turn everywhere, the Morenoites are opposed to working with other currents, and are pushing for a split as soon as possible.

The Lambert group, in an equal and opposite way, has a line of "deep entry" that means that they avoid fighting on political questions where a struggle is necessary to advance the consciousness of the PT ranks.

Interviews with leading PT candidates

"Lula" leader of the Sao Paulo steelworkers, candidate for governor of Rio de Janeiro state

From the July 14 issue of *Em Tempo*, the PT magazine.

Em Tempo: Both the PT's national program and its Sao Paulo state program call for "people's councils." What does this mean to you?

Lula: We have still to define precisely what we mean by this. I think that the role of these councils will be to discuss everything done in the municipal and state governments and also to monitor these decisions.

In distinction to those who talk a lot about "power sharing," without making any concrete proposals, the PT thinks that these councils should have a certain

decision-making power and not just be consultative bodies serving to justify decisions made beforehand in small committees. They should include representatives of neighbourhoods and trades and professions, as well as factory representatives.

At the state level, the base units should be the people's councils in the towns and cities. So, at the state level we would have a people's assembly — it might be called by some other name, if this one has developed bad associations — and this body would determine in a real way the authority of the state government.

As we see things as a party, it makes no sense to try to govern at any level unless you do this together with the people. We do not consider the executive powers to be the private property of those who govern, as is the tradition in this country. All political decisions, including the appointment of the various authorities,

must be subject to collective discussion by the population.

Em Tempo: Some sections of the opposition are starting to talk about the formation of broad democratic coalition governments after the November elections, which would include all opposition parties. In your opinion, what should the PT do, if it wins or if it loses.

Lula: The PT has not yet discussed this question. But whatever opposition party wins the elections, it will not have the strength to govern by itself (in the state of Sao Paulo), and so it will need the political support of all the opposition groups.

As regards the PT, I think that the way for us to assist the governments of other opposition parties is by offering criticism and monitoring their decisions.

It would not be enough to participate and to accept positions to say that the party would really share in running the

government. I don't think that the PT is interested in that sort of thing, at least that is my opinion.

What we should do is work outside any such governments, criticizing and exposing what they do wrong. We should organize mass movements to get the most out of the various governments. To do that, there is no reason to accept any posts in these governments.

Nonetheless, at the proper time, the PT will call state and national conventions to decide this question. But as for me, I will never agree to a government controlled by any of the other opposition parties. I think we have quite a different role to play than that.

Where we win, not all the posts in the government are going to be given to PT members. But we will not try to share governmental responsibility with the other opposition parties in a coalition framework. Governments we control will appoint qualified people to various posts in accordance with the general line of our policy. Dividing up governmental posts only serves to promote corruption and weaken party organization. That is why, even where we win, I am not favorable to forming coalition governments. ■

Sandra Starling, PT candidate for governor of Minas Gerais

From the August 25 Em Tempo

Em Tempo: How is the PT using the election campaign to give impetus to workers struggles?

Sandra Starling: In Santa Vitoria, in the mining triangle, for example we managed to hold a meeting of 200 to 250 agricultural laborers in the city hall. These are people who get up at 4.00 a.m., but they stayed from 7.30 to 11.00 at night to discuss with us and present their demands.

Our election campaign is a struggle campaign. That means that we don't just go to those places where we expect to get votes. For example, I went, along with Vicente Nica, a PT candidate for the national legislature, to Cochoeirinha in the northeast of Minas, where we formed a PT city directorate.

I was the only gubernatorial candidate at the mass meeting in solidarity with the poor peasants who were driven off their lands. They were subjected to brutal repression by the political police in Minas. Along with a 200-man-strong detachment of military police, the political police sent 150 agents armed with machine guns, revolvers, and bayonets to intimidate the workers.

Several trucks bringing workers to the meeting were stopped outside Cachoeirinha on the pretext that they did not

meet safety standards for transporting people. The government has shown no such concern for the vehicles that are used every day to transport agricultural workers to and from their jobs.

Em Tempo: How is the campaign proceeding in the big working-class centers in Minas?

Starling: Before organizing big rallies, we started our campaign in the working class with what we called "factory gate stops." We waited for the start or the end of shifts (it was best when the workers were going in) and we distributed campaign bulletins, explaining what the party is and why it is important for the working class to have a party of its own.

We went with PT banners, and the party activists and candidates held mini-rallies outside the factory gates. In the followup meetings at the factory gates, we distributed leaflets presenting our candidates for governor and senator and one answering the claim of the PMDB that the only way to make your vote count is to vote for them. Then in a third round of such meetings, we campaigned for the legislative candidates. Now, we are going to organize big rallies and street demonstrations.

The PT campaigns have become the means of spreading the experience of workers struggles, workers demands, and the trade-union mobilizations from one area to another and for denouncing repression. That is the role the PT is playing in the election campaign. ■

Perly Cipriano, PT candidate for governor of Espirito Santo

Given to our correspondent in September

International Viewpoint: What form does the argument that the only way to make your vote count is to vote for the PMDB take here in Espirito Santo state?

Perly Cipriano: Our country is in an economic slump, although the government is trying to cushion the recession while the election campaign is going on. The PT has its own program for uniting the working people in the cities and the countryside. In order to accomplish that, we have to confront not only the military dictatorship but also the opposition parties that in practise want to push the PT out of the picture, arguing that a vote for us is a wasted vote.

In Espirito Santo we have a typical example of the hypocrisy of this argument. The government's candidate, Carlitos, was one of the founders of the MDP (the precursor of the PMDB), then he went over to ARENA, and today he is the candidate of the PDS.

As for the PMDB's candidate for governor, Camata, he was a representative of the military dictatorship's party for 16 years, from the 1964 military coup to 1980. During General Geise's candidacy, he was even vice chairman of the PDS parliamentary fraction.

Finally, the PMDB's candidate for lieutenant governor is one of the biggest landlords in the state of Espirito Santo. He has just bought a property for 900 million cruzeiros, and is tied up with the most conservative circles in the state.

The government wants a "democratic adjustment" from the top. That is why it needs elections, to work out a new alignment of political forces. It seems to be losing to the PMDB. But that is only on the surface. Political professionals are shifting from the PDS to the PP and the PMDB, but that is only to make the official opposition party more trustworthy for the dictatorship.

The government is going to lose in some states. But with governors such as Camata here, Tancredo Neves in Minas, and Moro Teixeira in Rio de Janeiro, and many others of this ilk, the result will not be a defeat for the governor but a realignment of its forces preparing the way for the creation of new parties in 1983. The government still have a margin for maneuver for making deals with these so-called opposition parties.

So, the PT is the only party that is going to go on fighting in 1983. So, it is easy to see how important its role is. ■

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Repercussions of the Polish workers movement in China

This article was first published in October Review, a revolutionary Marxist journal published in Hong Kong, in August 1982. The English translation is by October Review, who will publish it in English in November 1982.

The 1980 autumn heat has reached from Gdansk to Beijing, across ten thousand kilometers.

When the workers' strike movement started in Poland, regimes of the Soviet bloc at once signalled a red light and denounced the workers for their "anti-socialist" attempt to form an independent trade union. The Polish United Workers Party (PUWP) was urged to respond with an iron fist.

But the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) leadership responded quite differently. It might have estimated that the Soviet army would intervene in Poland as it had done in Hungary and Czechoslovakia. In the official organ of the CCP, the *People's Daily*, anti-Soviet propaganda had been focussing on Soviet intervention in Afghanistan and Kampuchea (allegedly through Vietnam). The anti-Soviet feelings of the Polish people apparently tuned in well with their propaganda; thus its coverage on the strike movement in Poland was rather detailed and favourable. This proved to have far-reaching consequences.

On July 25 and 29, 1980, the *Peoples Daily* reported on the development of the Polish strike movement and the underlying economic reasons. From August 14, when the strike movement began to turn white-hot, the *Peoples Daily* reported on the developments almost every day for a month. In the August 14 report, it pointed out that besides the economic demands, the striking workers also "put forward the demand for reorganizing the trade union". On August 18, the front page headline read "Some factories in Poland set up Strike Co-ordinating Committees in unison, and put forward 16 demands to the government." The reportage also quoted from the Strike Coordinating Committee's communique: "Even when the strike is over, the Strike Coordinating Committee will not dissolve but will continue to struggle for the realization of their demands; they will become the provincial committees of the free trade union. . . The workers make political demands such as the end of censorship, guarantee of the freedom of speech and publication, formation of a free trade union, elimination of privileges, release of political prisoners and others." A news commentary on the same day entitled "The Polish strike movement is on the upsurge" pointed out that the workers

"also demanded the formation of free trade unions to carry out reforms in industrial management in order to expand the role of workers self-management committees." After August 20, the *Peoples Daily* even carried photos showing the strike workers distributing leaflets and the picket lines guarding occupied factories.

With the coverage already started, the *People's Daily* had to report on the result of the strike movement — the victory of the workers in forming Solidarity. On August 31, the *Peoples Daily* carried the headline: "The Polish government reached agreement with the strike committee and agreed to the workers forming an independent trade union; workers have decided to resume work."

Thanks to the reportage in the CCP official papers, the people of China have generally come to know the methods, political demands and victory of the Polish workers who have united nationally to struggle with the PUWP. The effects of the Polish events on the broad masses in China was more than the CCP leadership expected and, in the later stage, irreversible. Of course, the *People's Daily* repeatedly attacked Soviet hegemonism and warned of Soviet intentions to repeat the 1968 invasion of Czechoslovakia, hoping to divert attention from the real significance of the Polish struggle, yet it could not disguise the fact that although anti-Soviet feelings played a part, the spearhead of the Polish workers struggles was directed first and foremost at the PUWP bureaucracy. The Polish workers were putting forward demands primarily as workers and not as Poles. The *People's Daily* on August 20, had made a reference to the demand of the Polish workers in 1976: "All power to the working class!"

