

# International VIEWPOINT

ISSUE No 36

19 September 1983

## Widening imperialist intervention

- Chad
- Nicaragua

Chilean masses  
on the rise

Solidamosc  
shows its power



# International Viewpoint

ISSN: 0294-2925

Fortnightly Review of News and Analysis Published Under the Auspices of the United Secretariat of the Fourth International.

Rising Waves of Mass Opposition to Chilean Dictatorship by <i>Daniel Jebrac</i>	3
The Nicaraguan Revolution Under Fire by <i>Jean-Claude Bernard</i>	5
The Context of the French Intervention in Chad by <i>François Cazals</i>	10
French Troops Out of the Chad by <i>Christian Picquet</i>	13
Libya : Caricatures and Reality by <i>Claude Gabriel</i>	14
Solidarnosc's Challenge by <i>Jacqueline Allio</i>	15
Rightwing Shift of British Movement and Witch Hunt by <i>Brian Heron</i>	18
Eyewitness Account of the Anti-Tamil Pogrom by <i>IV Correspondent</i>	21
Reactionary Terror in Sri Lanka Statement of <i>Fourth International Bureau</i>	22
The Outcome at Liege by <i>La Gauche</i>	23
Danish Fourth Internationalists Hold Congress by <i>International Viewpoint</i>	25
Stop the Militarisation of Puerto Rico by <i>La Verdad</i>	26
The meaning of the Japan Sea Tragedy by <i>Christian Picquet</i>	27
Freedom for Ladislav Lis and Petr Uhl	28

News closing date 12 September 1983

## Subscribe now!

We prefer payment in French Francs where possible. Personal checks to PEC, and mail to : IV, 2, rue Richard-Lenoir, 93108 Montreuil, France. Postal orders to PEC, CCP Account no. 2 322 42T Paris. Bank Transfers to PEC, BNP Robespierre, 153 rue de Paris, 93108 Montreuil, France.

SUBSCRIPTION RATES :		6 months	1 year					
Surface mail, all countries		95FF	175FF					
Air mail								
Europe, Middle East, N. Africa		105FF	195FF					
The Americas, Africa		130FF	240FF					
Asia		145FF	270FF					
Exchange rates :								
FF	95	105	130	145	175	195	240	270
£	9	10	12	14	16	18	22	25
US dol.	16	19	22	25	31	37	42	47
Can dol.	19	21	26	29	37	40	49	55

The complete set of *International Viewpoint* for 1982 is available, excluding the pilot issue No 0.

These issues, Nos 1-20, contain detailed coverage of the wars in Lebanon and the South Atlantic, the activities of the Polish resistance after the military coup, and major documents of the Fourth International on Poland, building revolutionary youth organisations, and the situation in the Middle East.

In addition there are major articles on countries as diverse as Japan, Turkey, and South Africa, and on important political issues as the anti-war movement, and the fight for women's liberation.

The set costs 80FF in Europe, and 100FF elsewhere including surface mail postage. A chance not to be missed, complete your collection now!

### BLOCK LETTERS PLEASE

LAST NAME ..... FIRST NAME .....

ADDRESS .....

CITY ..... COUNTRY ..... CODE .....

RENEWAL

SUBSCRIPTION

# The rising waves of mass opposition to the Chilean dictatorship

Daniel JEBRAC

Every month since May 11, 1983, the Chilean dictatorship presided over by General Pinochet has had a confrontation with its opponents. There was one on June 14, and again on July 12, and once again on August 11, despite the 18,000 police and military patrolling the capital, Santiago.

On each occasion, these "Days of National Protest" have been marked by choruses of car horns, traffic slowdowns, concerted banging of pans, demonstrations and street clashes with the repressive forces.

Through action, through defying all the intimidation, the mass movement has begun to dissipate the pall of fear in the country. It has begun to consolidate itself. It has mobilized again and again, rising more and more indomitably — like the mass movement in Iran that overwhelmed the regime of the shah.

This mounting wave of protests grew out of the days of struggle in December 1982 and March 1983, which were a sort of general rehearsal that served to show the extent of exasperation with the regime.

Underlying this spread of protest are the deepgoing effects of the economic crisis that exploded at the end of 1981. Unemployment has risen to over 30% of the workforce. The youth have been hit massively. Half of the unemployed have been jobless for more than two years, and 75% for more than 12 months.

Those who do have jobs have seen their buying power cut by at least 20% since 1970. Cereals production has dropped, falling from 1.3 million tons per year to 690,000 tons last year, and the harvest this season will not go over 350,000 tons.

The foreign-trade balance is chronically in the red, and the foreign debt is approaching 20 billion dollars, when the population of the country numbers only 11 million. Bankruptcies of small and medium businesses are snowballing.

The attempts to apply partial economic solutions have finally given way to forms of drastic intervention into the economy. The debt owed by Chilean concerns has been centralized in the hands of the state. The International Monetary Fund and the private international banks have tightened the vise of their conditions.

Under this constraint, the economic indexes for the first half of 1983 have

been marked by a relative stabilization. Reduction of imports has made it possible to improve the balance of trade. There has been a slight decline in the unemployment rate, although in this respect the aid plans have changed the method of keeping the statistics more than the social reality. And the renewal of inventories has brought about a slight upturn in some industries.

However, overall, these pressures have kept economic activity at a very low level. This has made it impossible to meet the essential demands of the IMF. But it has deepened still more the tensions between the government and major factions of the bourgeoisie.

At the end of its second inspection trip, the IMF had to recognize that the targets had not been achieved. In the month of January alone, the government spent the credits that had been allotted for the entire year, 600 million dollars, to support private banking.

All these social and economic factors, therefore, explain the isolation and weakening of the military regime.

## A VARIEGATED OPPOSITION

The days of protest that began with the one on May 11 are the result of the convergence of opposition to the regime from various quarters. The following are the major components:

— The bosses organizations such as the Producers and Traders Confederation and the Sociedad de Fomento Fabril (the industrialists' association), which have condemned the deal with the IMF without proposing an alternative.

— The bourgeois opposition parties of the center and the right, such as the Christian Democrats, who have been driven to action by Pinochet's intransigence and the restiveness of their own supporters. This section of the opposition seeks fundamentally to create a climate of civil disobedience in order to get the military to share the government with civilians and accept a gradual transition to "a state with limited constitutional rights."

— The small and middle businessmen that have been hard hit by the crisis, and which are heavily in debt. This includes the truckers and merchants, whose role is important at this stage in the protest.

— The trade-union movement, which has more and more combined its economic demands with democratic ones. After being crushed in the wake of the

September 1973 coup d'état, it has undergone a process of recomposition in recent years. But it remains very much divided on trade lines. The copper miners played an important role in the spring 1983 mobilizations.

The absence of an organized leadership of all these heterogeneous forces has limited their effectiveness. Nonetheless, the government initially underestimated their capacity to organize and effectively coordinate the days of protest.

Another weakness of this protest movement lies in the still weak structures of the trade-union movement at the rank-and-file level. While the trade-union leaderships have participated in the calls for mobilizations, their links with the real process of reorganizing the trade-union and mass movements remain tenuous. The June 27 general strike confirmed this once again.

The truckers went out massively. But the workers in the factories were often badly informed and became isolated after the arrest of some union leaders. So, facing the threat of repression, the factories did not join in the strike.

On the left some have seen this ill-timed initiative as a maneuver by the moderate sectors to inflict a defeat on a poorly prepared workers movement and to create more favorable conditions for dialogue with the dictatorship.

Regardless of what may have lain behind this decision, the acknowledged semi-failure of the strike did not keep the July day of protest, called two weeks later, from being a success. Nor did it keep this day of protest from taking a more political form in response to the preventive arrest of the Christian Democratic leader Gabriel Valdes.

The bourgeois opposition as well as the church authorities, who have occupied the center stage, have rushed to "distinguish legitimate peaceful protest from vandalism and violence." They are, of course, anxious to find a solution to the situation before the mass movement revives, as well as being sensitive to the pressures of the international suppliers of funds.

By making such statements, these bourgeois forces put the blame directly on the left, more specifically the Communist Party and the Movement of the Revolutionary Left (MIR), for the barages of stones and the barricades made from tires, for the first forms of self-



Police watch over the burial of a demonstrator in June 1983 (DR)

defense in the shantytowns.

To a large extent, however, this elementary violence was the spontaneous expression of mass exasperation at poverty and unemployment. There is, thus, no need to look for any shadowy instigators.

Nonetheless, the bourgeois opposition wanted to make the question of violence the dividing line between the "responsible" opposition and the "subversive" left.

Parallel to this, following June 14, 1983, the big capitalists have also changed their attitude and accepted the deal with the IMF as an unavoidable evil. They have defined themselves simply as "the economic opposition" to the government, nothing more.

For its part, the government made some economic concessions to certain sectors. For example, it agreed to a debt moratorium and renegotiation of debt for the truckers. It provided for easements of real-estate debt. And it agreed to the rehiring of some of the 2,000 copper miners that it ordered fired in June when it moved to crush the strike.

But the repressive vise of the dictatorship has not been relaxed. At the end of June, the curfew was extended and street patrols were reinforced. At the time of the June 27 strike, censorship was imposed on the press. In the first half of 1983, more than 3,000 persons were arrested, as against 500 respectively in the first half of 1981 and 1982.

Almost all those arrested were taken in "group arrests," that is, during demonstrations or mobilizations. Along with this, the selective repression against the vanguard has continued, in particular against the MIR, which was hard hit in March.

### THE BOURGEOIS SOLUTIONS

By the beginning of August, the political schemes of the different forces emerged more clearly. First, Pinochet confirmed the timing set by the 1980 constitutional referendum — the non-Marxist parties would be legalized, of course, but in 1989!

At the same time, a civilian, Onofre Jarpa, former chairperson of the far right National Party, was named to head the Ministry of the Interior and Police.

Jarpa's appointment was supposed to

facilitate dialogue with the civilian opposition, with the perspective simply of adjusting the calendar set by Pinochet. That is, a parliament would be elected in 1986, with a modification of the rules about parties based on a referendum to amend the constitution.

The Democratic Alliance, a coalition comprising the Christian Democrats, the main bourgeois opposition forces, and the Socialist Party, responded immediately by calling for the resignation of Pinochet, the formation of a civilian-military government to preside over an 18-month period of transition, and the calling during this period of an assembly to draw up a new constitution.

The viability of such a formula depends to a large extent on the ability of the bourgeois opposition to win the confidence of sections of the military, to break them away from General Pinochet, and secure their collaboration. This solution has been viewed favorably in the U.S. press. And in such an operation General Leigh, one of the leaders of the 1973 coup who resigned from the junta in 1978, could serve as the bridge between civilians and military.