Indeed, as the Polish events unfolded, the CCP was increasingly aware that it was playing with fire. The *People's Daily* started to publish more articles appealing for real concern for the interests of the masses and for the people's deputies to genuinely represent the people. A big deal was made of reporting that the Bohai No. 2 oil ship disaster (caused by bureaucratism and not dealt with for a long time) was finally taken seriously by the authorities, quoting this to illustrate the government's resolve to fight bureaucratism. The papers also described how the trade unions defended the living standards of the workers and how the third session of the Fifth National People's Congress was "a congress of democracy and reform". All these were meant to persuade the people that the CCP and the PUWP were different, and the Chinese masses had no

need to follow in the footsteps of the Polish workers.

The reportage in the *Workers' Daily* is a good indication of the fear of the CCP regime. On August 22, the paper reported on the workers strike movement in Poland and also mentioned the demand for a free trade union. But after this, the paper refused to mention it again. Even on the occasion of the August 31 victory of the Polish workers, the *Worker's Daily* remained silent. Its last words about the Polish events appeared on September 1 when it reported that the Szececin workers had reached agreement with the government; Solidarity was not mentioned. Nevertheless, the impact of the Polish workers movement is obvious because the *Workers' Daily* repeatedly appealed that "the most fundamental requisite for trade union work is to link up with the masses."

Anyway, the seeds of the anti-bureaucratic struggle of the Polish workers, ironically enough sown by the CCP itself, rapidly germinated and grew in Chinese soil where the serious economic difficulties and bureaucratic dictatorship have caused a general, deep, indignation among the people. The Chinese people expressed their excitement over the Polish events in words and action.

Samizdat publications, expressing the people's true feelings, immediately congratulated the Polish workers, analysed this valuable experience, and drew the lessons from the struggle of the Polish workers. The Chinese working class also reacted by actual organization, action and strikes; the demand for a Solidarity-type independent trade union gained popularity. Even students demanded an independent students' union and started the organizational work of linking up with each other all over the country.

SOLIDARITY FROM SAMIZDAT PUBLICATIONS

Samizdat publications, whose banner is democracy and whose aim is to carry the Chinese revolution to the end, sprung up in Beijing in November 1978. It did not take long for such publications to spread all over the country. Most of them managed to stay independent of party control.

The samizdat publications responded to the Polish events with enthusiastic greetings and unconditional internationalist solidarity. Over ten samizdat publications reported and analysed the events and expressed solidarity. Firstly, the editorial of *Sea Waves* of Qingdao, No. 7 (August 1980) headlined "Congratulations to the glorious victory of the

Polish workers organization" pointed out that this is "a new era in the history of the communist movement". It said, "Public ownership of the means of production has not eliminated exploitation and repression . . . Privileges which have replaced capital are repressing the labourers in a more undisguised, intensive way than capital. There is no sign whatever of Marx's most basic idea — the emancipation of man . . . From Poland came the news of victory of the struggle of the working class. This event tells us that: socialism should be a method for seeking the emancipation of man . . . one-party structure leads to dictatorship." (The article was reprinted in *October Review*, December 1981).

Sea Waves carried in its No. 10 issue (November 1980) an article "On the irresistibility of a multi-party system in the light of the Polish independent trade union" which said: "The Polish workers strike movement led by Walesa gained victory with the formation of the independent trade union, and it has become the most glorious new starting point in the history of the international communist movement . . . When the workers go on a massive strike and themselves organize a trade union that represents the interests of the workers, when the workers have the possibility of their own independent activities, a political party in essence has come out. Political parties are simply organizations which have common purpose, unified will, a program and unanimous interests. The Polish Solidarity has all the above conditions . . . Therefore, a second political party has finally emerged in socialist Poland, and it is a political party truly belonging to the working class.

"The impact of the victory of the Polish working class is far from what they themselves can estimate, and it is not limited by national boundaries. It is a brand new milestone for the communist system. It has shaken and negated all regimes carrying the brand of socialism. It is an example for the labouring people of the socialist countries. It starts and develops the possibility of continuous revolution under socialist conditions.

"The Polish workers movement tells all communist parties that the emergence of a multi-party system in all communist countries is now on the agenda." (The article was reprinted in *October Review* January 1982.)

In November 1980, Xu Wenli, editor of *Correspondence of Studies* of Beijing, wrote "A letter to Walesa, chairman of Solidarity in Poland", greeting the victory of the Polish workers. The editorial board of *Beijing Youth* also wrote "A letter to the whole Polish people" in December 1980, pointing out that "the August 31 accords and the ruling of the Polish Supreme Court on October 10 are milestones in the course towards socialist democracy." It hoped that "all countries in the world will give fraternal aid to Poland", "We send our fraternal greetings and comradely salutes to the whole Polish people." (Reprinted in *October Review*,

August 1981) *The Times* of Beijing also carried an article in its January 1981 issue warmly praising the impact made by the Polish workers movement on all "socialist countries".

Voice of Democracy of Shanghai held a panel discussion of editors and readers to discuss the Polish workers strike movement. The *Association of friends devoted to democracy* of Qingdao even posted up leaflets and slogans on 16 December 1980 in support of the Polish workers movement and in protest against the Soviet threat of invasion.

The samizdat publications also surpassed the limits of official news coverage. The December 1980 *Free Forum* of Guangzhou, *The Sail* of Shanxi, and even the organ of the National Unofficial Publications Association — *Duty*, have reprinted "The 21 demands of the Polish workers" and "The Charter of rights of the Polish workers", so that the people can know the detailed demands of the Polish workers.

In fact, through the Polish events, the samizdat publications draw out not only the common repressions faced by the Polish and the Chinese workers but also the perspective for ending the repression. They point out that in Poland, freedom of publication can be achieved through strikes. In No. 5 of *Duty*, Xin Hua in his article "A brief discussion of the four fundamental principles" criticized the CCP's breach of the law and said that the workers, if they have to fight for their rights, must strike. "The Polish working class also struggled through strikes, and enlightened us on how to solve a whole series of questions such as how to raise the status of the working class and overcome bureaucratic rule in the existing socialist system. Thus it can be seen that strikes develop in conjunction with the development of the working class; they have played a very active role in history and now still have a progressive significance." (The article was reprinted in *October Review*, April 1981).

Beijing Youth announced that it would carry two articles "Analysis of the Polish event" and "Discussion of the Workers Congress" in its third issue, which would look at China's system of workers congress in the light of the Polish event.

As for the Qingdao *Theoretical Banner* the Polish experience brought it to adopt the perspective of the end of bureaucratic rule and consolidation of proletarian democracy. Its editorial of February 1981 issue, "The death knell sounds for the rule of the bureaucratic privileged class", pointed out that "the primary reason for the victory of the independent trade union in Poland is the quickened decomposition of bureaucratic privileges and the general awakening and true solidarity of the masses." It posed the question: "The present problem is: with what are we going to replace the rule of the bureaucratic privileged class?" It then gave an answer: "The rule of the bureaucratic class must not be replaced by the rule of the bourgeoisie. . . the only cor-

rect outlet is to build a system of proletarian democracy suitable for this particular transitional period in history, organically and firmly linking up true public ownership with true democracy so that they will complement and guarantee each other in the forward stride on the road to true socialism." It warned that "there is the possibility that China would accomplish radical revolution by a road more chaotic than Poland's . . . Let us firmly unite under the banner of proletarian democracy, and fight to eliminate all class rule, class exploitation and class repression, and help advance China's overall modernization construction!"

RESPONSE OF WORKERS AND STUDENTS

The Polish workers movement has not only had an impact on militants of the samizdat publications. Despite the government blockade of news, fragmentary information shows that since November 1980, strikes and workers' actions have repeatedly occurred in China. Moreover, the demands that the workers put forward are not limited to economic ones, but also include the demand to set up Polish-style independent trade unions. According to April 14, 1981, foreign correspondence, 20 to 30 strikes and demonstrations had taken place in China in the autumn of 1980.

Samizdat *The Sail* (December 1980 issue) reported on the spontaneous action of workers in the Taiyuan Steel Factory to fight for improving their conditions and defending their interests. This action was linked to the Polish trade union movement and the article proclaimed that "The working class of our country has reawakened." (Reprinted in *October Review* March 1981).

The official *Changjiang Daily*, 14 January 1981, reported of attempts to organize independent trade unions.

The official *Wuhan Daily*, on 29 January 1981, reported that some Wuhan workers demanded the formation of free trade unions.

The editorial of the official *Workers Daily* 16 February 1981, mentioned that in many regions (including Shanghai, Wuhan and Xian), workers wanted to organize independent trade unions.

On 8 March 1981, three printing workers from Taiyuan were sentenced to imprisonment for organizing the "China Democratic Party".

The demand to organize independent trade unions was not limited to the central plains of China. The Lhasa Radio reported on 24 January 1981 that among those arrested during a demonstration, there were workers wanting to organize an independent trade union.

It is difficult for the outside world to come to know the actual number and scale of strikes not reported in the official media. However, speculation can be made of the degree of seriousness from the fear and vigilance expressed by the government leaders.

Students were also affected by the Polish example. The official *Changjiang Daily* of 14 January 1981 reported of attempts to organize independent students unions. Samizdat publications revealed that Tu Shen, the Hunan student leader, went on a hunger strike with 87 students in October 1980 and then led a student delegation to petition in Beijing. On his way, he exchanged ideas with students from other universities, and they discussed preparations for setting up a national students' union to truly represent the interests of students.