A weak point in the bourgeois alternative is the fragmentation of the Socialist Party into several public factions. In order to make possible dialogue with the military, it is important to exclude the Communist Party and the MIR from the opposition coalition under the pretext of excluding forces that advocate armed struggle. But it is just as important to include a strong enough SP to serve as a bridge to the reviving mass movement. This is the precondition for a new lineup of political forces to prevent any immediate repetition of the polarization of the 1960s between the Christian Democrats and the other bourgeois parties on one side, and the former components of the Unidad Popular coalition (the CP, SP, and the left Christians) on the other.

In fact, while it has officially come out in support of armed struggle, the CP seems hardly to have gone beyond symbolic actions. It has devoted the bulk of its forces to rebuilding roots in the mass movement, which is in the process of re-composition.

Although it is continuing to knock on the door of the Democratic Alliance and court the Christian Democrats, the CP is concerned about establishing a re-

lationship of forces. And so, it has formed a regroupment with SP currents, the MIR, and the United People's Action Movement (MAPU), the main left Christian group.

Coming in this context of big political maneuvers, following in fact only a few days after the appointment of Onofre Jarpa, the August 11 day of protest was the bloodiest since May. Some military units got orders to "shoot for the belly," and extremely brutal searches were carried out in the poor neighborhoods. The result was that several dozen demonstrators were killed.

### PROMISES OF LIBERALIZATION AND ACTS OF REPRESSION

The regime wants at the same time to make a new demonstration of force and regain a social base, the lack of which has been becoming more and more serious.

Thus the bloodbath was followed immediately by new promises from Pinochet (public works, reforestation, the creation of 80,000 jobs). It was announced that beginning in September protests would be tolerated on the condition that the organizers assure order and discipline.

This was a concession but at the same time a challenge to the bourgeois opposition to demonstrate its capacity to keep a rein on the more radicalized sections of the masses in mobilizations against the dictatorship.

This deceptive "liberalization" is thus designed to foster divisions in the opposition and to build up pretexts for a "unity" maneuver by the army that embarked on a crusade against "chaos" ten years ago by staging a military coup d'état against the Allende government.

The only way to avoid these traps is to reinforce the unity and breadth of the mass mobilizations around the objective of throwing out Pinochet, who today is the kingpin of the dictatorship and the primary obstacle to restoring democratic rights.

Only reorganization of the workers movement on the basis of unity and independence from all the bourgeois political apparatuses can provide a solid leadership and backbone for the movement to overthrow the tyrant.

Ten years of dictatorship, destitution, and murder is more than enough. ■

# The Nicaraguan revolution under fire

Jean-Claude BERNARD

MANAUGA — August-September 1983 marked the start of large-scale military maneuvers given the name "Big Pine II," which are being directed by Ronald Reagan against the peoples of Central America.

Some 12,000 Honduran and U.S. soldiers are to participate in eight-month long joint training exercises on the territory of Honduras, which borders El Salvador and Nicaragua.

The main targets are the Salvadoran revolutionary movement and the Nicaraguan revolution. There is direct imperialist intervention in Central America. Nearly 6,000 more U.S. soldiers will be stationed in Honduras at least until January 1984, but it seems likely already that these maneuvers will be prolonged until the spring of 1984.

The objective of these operations is not simply to train Honduran soldiers in the use of arms. A sixty-room military hospital has already been set up near the barracks where the newly arrived U.S. military units have been quartered.

This shipment of troops is part of the military deployment designed to encircle the Nicaraguan revolution.

In the wake of the celebration of the fourth anniversary of the overthrow of Somoza on July 19, 1979, Ronald Reagan announced that a part of the U.S. fleet was being sent to the waters off the Atlantic and Pacific coasts of Nicaragua. Seventeen warships are involved in these maneuvers. Some of them are cruising less than 12 miles off the Nicaraguan coasts.

Provocations and incursions have been staged into Nicaraguan territorial waters themselves. The U.S. ships are equipped for offensive actions, since they include three aircraft carriers carrying 200 planes and a sea-to-land missile carrier.

In all the other Central American countries, the U.S. is reinforcing its political and military involvement. The August 8 coup d'état in Guatemala means the installation of a ruling team more subservient to Washington. In the aftermath of taking power, General Mejia, General Rios Montt's former minister of defense, declared flatly: "Guatemala supports the policy of the United States toward Nicaragua, because it seems to me to be the most appropriate." (1)

Up until now, the Rios Montt regime,

absorbed by its war against the guerrillas and the native American population, had refused to get involved openly in the imperialist crusade against Nicaragua. Less than a month before the putsch, the chairperson of the Guatemalan Council of State described the dispatching of the U.S. fleet to Central America as "lamentable." (2)

The overthrow of General Rios Montt has, moreover, been the occasion for reviving the Central American Defense Council (CONDECA), a counterrevolutionary alliance that has been in mothballs since the so-called Football War before El Salvador and Honduras in 1969. In fact, it was virtually dissolved after the fall of Somoza.

Direct collaboration between the Salvadoran and Honduran armies has been increasing for a year. The U.S. Green Berets are training about 2,400 Salvadoran military in a U.S. base set up near Puerto Castilla in Honduras.

The Honduran government has just proposed the reestablishment of the Central American Military Pact. In his reply, to this proposal, the Salvadoran minister of defense said on August 20: "There is an agreement between Honduras and El Salvador for the reactivation of the alliance." He then added that Guatemala "will not raise any problems about accepting this accord." (3)

While it is based mainly in Honduras, where the mass opposition is weakest, the U.S. military deployment covers the region. What it involves is more than a mere demonstration of force. It represents systematic preparation for a decisive move to crush the peoples of El Salvador and Guatemala and to overthrow the revolutionary government of Nicaragua.

## A NEW TACTIC BY THE "CONTRAS"

CIA financing of the activities of the counterrevolutionaries is openly admitted in Washington. The Nicaraguan intelligence services have, moreover, revealed the growing collusion of the Argentine military with the counterrevolutionaries, or "contras," as they are called in Nicaragua.

In fact, they have explained that the contras have "a joint general staff made up of a representative of the CIA, an Argentine military advisor, and a repre-



Celebration of the anniversary of the revolution in Nicaragua (DR)

1. *Nuevo Diario*, August 10, 1983.
2. *Idem.*, July 23, 1983.
3. *Idem.*, August 21, 1983.

representative of the FDN (Nicaraguan Democratic Force, a Somozaist group based in Honduras)." (4)

More and more sophisticated logistic support is being provided by the U.S. for the contras. They are well equipped and have, notably, 60 and 80 millimeter mortars, as well as high-technology radio equipment enabling them to receive the information picked up by radar installations in Honduras. They have been given airplanes to resupply the former Somoza National Guard groups that have infiltrated into Nicaraguan territory.

The total numbers of the contra mercenaries is estimated today at 8,000. In recent months, their tactic has changed, not as a result of planned progress in preparing their offensive but mainly because of the resistance they have run into on the ground.

In fact, the counterrevolutionary commando groups have finally failed in the attempts they began in the spring of 1983 to occupy a strip of Nicaraguan territory in the north near Jalapa. This is despite the fact that they had mobilized up to 1,200 soldiers in coordinated operations. In contradiction to the statements they issued, they failed to take any impressive initiatives in July 1983 to match the anniversary of the revolution.

Throughout August 1983, the actions by the contras have been carried out by groups including at most 100 to 150 operatives who have penetrated up to 80 kilometers into the country.

The present tendency is to increase sabotage operations. This reflects a reorganization of the contra forces to destroy targets more widely dispersed throughout the country. It means that relatively large contra groups have managed to penetrate deeply into the country. They have been able to hold positions, however, only in peripheral areas by-passed by the course of history in Nicaragua, around the large expanses of land devoted to growing crops for the export market.

The fact that the heart of Nicaragua is surrounded by border regions that, for objective conditions, remained largely outside the war of liberation constitutes an additional problem for the revolution.

A part of the area that borders on Honduras, thus, is characterized by a scattered population — mountain villages, a few towns, and by isolated farms, without even clusters to form hamlets.

Every peasant has to walk hours every day to work the hill-side plots. This is the case, for example in Totogalpa, a town 25 kilometers from the frontier. On July 12 and for four consecutive nights, this village came under mortar fire from the Honduran side of the border.

In this thinly populated region, it is a six hour walk from one of the five hamlets to the town of a thousand inhabitants. There are no big estates to expropriate nor much unused land to bring under cultivation.

The leader of the local organization of

the National Union of Tillers and Stock Raisers (UNAG) confirmed that he was finding it difficult to organize meetings of the cooperative, which still includes only a minority of the peasants. This is an exemplary struggle in very difficult conditions.

#### VISIT TO A NORTHERN VILLAGE

The tactic of the *contras* is clear. It is to attack the two sectors where the revolution has made possible significant advances — health and education — and to do this in the regions where such outrages can be carried out with the greatest impunity.

At the end of July, the jeep carrying a doctor visiting the hamlets around Totogalpa fell into an ambush and the driver was killed. The result — no more doctor's calls for the peasants living a long way from the town.

A gigantic effort has been made in education — 18 schools have been opened for a population that totals 5,000 persons. But recently a woman primary teacher was kidnapped by the contras. As a result, fearing for their lives, six teachers stopped going to their school and it had to shut down temporarily. One of the teachers is a former peasant who learned to read thanks to the literacy campaign. This is the sort of thing the contras cannot stand.

To carry out their tactic of spreading terror, the contras have a certain basis of support. This poor area was one of those from which Somoza recruited his National Guards. The contras also benefit from violently anti-Communist sermon by the reactionary section of the Catholic clergy.

According to the testimony of peasant who is an avowed supporter of the revolutionary process and lives twenty kilometers from the town, the line that the contras take for the old peasants is: "We are with Ovando y Bravo (the archbishop of Managua). Anyone who is not with him is against God."

But even in the village of Totogalpa the reactionaries are running up against an active mobilization — city councils, Sandinista Defense Committees, Sandinista Youth, the militia, and UNAG. All these institutions and mass movements are rallying militant fighters.

Clearly, the section that is most mobilized is the youth, which has been directly affected by the major expansion of education. What the revolution meant first of all for the leader of the Sandinista Youth here was the opening of schools, which made it possible for two young people from this isolated village to go to university, one in Cuba and the other in Nicaragua's second largest city, Leon.

Also important is the growth of the cooperative movement. It offers technical and economic advice to the peasants. The result is that the banks and wholesale buyers are no longer all powerful. These gains are defended arms in hand by thirty members of the militia. The con-

tras are a long way from being able to rule the roost.

The resurgence of counterrevolutionary operations in August is evident in a statement to the Council of State on May 4, 1983, the Sandinista leader Daniel Ortega already estimated the damage caused by such actions at 2% of the Gross National Product, or one entire week of work by the country. This is the initial result of operations than can only be carried out with the help of the CIA.

Nonetheless, the objectives set by the leaders of the armed counterrevolution have not been achieved. In all the towns they have tried to attack, they have run up against determined resistance. In no town have they been able to carry out the sabotage actions their plans called for.