THE CCP'S RESPONSE AND COUNTER-MEASURES

The CCP's leadership takes the Polish events seriously. It is conscious that the Chinese workers are likely to follow the Polish example and perhaps in a more radical way. When the Polish workers gained victory, the CCP leadership promptly reviewed the situation. The *Hong Kong Seventies Monthly* (April 1981) reprinted an internal document produced by the propaganda department of a provincial committee in China on 25 November 1980 and this document was already "A further discussion on the Polish event". The document reviewed the economic mistakes in Poland, and concentrated on discussing the party leadership's "decay", "degeneration", "serious bureaucratization", "antagonism to the broad masses", the fact that "the party cadres clique up to pursue selfish interests, manipulate their power to seek privileges . . . extreme disparity between the rich and the poor exists in society". The document pointed out that the "impact of the Polish event far exceeds its national boundaries". It proposed that the authorities should adopt contingent measures including the following: "to express that it would promote extensive socialist democracy . . . recognize that workers have the right to strike." The document concluded by saying that "some countries in Eastern Europe are very scared of the extension of the Polish phenomena. Czechoslovakia and East Germany have taken measures to blockade news about the Polish event, and have repeatedly published sayings condemning the emergence of anti-socialist currents in Poland. The Czechoslovak authorities, in order to prevent the extension of the Polish event, are intensifying their measures to further control of the trade unions, continue the repression on the Charter 77 Movement, and prohibit underground Catholic publications. Hungary tries to prevent the emergence of independent trade unions by giving more power to trade unions. Lately, East Germany ruthlessly repressed a strike of underground railway workers in order to prevent the appearance of the Polish event in East Germany. All these induce international observers to make a rather justified prediction that in the 1980's, "new upheavals caused by the Polish event will occur in Eastern Europe."

Although this paragraph did not mention China, its implication was obvious:



Chinese reading wall posters (DR).

what measures should China take to prevent any upheaval caused by the Polish event?

It is not known how the debate went on in the party. But speeches made by CCP leaders and the regime's subsequent actions clearly indicated the result of the debate.

In their conversation with foreign journalists or politicians, the CCP leaders have repeatedly revealed their close watch and fear of the Polish event. On 30 April 1981, Chen Yu, vice-chairman of the official China National Federation of Trade Unions, took pains to affirm that people in China who wanted to set up a Polish-type free trade union "do not get the support of the masses", and stressed that his union was totally independent from the party in its work. On 20 July 1981 when Li Xiannian, vice-chairman of the CCP, interviewed the president of the European Parliament, he pointed out that if China should fall into the same debts as Poland did, it would face the same crisis as Poland's.

At first the Chinese Communist Party introduced some reforms to overcome the separation from the people. At the end of 1980, elections of people's deputies on the county level were held throughout the country, and a system of workers congresses was practiced in some enterprises. On 21 March 1981, when a delegation from the French trade union federation, CFDT, visited China, a CCP official explained to the delegation that among China's 400,000 enterprises, 38,000 had established the institution of workers congress. He also frankly admitted that the formation of workers congresses was one of the means to prevent a Polish-type labor crisis in China.

However, since the bureaucrats at different levels of the hierarchy do not wish to give up their power, the county-level elections had run into much opposition from the cadres. The so-called workers congresses exist only in name. Besides the CCP is entrapped in increasing economic difficulties and political crises. Thus, the CCP finally decided to go on the road that Czechoslovakia and East Germany took, and carried out a ruthless repression of opposition forces.

In April 1981, the CCP authorities launched a massive arrest of democratic movement activists, and almost all the editors of the main samizdat publications were arrested. (A detailed list is given in *October Review*, April 1982). At the end of May, 1982, after over a year's detention, two of them, Wang Xizhe and He Qui, were sentenced to 14 years and 10 years in jail.

In November 1981, the Beijing Municipal government promulgated a decree forbidding the people to demonstrate, rally or give speeches at the Tian An Men Square.

In March 1980, the CCP had proposed to cancel the Four Freedoms (to speak out freely, to air views fully, to hold debates and to write wall-posters) from the Constitution, and in April 1982, the CCP Central leadership proposed to the National People's Congress to delete from the Constitution the article guaranteeing the workers' right to strike.

At the same time, in May 1982, the State Council issued "Regulations concerning rewards and penalties for workers in enterprises" which threatened workers with economic penalties and administrative dismissals in order to tighten its control over the workers.

Since the Maoist leaders were removed from power, the Deng faction has been following the Liu Shaoqi line, but the country is still bogged down in deep economic and political crises. Party cadres on all levels continue with, if not intensify, their corruption, bribery, privilege-seeking activities, so that the authority that the Deng faction had when it first resumed power has declined drastically. The party is confronted with an unprecedented crisis in faith and confidence. On this land where the people are thirsting for changes, the Polish experience is like a torch lighting up a whole pile of dry wood. The Chinese people readily identify with the Polish experience. The fear of the CCP is not unjustified because the Polish experience points out an alternative for the Chinese people and, in particular, the Chinese working class — that the proletariat will lead the peasants and allies from other layers, and this united force will challenge the Communist Party's bureaucratic dictatorship; they aim at building a country with true democracy and the people themselves managing the economy and society. The CCP's need to repress the working class and the people reflects what repercussions have been caused by the Polish event on China. For the moment, the Chinese democracy movement has been repressed and the working class is under more severe attacks. Similarly, Solidarity has been repressed. However, it has not been crushed by the authorities and its strength remains largely intact. With the deterioration of the economic and political situation and the further decay of the bureaucratic rule, the resurgence of a socialist movement for true democracy waged by the Chinese and Polish people is inevitable. ■

The radicalization of the peasantry in Bolivia

The following interview was given in October to S. Romande, a correspondent of *International Viewpoint in Bolivia*, by a group of peasant leaders belonging to the *Movimiento Indio Tupac Katari* (MITKA, the *Tupac Katari Indian Movement*) in the department of La Paz.

In brief, the *POR-Combate* (*Partido Obrero Revolucionario — Revolutionary Workers Party, Bolivian section of the Fourth International*) offers the following analysis of the peasant movement.

To understand the position of the peasant movement in the country, it is necessary to look back to the revolution of 1952 and the land reform decree of August 2, 1953, which provided for a massive distribution of land to the peasants.

Since the 1952 revolution, the MNR (*Movimiento Nacionalista Revolucionario — Revolutionary Nationalist Movement*) of Paz Estenssoro, a bourgeois nationalist formation, has staked everything on the peasant movement. It has made concessions to this movement in order to separate it from the workers movement and to be able to use it as a counterweight.

In order to establish a firm grip on the peasant movement, the MNR organized it around a network of bought-off local strongmen, *caciques*. Along with this, it took all the necessary measures to liquidate the peasant militias, and whipped up a virulent anti-Communist campaign, often directed explicitly against the Trotskyists, around the theme: "The Communists want to take away your land."

After General Barrientos seized power in November 1964, in 1965, the celebrated Army-Peasant Pact was instituted. The campaign around this was stepped up after the group led by Che Guevara began guerrilla warfare. The two main themes were "defense of the Bolivian nation" against an alleged Communist aggression and "defense of the land against the Communists."

The Army-Peasant Pact was successful to a certain extent. The independent peasant organizations were liquidated. Bodies directly linked to the army and the state were set up in the countryside. One of these was the COFADENA, a sort of state company controlled by the army, whose purpose was supposed to be to develop the economic infrastructure — roads, water, clinics, and so forth.

The whole operation was based on the *caciques*, who collaborated with the state

and the military. Often they were not even peasants, but people from the functionaries.

The success of General Barrientos' operation undoubtedly reflected the level of political consciousness of the peasants at that time. But the personality of General Barrientos himself was an important factor. He came from a peasant background and spoke both Quechua and Aymara, the two main Indian languages, (Quechua in the Cochabamba, Potosi, Oruro, Tajaira, and Chuquisaca regions; and Aymara in La Paz and also partially in Potosi and Oruro.

The tactic of the army-peasant pact was continued by the dictators who succeeded Barrientos after his death. But at the end of the dictatorship of General Hugo Banzer (who ruled from 1971 to 1978) clashes developed between the peasants and the military. Banzer was to send counterinsurgency forces against the peasants. After that, a process of political change began to develop slowly in the peasant movement.

The *caciques* began progressively to lose their authority. Antimilitary feeling began to spread among the peasantry, especially in the western part of the country. In the southern part of Santa Cruz province in the east, the situation developed differently, since that is a thinly populated area where big cattle ranches predominate. The agricultural workers are also mostly of European origin.

In the 1970s the peasant movement was forced to change its forms of organization by the increasing economic difficulties the peasants faced as a result both of the rise of prices of fertilizer and implements and the drop in prices for agricultural products on the Bolivian market. The devaluations of the peso sparked a sharp rise in inflation, which also affected the peasants.

It was in the 1970s that the *Tupac Katari* peasant union developed. It held its first national congress in March 1978. Then in 1979, the *Confederacion Sindical Unica Trabajadores Campesinos de Bolivia* (CSUTPB — *United Confederation of Rural Workers*) was formed. The founding of this organization marked a significant turn in the development of the peasant movement, since the CSUTPB was to join the *Central Obrero Boliviano* (COB — *Bolivian Labor Confederation*), thereby establishing the basis for an organized alliance between the workers and peasants.

The entry of the CSUTPB into the COB also led to the expulsion from it of the official peasant organizations linked to the dictatorship and to the Army-Peasant Pact, unions which however were supported by the Bolivian Maoist organizations.