On Friday, August 19, 1983, an FDN representative acknowledged this failure, saying that they had no hope in the context of the present relationship of forces, of "military victory against the Sandinista army." (5)

Such an admission does not mean, however, that the FDN is giving up the game. What it reflects is the need for more aid from U.S. imperialism. In fact, the poor results the contras have achieved by comparison with the objectives they set themselves point toward increased intervention by U.S. military forces. They do not mean that the dangers that hang over the Nicaraguan revolution are any less acute.

One of the contras' present limitations has to do with their inability for the moment to offer a credible political solution for all the counterrevolutionary sectors that have a potential base in Nicaragua. Any doubts about the existence and activity of this counterrevolutionary social base should be dispelled by a look at the combination mass and mass meeting held in honor of Archbishop Ovando y Bravo on August 14, 1983, in Managua, during which the U.S. ambassador was applauded by 15,000 persons.

Organizing such a ceremony to celebrate the continuing pastorate of a prelate who was a faithful friend of Somoza is a whole program in itself. To dare, in the midst of a period of imperialist aggression to call for applause for the U.S. ambassador, as the auxiliary archbishop, Bismark Carballo, did means identifying yourself openly with the counterrevolution.

In fact, the Catholic hierarchy presided over by Ovando y Bravo represents the main bourgeois institution in the country, with an organized network of influence that extends from Managua into the remote rural areas. This is far from the case, for example, of the opposition bourgeois parties grouped in the Democratic Coordinating Committee, which includes the Social Christian Party, the Liberal Constitutional Party, and the Social Democratic Party.

As for the contra organizations — the FDN, which operates in the North, and

4. Idem., August 19, 1983.

5. Dispatch from the Nicaraguan Press Agency (ANN), August 19, 1983.

the Revolutionary Democratic Alliance (ARDE) led by Eden Pastora, which is active on the southern frontier with Costa Rica, they have not yet managed to draw behind them all the big landowners, big merchants, and industrialists. Some of these are still trying to safeguard their interests within the country.

The existence of this counterrevolution was explained as follows by Jaime Wheelock, one of the nine FSLN commanders, on August 14, 1983, at a ceremony of turning over land to peasants in Massaya in the southern part of the country.

"There is a counterrevolution because there is a revolution. The counterrevolution is going to be more active because the revolution is going to continue to attack the interests of certain people. For every person who suffers loss, a hundred will gain." (6) Continuing to address the peasants, he said: "the lands that the revolution is turning over to you will never be taken back by the bourgeoisie."

#### ORGANIZING THE DEFENSE OF THE REVOLUTION

Defending the gains of the revolution comes first in Nicaragua. It is an urgent and immediate task: "They will not get past the border! All arms to the people! A single army!" — these were the main slogans in the summer of 1983.

The political and military defense of a revolution under attack necessarily sets in motion great social processes. All the efforts that are being made now to extend, rationalize, and raise the technical level of the military defense are intertwined with a process of social polarization.

The very gravity of the imperialist aggression is highlighting more and more every day who is defending the revolution, who is fighting against it, and who is holding back from assuming the tasks that are being taken up by the urban working people, as well as the agricultural and the small peasants in the countryside.

In turn, the FSLN leadership is being led to base itself still more resolutely on the classes that form the social foundations of the revolution.

The defense of the revolution has thus far been organized on four distinct levels — nonarmed revolutionary vigilance; armed militias organized to defend the neighborhoods, villages, or enterprises; reserve battalions ready to be sent to combat zones; and the standing army, the Sandinista People's Army (EPS). One general principle applies to recruiting for these four structures — it is on the basis of volunteering. People are asked first to sign up and then to go off when the time comes.

This systematic appeal for volunteers is coming up today against the limitations posed by its results for production, both from the standpoint of economic efficiency and political motivation in the workplaces.

It is emulation among the most deter-

mined activists that leads them to go to the front lines in the defense of the revolution. The withdrawal of such activists from production both in the cities and in the countryside is planned on the basis of criteria that scarcely take account of the needs of production itself. The inevitable result is problems in production.

More serious still is the problem posed by the departure of the best activists for impelling the unions, the mass movement, and the Sandinista Defense Committees (CDS). If there is a consistent pattern of the most active leaving for the front, it



'Participate in the revolution, increase production' (DR)

becomes more difficult to mobilize the bulk of the population.

In most of the big factories in Managua, any visit starts with a listing of those who have left for the front, in the north or the south. A great many of them are activists of the Sandinista Workers Confederation (CST) or the Sandinista Defense Committee, or the Sandinista Youth. This problem is made worse by the fact that the number of those who have fallen in the defense of the revolution is beginning to be significant by comparison with the economic active population and the cruel lack of political and technical cadres.

Daniel Ortega has estimated the total number of Nicaraguans felled by the blows of the counterrevolution at 600. (7) So, it is important to broaden the base of a defense system that needs skills and military training. This is the objective of the new Patriotic Military Service announced on July 19 by Daniel Ortega in his speech on the occasion of the fourth anniversary of the revolution.

He ended by saying: We have to prepare ourselves to fight and to win, with all the mighty power of the organized people. The National Leadership (of the FSLN) has decided, with the approval of the Government Council, to introduce a law establishing Patriotic Military Service.

"It is the decision of the National Leadership, approved by the Government Council for National Reconstruction, to supply arms in an orderly and organized way to every corner of the country, all the arms to the people. This is so that the people, organized on a territorial basis in the Sandinista people's militias, can have weapons with which to fight. All arms to the people to defend the land, to

defend the gains of the revolution, all arms to the people." (8)

When this proposal was submitted for discussion to the Council of State on August 10, 1983, it sparked a very wide-ranging debate. In fact, this was a good indication of the social polarization that is sharpening in the country. The proposed law puts this new military service in the context of defending the revolution.