The CSUTPB was the expression of the radicalization taking place among the peasantry. It did not recognize the Army-Peasant Pact. It adhered to the Theses of the COB and the perspective of an alliance with the working class and the students, accepting the leading role of the working class in the revolutionary process.

Along with this, radical political organizations appeared among the peasantry, such as the *Movimiento Revolucionario Tupac Katari* (MRTK), which is a member of the *Union Democratica Popular* (UDP), which was formed in 1978, and the *Movimiento Indio Tupac Katari* (MITKA), which was officially founded in 1978, but in fact arose in the mid-1970s.

The political evolution among the peasantry was also reflected by the vote gotten both by the MIR and the PS-Uno (*Socialist Party, No. 1*, a broad left-centrist formation) in the spring 1970 elections. In some departments, these parties, along with the MRTK and the MITKA, got a majority of the peasant votes, displacing the MNR and the other formations historically influential in the countryside. This marked a still partial but important break of the peasants from the traditional bourgeois formations.

At the first congress of peasant women organized under the auspices of the CSUTPB in January 1980, the need for independence from the bourgeois government was stressed, along with the need for fighting for national liberation and socialism, based on an alliance of the workers, students, and peasants.

Subsequently, the peasants played a very important role in the struggle against the dictatorship established by the military coup of July 17, 1980. This involved hunger strikes, blocking roads, the fight for fair prices for agricultural products. The convergence of peasant actions with workers mobilizations in the last phase of the dictatorship in fact marked a historic turning point.

Of course, the development of consciousness among the peasants was uneven. The most advanced experiences

came in the northern part of the departments of Santa Cruz, Cochabamba, and La Paz. The workers and peasants alliance took an active form in the mining areas during the strikes there.

When strikes broke out in the mines, the military's standard procedure was to encircle them, cut off the water and elec-

tricity, and stop food from going in. This was aimed at starving out the miners who often sealed themselves in their mines where it was difficult for the military to get at them.

In the recent mine strikes, the peasants brought food to the miners and thereby broke the military blockade. So, there

was real practical collaboration between the working class and the peasants. The peasants also often maintained communications between the various mines on strike, passing messages on from peasant community to peasant community until they reached their destination. ■

Interview with revolutionary Indian leaders in Bolivia

Question: Why was the MITKA founded?

Answer: Since the Spanish arrived in this area, we Indians have been oppressed and exploited. Up to today, we have always lived in slavery. The republic did not liberate us either from exploitation or racism. The 1952 agrarian reform did not eliminate racial discrimination, mistreatment, or oppression.

General Barrientos' Army-Peasant Pact changed nothing. It may have created some illusions, but in time it became clear that there was no change in the conditions of our lives or our social situation.

Now Siles Suazo and the UDP are trying to get support from the peasants, to win their confidence to establish another sort of pact. But it is clear that the UDP is offering nothing that will end the exploitation to which we are subjected. The UDP is not the solution.

We want to make a revolution with the working people and the industrial workers. We have to change the whole society in order to get our demands. We are for the poor and we want to fight to liberate all the poor. We want to liberate the poor people throughout the world, we want liberation for the workers and the peasants.

Q: What are the basic principles of your movement?

A: We are for equality for all, white, black, or "Indian." We don't want the Indians to be looked down on, mistreated, and discriminated against. Secondly, we want a socialist society based on community cooperation. We were the first in this country to live in a communist society. In the highlands, there are still vestiges of the community structure of this system of primitive communism. We want a socialist society that would take account of this experience, respect our cultural inheritance, our special characteristics.

Thirdly, we want a real agrarian revolution that would end the exploitation from which we are suffering both as buyers of the goods we need and as sellers of agricultural products.

Fourthly, this agrarian revolution should go hand in hand with an overall economic revolution, the transformation of all the structures of this society. And only an alliance of the workers and peasants can accomplish that.

Q: Political differences have arisen in the MITKA. What is the basis of the diffe-



Bolivian miners (DR).

rences that have appeared in the most recent period?

A: At its origin, the ideology of the Movimiento Indio Tupac Katari was Indian nationalism. It combined demands related to our situation as peasants with others related to our status as Indians. We ran three times in elections. In every case, it was to put forward our demands both as peasants and as Indians.

Then differences arose among us for ideological and political reasons. A section of the MITKA does not look beyond Indian nationalism. We see the need for giving a new content to Indian nationalism, and we stress the demand for equality among the races. But we give the highest priority to building links with organizations rooted in the working class and its traditions of struggle, such as the POR-Combate — with the workers movement.

As we explained, we put forward our own demands in the framework of a struggle for socialism. We are seeking alliances. We stand alongside the miners, the workers in the factories, the impoverished petty bourgeoisie. We have to unite on a program of struggle to change society.

The desire for such unity does not mean that we are any the less determined to maintain our identity as Indians. We want to clean out all the filth that exists in this country. This is a marvelous country, we cannot let it be besmirched by drug traffickers, brass hats, and capitalists.

Q: How is the MITKA organized?

A: We have a national council and departments, which are divided into provinces. So, we also have provincial councils. So, we also have provincial councils, regional councils, and area councils. Our base is mainly in the departments of La Paz, Sucre, Cochabamba, Santa Cruz, and Potosi.

Q: A few days ago, the whole press was talking about an attack by peasants on the military in the village of Chulumani, a village in south Yungas in the department of La Paz. Could you explain what happened?

A: In that region, the military officers who control the cocaine trade have become drug traffickers. They don't protect us, they exploit us, they kick us around.

Recently, the military in the area of Chulumani killed a peasant, raped his wife, and his ten-year-old daughter. The peasants struck back. They organized and attacked the Chulumani military base with machetes. They executed the seven military officers responsible for these crimes.

They did that because we peasants have had enough of being kicked around, oppressed, raped, and killed. The "sausage making" at Chulumani — the officers were cut to pieces with machetes — will be repeated if the peasants are subjected to any more outrages.

Experience shows that self-defense is the way to safeguard our dignity. Our whole past experience shows that armed self-defense is the only way to achieve liberation. The "Indians" will not let themselves be exterminated any more. They have shown that in Chulumani; they are ready to meet blows with blows.

The fight of the Kurdish people in Iran

Interview with Sheikh Ezzedin Husseni

The following interview was given to Gerry Foley in Paris on October 26 by Sheikh Ezzedin Husseni, a leader of the Kurdish people of Iran. The sheikh is a religious leader of the Sunni sect of Islam, the religion of the majority of the Iranian Kurds, and has been the symbol of national unity.

Question: Armed conflicts between the Kurdish organizations and the forces of the Khomeini regime have been going on since March 1979. What is the situation in Kurdistan now?

Answer: The government launched a major new offensive against us this September, obviously aimed at occupying militarily all of the territory in which the Kurds are the majority.

They have been throwing everything at us, attacking the civilian population of our towns and villages. Nonetheless, the peshmergas (the nationalistic guerrillas, literally 'those who face death') have not remained on the defensive but have started counterattacks. And so in the last weeks, we have seen very large battles waged by the peshmergas against the force of the regime.

We do not deny that the governmental forces have captured some areas, especially near the Iraqi border. But at the same time, the peshmergas have inflicted heavy losses on them.

There has been fierce fighting near the towns of Mahabad, Sandandaj, Bowkan, and Divandareh. In each of these battles, the government forces have lost more than fifty men. The peshmergas have captured major quantities of heavy armament and large amounts of ammunition.

Yesterday, October 26, we had information that a helicopter was shot down in the area of Divandareh, and that one tank was destroyed near the city of Miandoab.

Fortunately, the major Kurdish military forces, those of the Komala and the Kurdish Democratic Party, have signed a military cooperation pact. And, for the first time in our history, these two organizations now have a common general staff, which is based in the area between Piranshahr and Sardasht.

Q: In recent weeks, the Persian papers have been carrying more and more accounts of Kurdish villages being 'cleansed of counterrevolutionary filth.' That was the headline a few days ago in

Khomeini's paper 'Jumhuriye Eslami' that so many villages were 'purified from corruption.' What does that mean in practice?

A: It means that the forces of the regime surround a village, they enter, they gather all the people. They ask who has arms and say that anyone who has weapons must turn them in. If the arms are not handed over, they look in the houses.

But in most cases, the young people get away.

Then, the regime forces arrest some people, claiming that they are sympathizers of one or another organization. In some cases, they open fire on the people. And then they go back to the town where they are based and announce a 'purification.'

After some time, the peshmergas come back. There are some villages which have been 'purified' many times.

Q: Could you cite some examples?

A: This happens usually with the villages around the towns. I can give the names of some villages around Mahabad, such as Inderqash, and around Bowkan, such as Rahim Khan.

Q: Ever since August of 1979, the government has tried to maintain an economic blockage of the Kurdish villages and towns. What are the results of this?

A: The people are the peshmergas, and the peshmergas are the people. Because of this very close cooperation, we are able to survive the economic blockade, although it causes many problems.

The army and the pasdaran cannot control all the roads. The people manage to take things from the towns into the villages. And in the villages that are being subjected to the 'purification' campaign, the people live in a largely self-sufficient economy.

Q: What about fuel? It gets bitterly cold in the Kurdish mountains.

A: Last year, we had a very hard winter, and that made it very difficult, especially for the peshmergas. But they were able to survive with the help of the people.

This year, we expect the Iranian government to apply an austerity policy throughout the country, and that will tighten the squeeze on us.

But what we need most is medicine, doctors, surgeons. There have been many cases when for lack of medicines and doc-

tors, wounded peshmergas have been martyred for their people.