Notably it says: "In its historic program the FSLN included abolition of the force that was the enemy of the

people, the National Guard. It called for creating a revolutionary patriotic people's army in which students, workers and peasants, as the fundamental forces in society, could defend their gains arms in hand against the inevitable counterrevolution by internal and external counterrevolutionary forces." (9)

#### NATIONAL SERVICE AND THE TERRITORIAL MILITIAS

The proposed law calls for active service by all men between the ages of 17 and 25, if required. Women between the ages of 18 and 40 will be able to participate in the reserve service, according to the needs determined by the Ministry of Defense. All Nicaraguan citizens may be called up for this active or reserve service.

Registration will begin on October 1. In a country where there is no census, in the immediate future the task of drawing up the lists falls to the administrative or military authorities. Registration is therefore voluntary, that is at least in the first stage of the new service. It is this that will make it possible to form the first contingents.

The first units will be organized on January 1, 1984. They will involve 20,000 to 30,000 Nicaraguans. The number is limited primarily by the number of officers the EPS has to organize the new recruits.

6. Notes taken during Jaime Wheelock's speech (this part was not picked up in the press the following day).

7. Speech by Daniel Ortega, July 19, 1983, government press service.

8. Idem.

9. Draft law on military service, from the government press service.

All the mass organizations that support the revolutionary process are firmly backing this project. The only reservations have come from the Luisa Amanda Espinoza Nicaraguan Women's Association (AMNLAE). These are because the proposed law makes a distinction between men and women, excluding the latter from active military service.

With respect to this, Glenda Monterrey, a member of the Sandinista Assembly, has written: "We all have limitations, and we run into obstacles. This does not mean that our society can adopt a law that includes discrimination on the basis of sex....Women are demanding the right to take an active part in the service that is being organized." (10)

This question is posed all the more forcefully because the militias are mixed. And in separate battalions, women make up 30% of the reserves involved directly in fighting the contras on the front.

*Barricada*, the organ of the FSLN, has given considerable space to this debate among supporters of the revolutionary process.

More fundamentally, this military service law has been seen both by those on the revolutionary side and on the counterrevolutionary side as a calculated challenge to the bourgeoisie. It will be shown concretely who defends the revolution, because in principle the law applies to the entire population.

In Monimbo, in the southern part of the country, this law has evoked a lot of comment as well: "The reactionaries have begun to spew out vilification and falsifications about this process, which means that our role will be to clarify it and make the will of the people felt," said Carlos Salinas, a small shopkeeper.

Paula Rodriguez, another local person said: "We will see now who really defends the revolution. We'll see what they do. This is a goal for the people."

Gonzalez Mendez, a painter-carpenter in the same neighborhood, said: "It is very important for us workers because if we don't defend the revolution, who can do it? I don't think the sons of the bourgeoisie will do it." (11)

To counter these assessments, which reflect a sound class instinct, the bourgeoisie has launched a rumor campaign around the theme of "They're going to take away your sons." According to consistent reports, students from big and middle-bourgeois backgrounds have already left the country. The demand for U.S. visas has risen. A new process of clarification is under way.

The implementation of the Patriotic Military Service law will make it possible to bring to fruition all the work that has been done for youth. Through the mass organizations, the young people have remained in most regions the spearhead of the revolution.

This mass enrollment of the youth will make possible a better distribution of the tasks of political and military defense. It fits into the more general policy of rationalizing the defense system to make it more efficient and to adjust it

to deal with a possible step up in external and internal attacks.

The people's militias in the cities have been reorganized on the basis of territorial battalions. It would be wrong to consider this a sort of normalization that would involve the withering away of the factory militia units.

In Managua in particular these units continue to serve as the foundation stones of the militia. However, the system is not very efficient. The main reason for this is the extreme dispersion of the factories. There are only 96 enterprises in the whole of Nicaragua that have more than a 100 workers. (12)

The first territorial battalions, which were organized on the basis of geographical zones in Managua, were set up on July 26, 1983. The occasion was a rally of 3,500 militia members, including youth of 16 and people at least as old as 50, as well as both men and women.

The Minister of Defense, Humberto Ortega, stressed the part played by the working class in these first battalions in Managua.

"The CST is taking the lead in mobilizing people for military defense. Obviously, the militia battalions organized on a territorial basis include a large proportion of workers. Among them are both industrial and agricultural workers, as well as other working people."

The task of these militias is to defend the urban areas in the event of a large-scale attack.

"The battalions must guard the cities, the industries, and the schools so that the invaders will not be able to take any street....What the national leadership (of the FSLN) is preparing for is the most massive counterattack against the threat we think we now face — that is conventional military assaults backed up by the landing of commando forces directed against strategic points such as the airport or the telecommunications building." (13)

It is necessary to realize the gravity of the threats of imperialist aggression as they are seen in Managua. The objectives of the national leadership of the FSLN are to build up the essential defense effort and to do everything possible to stop the closing of the vise that is being clamped on to crush the Nicaraguan revolution.

The peace proposals made by Daniel Ortega in the name of the FSLN and the Council of Government on July 9, 1983, are part of this. They refute the false arguments spread by the pro-imperialist propaganda agencies that a small country like Nicaragua is deliberately seeking a military confrontation with U.S. imperialism.

However, in view of the U.S. threats, the question of immediate military effectiveness is decisive. This is inseparable from the deepening of the revolutionary process, which is the key factor for stepping up the mobilization of the social base of the revolution.