The issue in Kurdistan is very simple. There is a war going on. One side represents injustice, the other side represents oppression.

We ask all humanitarian individuals and organizations to help the Kurdish people in their just fight.

What is going on now in Kurdistan is a life or death struggle. The government has launched a very large offensive against us, and our people are fighting desperately to keep from being strangled, to be able to live in democracy.

We do not think that this government is an Islamic regime. Islam means mercy and good works, not massacring whole communities of innocent people. That is why we are against this regime. I am here in France to explain this to international public opinion. I will go back to Kurdistan shortly to work harder to consolidate the unity of the Kurdish people.

Q: What has been the position of the Kurdish organizations toward the Iran-Iraq war?

A: Our position was clear. We said that if the government accepted our national rights, if it gave autonomy to the Kurdish people, we were ready to defend the Iranian border, and the government could count on us.

I have said repeatedly that if they stop the war against us in Kurdistan and give us our rights, we will defend the Iranian border. But not only has the government not stopped the war against us, it has intensified it.

Q: How did the Iraqi invasion change the conditions of your confrontation with the Iranian forces in Kurdistan?

A: There is no relation between these two wars. Before the war with Iraq, the government was already fighting us, so it was not because of the Iraqi invasion that they have waged war on us. We are just continuing our fight to defend ourselves. So, in that sense nothing has changed.

Q: But what do you do concretely in an area such as Qasr Shirin, which is a Kurdish town, and was held by the Iraqis from early in the war until their withdrawal after the liberation of Khorramshahr?

A: In that area, our forces were so weak, that when the Iraqis came in, we just left.

But in the area of Marivan, on the other hand, where there has been fighting between Iran and Iraq, and where the Iranian forces have attacked Kurdish civilians, the Kurds fight back against the Iranian forces. But they do not hit the Khomeini forces on the front where they are fighting with the Iraqi army.

These are two separate wars; they have nothing to do with each other. There is a people fighting for their national rights, and then there is a war between two governments.

Q: What do you think about accepting military aid from the Iraqis, since, as you say, you are being hard pressed by the Iranian army?

A: I have not had to make that decision, since I personally do not command any peshmergas. I did not get any help from the Iraqis. But I think that in such a situation if there is someone who wants to help you against your enemy, if they do not impose conditions, and if you are not put in a position of being dependent on them, it is possible to take such aid. That is my general point of view.

The struggle of the Kurdish people is a just struggle for their rights. Whatever happens in this war between Iran and Iraq, if it stops or if it goes on for years, our struggle will continue until we get our rights.

Q: Do you have a position on the Iran-Iraq war itself?

A: We think that this war goes against the interests of both the Iranian and Iraqi peoples, and so we want to see it ended.

Q: What role did the Khomeini-led forces play in the revolution in Kurdistan and in the organization of the masses following it?

A: In Kurdistan itself, they played little or no role, although the insurrection in Teheran was the signal for the insurrections here, as in other areas of Iran.

Q: How did the revolution develop in Kurdistan, how was it organized?

A: It arose out of our own experience and the conclusions that the political elements drew from that.

Our struggle for our national rights is a very old one; in Iran it goes back at least a hundred years.

In the past our struggle was led by the local lords and religious leaders. But such leadership was never able to achieve any victory.

During and after the second world war because of the weakness of the central government in Tehran, the rulers of the country were obliged to permit a measure of liberty and democracy in Kurdistan.

In this situation, the Kurdish people mobilized once again to demand their national rights. In those years, an organization was created by the Kurdish intellectuals, who come from among the small landowners in the rural areas and the town petty bourgeoisie.

In Kurdish, their organization was



Kurdish militants of the Komala group (DR).

called the Komala i Jianaway Kurd, the Society for the Renaissance of the Kurds. It was founded in 1942. Three years later, in 1945, with a change in the program and in the leadership, this organization became the Kurdish Democratic Party, presided over by Ghazi Mohammed, the martyred president of the first Kurdish republic.

In 1946, the first autonomous Kurdish republic was declared in Mahabad. It was suppressed after only eleven months.

Under the shah's regime, there was another movement in 1967-68. It was an armed movement in the mountains of Kurdistan. But the shah's forces mounted massive attacks against it and crushed it.

It was a movement of the new intellectuals who were creating a new way in the national struggle. It was organized by the Komiteh Enqelabi (Revolutionary Committee) of the KDP. This did not represent all of the DKP, but included some other nationalist forces. The objective, which was shared by the forces coming from the KDP, was to create a new organization.

The struggle against the shah's regime in the last years was a continuation of this long struggle. That is why from the very beginning, the revolution had another color in Kurdistan. There was real democracy and liberty. While the revolution was led in other parts of the country by one person, in Kurdistan it was led by the city councils.

Of course, we had to fight to keep the reactionary elements from restricting this sort of democratic organization. I opposed those who said that the religious people should dominate everything. I fought for freedom of speech for everyone.

I said that our problem was not that we did not have Islam. We had Islam. What we did not have was liberty, and the problem was to achieve that.

Q: What were these city councils (shoras) that you say organized the people in Kurdistan?

A: When we reached the point where a city was not controlled by the govern-

ment's agents, we were obliged to create city councils to run the towns. In order to form these bodies, there was an election among the different categories of the people, the administrative staffs; the merchants; the workers; the peasants; the students; and, in some places, even the women.

Each of these categories had one representative. The councils included seven to eleven representatives.

Q: How did you reach a point when the cities were no longer controlled by the government's agents?

A: In May or June 1978, the body of a veteran KDP leader, Aziz Yusafi, who spent 25 years in the shah's jails, was returned to Kurdistan. He was buried in Mahabad.

People came from all over Kurdistan to the funeral. I spoke, explaining that Aziz Yusafi was a martyr of the revolution, a martyr for his people and his country. This speech was distributed all over Kurdistan.

This began a series of mass demonstrations throughout Kurdistan. At a point two or three months before the shah's regime collapsed, it was no longer in control in Kurdistan. Then we could call people together in the big mosques and have them elect representatives to the city shoras.

Q: So, who controlled Kurdistan after the shah fell?

A: The cities were controlled by the masses of the people. At that time all the people participated in the revolution. Everyone came to me and asked what they could do for the revolution. The young men kept guard on all the important buildings, on the roads, especially during the night.

During the winter of 1978-79, we had a shortage of fuel for domestic use. At that time, the young people doled out what there was in the tanks. Every family got 30 liters, and the young men took it to the most remote places.

It was only after some time that the political organizations began to demonstrate their existence.

Q: But there must have been someone organizing all this.

A: It was the expolitical prisoners. There were so many Kurdish political prisoners under the shah. All of them were released this time.

In Mahabad, we were organizing the movement. But in the other towns, it was the revolutionary elements.

Q: Who is 'we'?

A: The city shora; I was chairman of it at the time.

There was very close coopartion among the cities at the time. This is something that did not exist outside of Kurdistan. To give you an example, in Bowkan when someone was shot by the government forces, I would go there, and people would come from all of the Kurdish cities. This transferred the experience of one town to the others. So, if a council was created in one city, it was imitated in the others.

The intellectuals were always travelling around between the various towns. They had friends everywhere. The political elements had gotten to know one another in prison and in the underground.

Within a few days after the collapse of the shah's regime, associations had sprung up. They were called by such names as the Association for the Defense of the Revolution and Liberty, in Persian, Jamiate Defa az Azadi va Enqelab. Along with this, the KDP built up branches. Of course, the associations were supported by the Komala.

Q: Was the KDP in these associations?

A: No. The Komala was the main political organization backing them, and they included other Kurdish nationalist groups outside of the KDP. The associations tended to be the dominant groups in the south of Kurdistan — Sanandaj, Bowkan, and places like that. The KDP branches were dominant in the northern part of the Kurdish territory, such as Mahabad and further north. I am talking, of course, about the real Kurdistan and not Kurdistan province. Officially, Mahabad is in the province of West Azerbaijan.

Q: Where did the Komaleh come from?

A: These associations had different names in different towns. The one I mentioned was the one used in Sanandaj. In Mahabad, it was the Jamiate Rahe Rehaiye Zehmetkeshan (Association for the Liberation of the Toilers). In Saqqez, it was the Jamiate Defa az Zehmetkeshan va Halqe Kord (Society for the Defense of the Toilers and of the Kurdish People). But one word was common everywhere. It was *jamiat* and the Kurdish translation of *jamiat* is *komala*.

For details about Komala, you should ask them, but as far as I know, the Komala was an underground organization at the time of the shah. Some of the leaders had relations with me. I met them secretly, as I did the other active revolutionary elements.

Q: Were there any organized forces in Kurdistan that followed the leadership of Khomeini in the period right before and after the revolution?

A: There were no mass organizations or political groups as such that followed Khomeini. There were some religious figures with a certain clientele who were attached to Khomeini. The most important of these was Ahmedi Muftizadeh, a Sunni clergyman in Sanandaj.

Q: What were the reasons, in your opinion, that you found yourselves in conflict with the Khomeini forces from almost the very beginning?

A: From the very beginning, we demanded autonomy. Since we did not want any fighting with the government we tried to talk to the new rulers of Iran to obtain our national rights.

Q: What was the response of the Kurdish organizations to the government's offensive in the summer of 1979?

A: The most important election was held in Sanandaj, just after the fighting in March. It was held on the insistence of Ayatollah Teleghani (the liberal ayatollah that the Mujahedeen of the People regard as their spiritual father; he led the team sent from Tehran to find a solution to the fighting in Sanandaj.). The fighting had developed as the result of conflict between the Muftizadeh faction and the Jamiat. The vote was to determine which group had the support of the people. The council elected represented the people of Sanandaj as a whole, with a majority of Jamiat representatives.

Q: What was the response of the Kurdish organizations to the government's offensive in the summer of 1979?

United Secretariat statement on Kurdish struggle

On October 10, the United Secretariat of the Fourth International adopted the following resolution of support for the struggle of the Kurdish people:

Once again the Kurdish people are suffering the blows of savage repression.

In Turkey, the military regime is jailing and torturing hundreds of Kurdish activists, mounting bloody operations against villages, and sealing off the Kurdish areas from the rest of the world.

In Iraq, the Kurds are still being deprived of their most elementary demo-

cratic rights.

In Iran, in recent months a massive offensive has been launched against the Kurdish fighters. It has already claimed thousands of victims, the great majority of whom are civilians.

The Fourth International supports the struggle of the Kurdish people for self-determination. It condemns all the forms of repression against the Kurdish people being practiced by the states in the region, and supports the campaign in defense of the basic democratic rights of the Kurdish people.

So, in February 1979, a delegation came from Tehran to Mahabad, and we proposed the Eight-Point Declaration of Mahabad, the seventh point of which was that any negotiations between the government and the Kurdish leaders should be presided over by me.

Then fighting broke out in Sanandaj in March, about the time of the Persian New Year (March 21). I proposed a second plan, also consisting of eight points, which also confirmed the eight in the Plan of Mahabad. It was trying to solve our problem politically.

After than I went to Tehran and to Qom. I saw the leaders of the government including Khomeini, but they would not agree to grant any sort of national rights to the Kurdish people.

Relations continued to deteriorate.. There was the massacre of Naghadeh. Then the launching of a full scale offensive in June.

And finally on August 19, 1979, Khomeini declared a Holy War against us. Ironically, this was the same date on the Persian calendar as the shah's coup against Mossadegh, the 28 of Mordad.

Q: Wasn't there a major free election in Kurdistan in the brief weeks of rela-

A: At the time, the people were not prepared for such a big war. So, at first they retreated. Then they started to attack the army bases and the pasdaran.

The pasdaran were not able to fight. At the same time, the government was weak, and we took advantage of the situation. At that time, in our declaration, we said that our movement had two arms. One was the armed peshergas in the mountains; the second was the masses of the people in the towns.

On the fete of Eide Kurban, 1st November 1979, I called on the people to demonstrate. Hundreds of thousands of people demonstrated in all the towns of Kurdistan. This shocked the government. In the town of Mahabad itself, three or four tanks were destroyed. Bowkan was recaptured after heavy fighting.

The government was forced to offer to negotiate with us, but then it tried a divisive manœuvre. It wanted to negotiate with one party only. But everywhere the government representatives went, the people shouted: "You have to talk to all of our leaders, who are in the mountains." And so the Kurdish representative delegation was created. I headed it. It included the Komala, the KDP, and the People's Fedayan.



Peshmergas — Kurdish guerrilla fighters (DR).

Q: The occupation of the American embassy in Tehran by the Students Who Follow the Imam's Line came roughly in this period, shortly after the defeat of the Khomeini forces in the first Kurdish war. What was your attitude to it?

A: We regarded it as a theatrical stunt, with no positive political importance whatsoever. It was staged as a means of stabilizing Khomeini's regime by giving the people a meaningless safety valve for their feelings.

It was a diversion, and we said so at the time.

Q: Weren't there some statements from forces in the United Front of Kurdistan that expressed support for the sentiments expressed in the mobilizations around the occupation, if not the motives behind it?

A: No. We considered it purely a diversion. At that time, the government was very weak, and if they proposed negotiations, it was because of this weakness. That is why there was only 45 minutes of official negotiations — just time enough to present each person in our delegation..

They stopped the negotiations officially. But then they started going round to the various leaders individually, to me and to the KDP for example.

We knew in that period that they were trying to gain time to rebuild their forces, to prepare for another attack. It came five months later, on April 19, 1980.

Q: How do you think that they were able to strengthen themselves sufficiently to launch a second and much larger operation against Kurdistan?

A: For one thing, the Bazargan government had fallen. Even now when they condemn the Bazargan government, one of the proofs of its rottenness they also cite is that it negotiated with the Kurds.

They had time to carry out their operation to set up their Assembly of Experts. Then they held presidential elections, in which Bani Sadr was elected. So, they had a recognized governmental structure, and they were ready to start up war against us again.

Q: Was the occupation of the US embassy an important factor in the government getting into position to launch the second war against the Kurds?

A: Yes, it was.

Q: What was the character of the second offensive?

A: It was a very large-scale operation. This time the army was very active, along with the Pasdaran. They systematically bombarded the towns. Sanandaj was bombarded for 24 days. Of course, there was big popular resistance there. But even in Mahabad, where the people were not prepared to stage major resistance, the town was bombarded by cannon and mortars.

This time, the attacks were directed at whole populations, including women, and not just at armed peshmergas. There were even cases where they executed doctors and nurses, who had only been treating wounded people, including wounded pasdaran and soldiers.

Some towns, such as Baneh, were virtually levelled.

Q: On what political program are you fighting now?

A: What we ask for is self-determination for the Kurdish people. For us, that means autonomy. We do not ask for separation because we do not think that separating from Iran is in our interest.

Q: Why do you want to remain part of a country whose government has waged atrocious war against you for two and a half years?

A: If we can achieve a democratic and independent Iran, that will mean that we will be able to benefit from all the resources of Iran, along with the other peoples of Iran. We will be able to live together with them for our mutual benefit if we are regarded as a nation.

Q: How do you propose to get that sort of Iran?

A: To achieve our national rights, we need the support of all progressive Iranian forces. We cannot, by ourselves, topple the Iranian government.

So, in order to achieve a democratic Iran in which all Iranians can live in peace, we need to cooperate with all the Iranian forces.

We have three principles, which you could consider a platform to gather those who are prepared to do something.

The first is overthrowing the present regime.

The second is establishing a democratic regime, a democratic republic of Iran.

The third is the acceptance of the right of the Kurdish people to autonomy.

We are ready to collaborate with all those oppositional forces that accept these three points, regardless of their ideology.

Q: What is your attitude to the National Resistance Council?

A: We have some points of agreement, and we have some differences, which do not prevent us from collaborating with some of the elements that participate in the National Resistance Council.

Q: But that doesn't mean joining the council?

A: No. One difference I have with the National Resistance Council is on autonomy for Kurdistan. The statements it has made on this question are very vague. They can be interpreted any way you want.

Q: Would the fact that one of the leaders of the National Resistance Council is Bani Sadr, who commanded a phase of the war against the Kurdish people, justify your taking a stand-offish position toward it?

A: Yes, I have said this before.

Q: There are a number of peoples in the world who know what it is to be left to fight almost alone against a powerful and cruel oppressor. That is true in the British occupied areas of Ireland for example, where during the second Kurdish war ten of the Irish equivalent of the peshmergas had to starve themselves to death one after the other to draw the attention of the world to the massive repression that exists in Northern Ireland. Do you feel an identity with the struggles of such peoples?

A: We followed the events in Ireland closely and our hearts were with the Irish people.

I think that there are points of convergence between the struggles of all oppressed peoples who are fighting for their national rights, especially when they have reached a decisive stage of their revolution, as we have in Iran.

The Kurdish people are the real friends of the Irish people, not the Khomeini regime, although it claims in words to be their friend. It is impossible for a regime to oppress its own people, and at the same time to sincerely defend the rights of other peoples. That lesson has been deeply impressed on the minds of the Kurdish people by our difficult struggles and our suffering. ■

What lies behind the ZANU-ZAPU conflict

Perry FREEMAN

Harare — Zimbabwe's Prime Minister Robert Mugabe appeared to have imposed a certain stability upon his war-torn country at the end of 1981. Mugabe's ZANU-PF party was loudly proclaiming the need for a one-party state; but this was to be achieved through discussion with the other major nationalist party, Joshua Nkomo's ZAPU. There was no suggestion that the one-party state would be imposed against ZAPU's will, and Nkomo appeared to be responding favourably to Mugabe's overtures. The major security problem facing the government, the integration of ZANLA (ZANU-PF), ZIPRA (ZAPU) and ex-Rhodesian units into a single force appeared to be proceeding smoothly. There had been no repeat of the inter-factional fighting which had taken place in December 1980 and February 1981.

But then, in January of this year, the government announced the discovery of ZAPU arms caches in areas throughout the country, but especially around Bulawayo, centre of Matabeleland, the region from which Nkomo draws most of his support. Mugabe accused Nkomo of plotting against his government. Nkomo and some other ZAPU cabinet ministers were dismissed from the coalition government. Deputy army commander Lookout Masuku, and former ZIPRA intelligence chief Dimiso Dabengwa, both leading members of ZAPU, were detained without trial, along with many other members of their party. The government adopted a totally hostile attitude towards ZAPU.

At about the same time, the security situation in Matabeleland began to deteriorate. A spate of armed attacks on government official vehicles, as well as on stores and buses began. Desertions from the army increased at a rapid rate. In order to deal with the situation, the government launched massive security operations in Matabeleland. These included house-to-house searches and road blocks in Bulawayo and virtual counter-insurgency operations in rural areas.

WHAT IS THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THESE EVENTS?