An indication of the breadth of the present mobilization is the rally organ-

ized in the country's second largest city, Leon, to celebrate the fourth anniversary of the revolution on July 19. It gathered more than 120,000 persons.

This is a considerable figure by comparison with the total Nicaraguan population of 2,900,000, of whom 990,000 are economically active. It is all the more significant because the leaders had to dissuade a lot of workers and peasants from coming to the rally because of problems of transport.

Peasants began to be assembled in columns at 3:00 in the morning and remained in them for nearly nine hours. But this joyful, turbulent throng was far from the image of a militarized population that is being spread by the big international press.

Tens of thousands of peasants and urban working people chanting "All arms to the people!" certainly make a striking impression. But the level of the mobilization can only be fully appreciated when you consider the role of the mass organizations and the relations they maintain with their base.

In a recent book, Jaime Wheelock, one of the nine leaders of the FSLN, wrote: "We are able to mobilize politically 600,000 persons — the great majority of them members of the mass organizations the revolution has created. This is quite enough if you consider that the country's economically active population is 900,000." (14)

The problem is that the level of mobilization is far from even. This is the result in particular of the newness of most of the mass organizations, which still have to consolidate their base and build up their structure of intermediate cadres.

In an interview granted to us, Lucio Jimenez, the national coordinator of the CST, summed up the history of his confederation in this way: "In 1979, only 6 percent of the economically active population was in unions. There were six badly organized and deeply divided confederations. The CST was founded on July 27, 1979. In the whole first phase, the CST was organized from the top down."

Referring to the last congress of the CST, held in February 1983, he made the point: "This wasn't really a congress but a founding assembly. Now a process of building the union from the bottom up is beginning on a new basis."

This point is not just a semantic one. Most of the mass organizations have operated with appointed leaderships on the various levels, although in the case of the UNAG, the ranks had the right to refuse to accept the leaders appointed from above. The "founding assembly" of the CST has inaugurated a new mode of functioning.

What this means, Julio Jimenez explained, is that "all the leaders elected at any level of the union have to go

10. *Barricada*, August 18, 1983.

11. *Idem.*, August 13, 1983.

12. INEC data, February 31, 1982.

13. *Barricada*, July 27, 1983.

14. *El Gran Desafio*, p. 129, Ediciones Nueva Nicaragua.



through the filters of trade-union democracy from the bottom up."

Of course, the transition to a new mode of functioning is not completed overnight, and we encountered many union leaders who expressed some skepticism about generalizing the principle of "from the bottom up."

But it is significant that statutes calling for the election of all leaderships have been adopted by the CST. This confederation's aim is to bring in the industrial and sugar workers. And it was the first mass organization formed after the revolution. Moreover, it is explicitly linked to "Sandinoism."

Built up from nothing, but with the benefit of the support and influence of the FSLN, in four years the CST has come to represent 90% of organized workers. Its membership is approaching 100,000. The massive expansion of trade-union organization has mainly benefitted the CST. But it has also grown through the adherence of unions that have come from other confederations.

In July 1979, the total number of union members was 27,000. Some 40,000 more were enrolled in unions between August 1979 and December 1980. In 1981, 39,000 more workers joined unions. But in 1982, it was only 10,000. (15) The main problem is to give impetus to union activity, not to extend the unions. The CST today is by far the largest. "It is the backbone of the trade-union movement," explained Lucio Jimenez. But it is not the only union confederation. The others are older than the CST.

On January 31, 1980, the Nicaraguan National Commission for Trade-Union Coordination was formed. It was subsequently, on November 16 of the same year, transformed into the National Trade-Union Coordinating Committee (CSN). This was done at the end of a meeting attended by 300 trade-union leaders from various tendencies.

The CSN includes the CST, the CGT (which is directed by the pro-Soviet Nicaraguan Socialist Party), the Action Committee for Trade-Union Unity (CAUS, led by the Nicaraguan Communist Party, another Stalinist faction), and the Workers Front (the mass front of the Movement for People's action, an organization with Maoist origins).

Besides these various union confederations, which all represent different political currents, the Association of Rural Workers (ATC) and the teachers union (Anden) are also part of the CSN. Only the confederations linked to the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions and the World Confederation of Labor remain outside, by their own choice. These are respectively, the Committee for Trade-Union Unity (CUS) and the Confederation of Nicaraguan Workers (CTN), which has a Christian Democratic Leadership.

For three years, the CSN — which is not just a formal umbrella organization — has stood up to the tests that the revolution has gone through.

A notable example is the proposal the CSN made in negotiations with the government this summer over the question of minimum wages in industry and in agriculture.

The CST proposed to the other confederations to set the minimum-wage demand for workers in the cities at 1,900 cordobas a month. The CSN, and all the currents within it, accepted this demand. It negotiated the question with the government and the final result was that the minimum monthly wage was set at 1,700 cordobas. (16)

The desire to keep impatience from leading to things getting out of hand anywhere explains to some extent why unions such as the CAUS or the Frente Obrero were brought into the overall wage agreement. But the recognition among declared supporters of the revolution of the existence of a variety of political currents is a very positive element.