The breaking of the ZANU-PF/ZAPU alliance should be viewed as a deliberate change of policy by Mugabe, not as a result of an accidental 'discovery' of the plot. There is no doubt that all the fac-

tions involved in the Zimbabwe war cached arms when it ended, as 'insurance' for the future. ZAPU in particular wanted to be able to defend itself against forcible dissolution at the hands of the numerically superior ZANU-PF. Furthermore, many of the weapons had been sold to the South African ANC, with which ZAPU has close links, for use in its guerrilla operations. So the existence of ZAPU caches does not necessarily indicate the existence of a plot. It is likely that the government knew of the arms caches a long time ago. Their 'discovery' represents a decision by ZANU-PF to abandon the strategy of unifying with ZAPU through persuasion and instead to create a one-party state through the crushing of its rival. This approach has advantages for ZANU-PF; it can crush more radical ZAPU elements.

The loss of government control in Matabeleland is only partly linked to the breaking of the coalition. There is no evidence that there is a ZAPU plot to destabilise the government, and Nkomo has frequently denounced the 'dissidents' (as the government has dubbed the Matabeleland bandits). But it is also clear that many of the 'dissidents' are ZIPRA ex-guerrillas who feel that the government has done nothing for them and does not represent them. And many peasants in Matabeleland are prepared to give them shelter because they share the 'dissidents' hostility to the government. Many of the 'dissidents' also have material reasons for their disaffection. Over two years after the war's end, many are unemployed, and some have not been paid their demobilisation benefits for ten or eleven months. The government's use of punitive measures against communities which fail to inform on dissidents are certainly having wholly counter-productive effects.

How has Mugabe's government got itself into such a situation? The roots of Zimbabwe's present problems have to be sought in the circumstances in which ZANU-PF came to power. As a result of the combined pressure of imperialism and the war-weary 'front line' African states (especially Zambia and Mozambique), the Zimbabwean nationalists had to accept independence in the framework of the Lancaster House agreement. The agreement was the brainchild of the then British Foreign Secretary, Lord Carrington, and was the lineal descendant of previous Anglo-American proposals to ensure that the transition to Black rule in Zimbabwe took place with a minimum of

threat to imperialist interests and without a genuine social transformation of the country. The agreement provided constitutional guarantees for private property and compulsory compensation in those limited cases where government appropriation of property was committed. Given that imperialism would use its whole economic weight in the country to prevent any breach of the agreement on this point, it is a powerful check on any attempt at nationalisation of industry or agriculture. The structures of the bourgeois colonial state were defended through the agreement's insistence that Smith and Muzorewa's civil servants would retain their jobs and pensions and would be under the control of a Public Service Commission which would prevent political 'interference' in the civil service. The 'independence' of the judiciary — including Smith's hanging judges — was to be maintained. Most importantly, the guerrilla fighters of ZANLA and ZIPRA were to be integrated with ex-Rhodesian forces into a non-political 'National Army'.

Two years later, how has the Mugabe government been able to deal with this straightjacket?

It is certainly true that it has been able to carry out many important social and economic reforms, which have given it a wide popularity. A minimum wage for all grades of workers has been imposed. Health care has been made available free to low-income earners and services in the rural areas have been expanded. Primary education has been made free and both it and secondary education have vastly expanded their intake of pupils. The government has supported campaigns against racism at work. Promotion of Blacks in government employment has been tremendously accelerated. Encouragement has been given to co-operatives although these are few in number. Unused or abandoned land on white farms is being acquired for the peasants. But, at a more fundamental level, the aims of Lancaster House have been achieved. Imperialist ownership of industry and finance remain. The huge white-owned farms are intact and secure. The structures of the civil service are as they were in Smith's day, despite a change of personnel, (and in many cases even the personnel are the same). The integration exercise in the armed forces has gone forward; and effectively the structure of the old Rhodesian army has absorbed that of the guerrilla armies.

Why is it that ZANU-PF has not been able to produce a revolutionary solution to these fundamental problems? Above all the answer must be sought in the character of ZANU-PF as a party. Despite a great deal of socialist verbiage, it never developed an analysis of how to deal with the settler state and imperialist capital. This lack of a revolutionary analysis is in large part due to the totally undemocratic policies of the nationalist leadership during the struggle; they always placed the maintenance of their control first, and liquidated or imprisoned a number of left wing currents in both ZANU-PF and ZAPU. In power, ZANU-PF has increasingly adapted itself to the task of running a capitalist economy. In a recent speech, Mugabe proclaimed that although Zimbabwe was a socialist country, it would not be necessary to nationalise any industries, and that there need be no conflict with the interests of the 'business community'.

In short, the leadership of ZANU-PF has never transcended the limits of petty-bourgeois nationalism in practice. While it was absolutely correct to give unconditional support to ZANU-PF and ZAPU in their struggle against the Smith regime, there must be no illusions now that their leaderships were or are of a revolutionary character.

But left critics of the ZANU-PF government have to answer an important objection to their strictures on the regime's actions. It can easily be asked — what was the alternative? Having had little alternative but to accept Lancaster House, and given that an attempt to tear up the agreement would have led to a full-scale confrontation with imperialism in a highly unfavourable situation, could ZANU-PF have done anything else? Could any more radical a strategy have been adopted?

We would answer in the affirmative. Even in the post-Lancaster House situation there was a way to develop a revolutionary mobilisation — a path that was taken by the government. During the course of the armed struggle of the independence election, powerful grassroots organisations had developed throughout rural Zimbabwe. In most areas elected party committees assumed effective control over the administration of their locality, totally usurping the functions of the racist regime's civil service. They mobilised migrant workers in support of the nationalist movement. This mobilisation, which by its very nature involved struggle around the social conditions of the masses as well as the overthrow of white rule, could have been the basis of a continuing anti-imperialist mobilisation. But far from attempting such a project, the nationalist leadership, obeying the logic of Lancaster House, demobilised the mass movement, and replaced its local control with that of the inherited state machine, which had earlier been driven out of the rural areas.

The nature of the political process which is taking place in Zimbabwe can be

seen most clearly in the way in which the Mugabe government has responded to the self-organisation of the masses.

When a wave of strikes against racist management practices and low wages broke out at independence, ZANU-PF's leadership immediately responded with calls for a return to work. Labour Minister Kangai made the first of many speeches around the theme that 'the country' could not 'afford' strikes. In December 1981, the government used police against striking teachers and and victimised strike leaders. In March 1982, when bus drivers, employed by a public company involving substantial British capital went on strike, the government has 1000 arrested and supported the dismissal of 1800 workers.

A national trade union centre was established, not through democratic discussion amongst the workers, but through a meeting of hand-picked trade unionists presided over by the Minister of Labour. The government has sponsored the establishment of workers committees in factories and workplaces, which can be a focus for worker organisations, but are barred from dealing with issues relating to wages, and have no lateral links with each other.

On the land, the government has given little support to the large numbers of peasants who are squatting on the big white farms. Only land which is unused or has been abandoned is being taken over for utilisation by the peasantry, and such land is in general being paid or compensated for rather than expropriated. This programme is in any case proceeding extremely slowly and the mode of resettlement is one of individual tenure.

While most of the reforms in the fields of health and education have brought welcome improvements in the lives of the mass of the population, they have been administered through civil service structures in a way which has undermined local initiative and self-organisation. The government is trying to establish a kind of Social-Democratic welfarism which it does not have the economic resources to sustain. In a country of this type, an all-round transformation of social conditions requires mass politicisation and mass activity — it cannot be conferred from above.

The defeat of the Smith-Muzorewa regime was a tremendous and historical victory for the Zimbabwean people. But it has not grown over into a revolutionary overthrow of imperialist domination. For the Zimbabwean masses, that remains the task of the future. ■

* See "Nationalist Demagoguery used Against Zimbabwean Workers," *International Viewpoint*, April 24, 1982, p. 12

Solidarity with Alexander Schubart

Shortly after the Hessen state elections in October the law suit against Alexander Schubart was due to start in the provincial appeal court at Frankfurt. Schubart is the main spokesperson for the campaign 'No West Runway'. He is facing charges arising from the November 15, 1981, demonstration at Rhein-Main Airport. The charges are: attempted coercion of state authorities, and serious breach of the peace. He faces a maximum sentence of ten years.

Schubart initiated the call for a referendum on the building of the west runway at Rhein-Main. More than 300,000 citizens, as demanded in the state constitution, signed. The regional government and the public knew that the application met the necessary legal conditions. On November 14, 1981, the list was handed to the Chief Observer of Elections.

However, despite that, or perhaps because of it, the woodcutters and power saw operators, protected by police began their work.

As the petition was presented 150,000 people demonstrated in Wiesbaden. Schubart demanded a moratorium on construction work until the court should rule on the referendum, if the application was refused by the local government. The government were asked to stop work before noon November 15. One month later the presiding judge of the court did *allow the appeal, and work was temporarily halted.*

Alexander Schubart denounced the decision of the movement against Runway-West to organise a peaceful demonstration if the moratorium was refused.

This demonstration was brutally broken up by the police. To escape, the demonstrators had to move onto the highways, stopping the traffic around the airport. The fevered response of the government and the media created an atmosphere of 'civil war'. More than one thousand protestors were arrested and charged. The Mayor of Frankfurt far exceeded his authority in suspending Schubart from his job as a civil servant with a lifetime appointment.

Although Schubart did not join the demonstration he is charged with being the ringleader. This is a unique attempt to criminalise someone who has always stood for a peaceful resolution to the question through democratic means. Although the demand for a referendum was not agreed by the courts of the gov-

ernment it was supported by large numbers of the public.

The Union for Protection of Nature, Committee for Basic Rights and Democracy, the Committee for Solidarity with A.Schubart, the Republican Union of Lawyers in Hessen and the Union of Trial Lawyers in Hessen have signed a common appeal outlining the case, and demanding that Schubart is acquitted and his job restored. ■

West German youth against cuts

"Jobs not Bombs — All Out to the demonstrations on 23 October!". That was the headline of the latest issue of the West German revolutionary socialist youth paper *roter Maulwurf* (Red Mole). The comrades from the local *Maulwurf* groups participated in the big anti-austerity demonstrations of that day throughout West Germany. With 150,000 participating in Stuttgart, 100,000 in Dortmund, 60,000 in Frankfurt, and 50,000 in Nurnberg these were the largest trade union demonstrations in West Germany for years. They took up slogans against the new Christian Democrat-Liberal government and against the minister for social services, Norbert Nlum, in particular.

This issue of the newspaper *roter Maulwurf* is the fourth to have appeared. The first came out for the 300,000 strong demonstration against nuclear weapons in Bonn on October 10, 1981. Since then *Maulwurf* groups have been set up in eight cities in West Germany, with a total of around 70 people. Militants from the local groups have been active in the peace movement, in housing actions, and in the movements of solidarity with Central America and with Solidarnosc in Poland. The *Maulwurf* groups, in a summer camp in the Emsland region of northern Germany, also discussed what autumn activities to undertake with comrades from their sister organisations Rebel (Netherlands), Jeune Garde Socialiste (Belgium), and *Maulwurf* (Switzerland).

During October the *Maulwurf* groups held a series of meetings to commemorate the 15th anniversary of the death of Che Guevara. These were attended by 200 people in Freiburg, 100 in Hamburg and Munich, and 25-50 in the other cities where they were held. 1,000 people also came to a rock concert held after the meeting in Freiburg.

The main work the *Maulwurf* groups have put forward for the autumn is to strengthen their work inside the trade

unions, in the schools, and in particular inside the peace movement. In November there will be "weeks of action" by all the local peace groups in West Germany. In December demonstrations to all the localities where the new US nuclear missiles will be deployed in 1983. To participate in these, the *Maulwurf* groups have launched a campaign on the slogan of "Jobs not bombs," with the demands that all government spending on missiles and conventional weapons should be stopped, that new jobs should be created by expanding social spending, and that massive jobs training programs for young people should be introduced.

These campaigns, and the autumn meetings that were held, show the progress made in working to establish a revolutionary socialist youth organisation in West Germany in the last year. ■

Save the lives of Kuttimani and Jegan

Two young Tamil nationalists, Kuttimani and Jegan, have been sentenced to death in Ceylon on the basis of confessions extorted by torture. The sentence was handed down by one of the special courts set up by the Prevention of Terrorism Act, which do not recognize the rights of the defense established in common law.

The rule that defendants cannot be convicted on the basis of self-incrimination is one of the fundamental principles of common law, on which Ceylonese jurisprudence is also based. It was established precisely to eliminate the practice of extorting confessions by torture.

This attack on the democratic rights of the Tamil people, who make up 11% of the population of Ceylon and are concentrated in the plantation country in the north, comes in the framework of a general offensive against democratic rights by the right-wing United National Party Government.

The Revolutionary Marxist Party (RMP), Ceylonese section of the Fourth International has called for a massive campaign to save the lives of Kuttimani and Jegan and to win the release of all political prisoners. Telegrams and motions of protest should be sent to J. R. Jayewardene, Colombo, Sri Lanka.

The following statement was adopted October 12 by the Bureau of the United Secretariat of the Fourth International.

The death sentence imposed by a Sri Lankan court on two young Tamil nationalists — Kuttimani and Jegan — who were tried under the draconian Prevention of Terrorism Act is yet another in a long series of attacks on the Tamil

nation by successive Sri Lankan governments. The oppression of Tamil speaking people over many decades resulted in the emergence of a movement calling for the establishment of a separate state of Eelam in their traditional homelands. The continual harassment and virtual occupation of the Tamil areas by the state security forces as well as frequent racial pogroms unleashed on the Tamil-speaking people resulted in the growth of a resistance movement which recognised the need for self-defence against state-sponsored violence.

Kuttimani and Jegan have been singled out for execution in order to intimidate and terrorise those who support the right of self-defence and advocate the right of self-determination by the Tamil nation in Sri Lanka.

The trial itself was an obvious frame-up. They were denied the jury trial which is officially open to every person charged with a serious crime in Sri Lanka. Moreover their convictions were entirely based on 'confessions' exacted whilst they were being held in an army camp and by means of torture.

At their trial witnesses gave detailed evidence of the manner in which they were tortured by the army and the police. They were repeatedly beaten, hung by their feet, metal rods inserted in their anuses, forced to inhale choking powder etc. Despite this and despite the fact that the Court of Appeal had in an earlier case accepted the charge that violence had been used against suspects held under the Prevention of Terrorism Act, the court held that 'it does not appear probable that' the two accused had been assaulted or tortured. It is well known that the torture and third degree methods of interrogation are used by the police in Sri Lanka.

Even the trial judge, however, admitted that these youths had been held in a 'secluded and a lonely place', without 'access to friends, relations or lawyers' and 'amongst armed and unarmed without knowing how long they would be in custody'. And he went on to consider whether those facts themselves would not make the alleged statements of the accused inadmissible in evidence. But he concluded that the provisions of the Prevention of Terrorism Act did not permit him to make that ruling.

Tamils in Sri Lanka have been subjected to a long series of repressive measures. These began with the disenfranchisement of the 1.2 million plantation workers in 1948, and the imposition of Sinhala, the language of the majority, as the official language. In the recent past the frequency and the intensity of anti-Tamil pogroms have increased. Twice within the last five years — in August 1977 and June to August 1981 — Tamil people have been brutally attacked and their property looted by racist mobs organised and encouraged by the ruling United National Party leaders.

The Fourth International draws attention to the fact that these racist attacks in particular and Sinhala chauvinism in

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general have greatly increased after the traditional working class party in Sri Lanka, the Lanka Sama Samaja Party, abandoned its class independence and adopted a class collaborationist perspective. It abandoned at the same time its demand for citizenship rights to Tamil plantation workers and parity of status for Sinhala and Tamil.

The policy of racial discrimination and repression followed by the UNP government today is part of their attack on the Sri Lankan workers and peasants and the oppressed masses in general. The government is at one and the same time seeking to set Sinhala and Tamil workers and peasants against each other and to erode human and democratic rights in order to facilitate the interests of imperialism and capitalism.

The Revolutionary Marxist Party, Sri Lanka section of the Fourth International, has consistently opposed the racist policies of successive capitalist governments in Sri Lanka and stands for the self-determination of the Tamil nation up to and including secession. Furthermore it defends the right of the oppressed Tamil nation to take whatever steps are necessary to defend themselves against racial violence.

The United Secretariat of the Fourth International condemns the death sentence imposed on Kuttimani and Jegan and calls upon the Sri Lankan government to rescind the hanging immediately, to release all political prisoners and to repeal the Prevention of Terrorism Act.

The Tamil bourgeois parties and politicians, such as the Tamil United Liberation Front — have been proved to be bankrupt in the face of continued repression of Tamil speaking people and also to have sacrificed the interest of the Tamil masses to their narrow parliamentary ends. This places a heavy responsibility on the shoulders of the workers and peasants of Sri Lanka to struggle against the discrimination and oppression directed against the Tamil-speaking people. —

Ceylon workers win important victory

The workers at the Paranthan Chemical Corporation plant in northern Ceylon won a major victory on September 6 after a ten-month-long strike, one of the most determined actions in the history of the Ceylonese labor movement.

This strike had a broader significance for two reasons. First this is a nationalized company, and the right-wing bourgeois governments that have ruled the country during the last decade had succeeded in seriously undermining the union movement in the state sector. So,

the outcome of this strike was a big victory for trade union rights in the state sector.

Secondly, the strike took place in the Tamil area and offered an example of the unity of workers of both the Sinhalese and Tamil nationalities.

The main demands of the workers were the following:

1. Reinstatement of all banned trade-union leaders and other workers associations with trade-union action in the factory.
2. Restoration of the trade-union offices situated in the factory premises.
3. The right of "casual" employees to belong to trade unions and their right to strike.
4. No victimization of trade union officials by indiscriminate transfers.

On the basis of these demands, they voted unanimously to launch the strike on November 27, 1981.

The attempt of the bosses to victimize trade-union officials was defeated. All the "permanent" workers on strike, including the fifteen branch union leaders of the Ceylon Merchantile Union (CMU) reported for work on September 9.

The question of the "casual workers" was not settled by the strike, since the general situation in the state sector was under the shadow of the presidential elections that have since taken place. In Ceylon, tremendous powers are concentrated in the hands of the president.

The CMU organized a picketing campaign in support of the Paranthan struggle in Colombo and its suburbs in April 1982. When it became clear that the strike would be prolonged, the CMU organized a one-day general strike on July 14, 1982. Later, the week beginning August 23 was declared to be "Paranthan Struggle Week" by the CMU. This period was marked by several short stoppages of work by thousands of CMU members, mass picketing campaigns, a second one-day general strike, and a mass rally in Colombo on August 27, 1982. ■

Bombay strike

On October 18, the strike by 250,000 Bombay textile workers entered its tenth month. Despite the long war of attrition against the government, which is the target of the strike, the workers' morale reportedly remains high. Many of them have been able to survive only by going to live with relatives in the countryside.

The workers are demanding pay parity with heavy industry, an evening-out of the annual workload, and standards for working conditions throughout the industry. They are also demanding the scrapping of the reactionary Industrial Relations Act and recognition of their union.

The textile workers participated actively in the August 19, 1982, street demonstrations in Bombay, sparked by discontented policemen. As a result 26 workers are in jail. Repressive attacks on the strikers are increasing. ■

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