On August 3, Comandante Tirado, one of the leaders of the FSLN, spoke to 250 union delegates who were discussing and voting in common. He said: "The workers movement has to try to achieve unity in a single confederation. It doesn't matter whether it is called the CSN. What is going on today shows that the working class is taking the leadership in this stage, which is marked by the approach of elections. The working class has to be united to wage the fight against the enemy. The imperialist threats are leading us to deepen this revolution, and the workers movement will have to demonstrate that this revolution is invincible, that it is following the strategic path laid out by Carlos Fonseca (founder of the FSLN) toward the new society." (17)

The August 3 assembly adopted a resolution expressing a common stand on the wages question. But it also called for revising fiscal policy and the policy of subsidizing private enterprises. The resolution pointed out that one of the sources of inflation was this flow of money to entrepreneurs who did not invest it in production. It concluded by demanding more involvement of the unions in decision making and the election of economic options.

Lucio Jimenez commented to us on this resolution: "It is necessary to favor those who live from their labor and not those who live from their capital."

This resolution, which is critical in many respects of the economic policy that has been conducted up to now, reiterated that the first priority of the workers movement is defending the revolution and participation in the militias. It illustrates how, even in the context of a mounting counterrevolutionary offensive internally and externally, there is room for a dynamic that gives impetus to the mass movement and pushes the revolutionary process forward.

This resolution shows, moreover, that overall agreement with the recognized leadership of the revolution, the national leadership of the FSLN, does not lead to

transforming the mass organizations into mere transmission belts.

The same sort of thing that happened in the discussion of wages has taken place in the countryside, in the case of the demand raised by UNAG for cancelling the peasants' debts. This organization of peasants and stock raisers has waged a real campaign on this issue. In fact, the problem was crucial for these peasants. The combination of the natural catastrophes in 1982 (floods followed by drought) and the damage suffered before 1979 and the modernization undertaken since resulted in a disastrous level of debt.

A major part of the sales of produce did not bring in new money but only served to reimburse old debts. "We have had good harvests but they have only gone to fill the coffers of the banks," the leader of a cooperative near Rivas, in the southern part of the country, told reporters. (18)

On the initiative of the UNAG, street demonstrations took place in Estelli in the north and Granada in the south. In most of the regions, the demand for cancellation of the debts was presented to the administrative authorities. A real mass movement developed around it.

On July 19, Daniel Ortega was obliged to make a positive response to the peasants' demand. He announced a differentiated scale for cancelling the debts. That is, it involves making distinctions between producers cooperatives, service cooperatives, and individual producers, with producers cooperatives getting the most favorable conditions.

Even though the banks are nationalized, they are trying to make the most restrictive possible interpretation of these provisions. The UNAG activists have not ended their campaign on behalf of the small peasants.

The two examples given, that of the CST and the UNAG, show the vitality of the mass movement, which finds specific areas for expression. Far from opposing this, the FSLN leadership strives to promote the development of this sort of movement. The objective is to help them create their own dynamic leading toward a deepening of the revolutionary process. This does not proceed without contradictions or without running into many forms of resistance.

For the moment, the choices made by the national leadership of the FSLN are also dictated by the need to keep the U.S. from closing its vise around the Nicaraguan revolution. The urgent task for the international solidarity movement is thus, to leave no stone unturned to stay the armed hand of U.S. imperialism and its Central American agents. This is the precondition for continued advance by the revolution in Nicaragua and Central America. ■

15. The magazine *Envio*, May 1983; and INEC date, 1982.

16. As a standard for comparison, a bus ticket costs 1 cordoba and a meal in a factory cafeteria, about 25 cordobas.

17. *Nuevo Diario*, August 4, 1983.

18. *Barricada*, July 12, 1983.

# The context of French intervention in Chad

Francois CAZALS

Chad is two and a half times bigger than France, for a population of little more than four million. The country has two distinct regions, separated by the 13th parallel which cuts the country at the level of Lake Chad.

In the north is an Islamic nomad and semi-nomad population whose main activity is pastoral. Their commercial contacts (sale of cattle) and their cultural and ethnic loyalties orient them more towards the neighbouring countries, Libya, Sudan and Niger, than towards the South.

In the south, the population is animist or Christian, settled and practising agriculture, nearer to the population groups in neighbouring Central African Republic.

The pre-colonial relations between these two populations were already marked by violence. The peoples of the north, organised in Islamic kingdoms, dominated the south by raids and pillage.

## THE DUAL REALITY OF CHAD

However, these two population groups which are numerically more or less equal, do not comprise two perfectly homogeneous units.

They, in their turn, are marked by ethnic differentiation. Thus, the population in the north, while 95 per cent Islamic, is divided between the Tubu nomads on the Libyan border, the Kanembu in the west, the Ouaddiens in the east, and an Arab minority, particularly along the Sudanese border.

In the south, in addition to the predominant Sara stock, composed of some fifteen ethnic subgroups, the population is divided in different ethnic groupings, subgroups and local groupings.

This mosaic of populations explains why political divisions, which in this country often intersect with former tribal and regional rivalries, are not limited just to the principal north-south opposition.

French colonial rule did not succeed in integrating the activities and the administration of these disparate populations within the arbitrarily defined national framework. The north was only completely occupied in 1913. The numerous experiments in fixing the borders illustrate the difficulties met by the colonising power.

For example, Logone and two other areas in the south were successively

attached to Chad and the Central African Republic until 1930. Tibesti, in the north, was given to Niger.

In 1935 the French president, Pierre Laval, ceded the Aozou strip in the north of Chad to Mussolini's Italy, then the colonial power in Libya. This agreement subsequently served as the basis for the territorial demands of Colonel Moummar Qadhafi whose troops have occupied this zone since 1973.

As Islam constituted a certain brake on Christianising the country and introducing French as the major language, the policy of colonial assimilation was applied mainly in the south. It was also in this 'useful' part of Chad that the agricultural, industrial and commercial activities introduced by the colonial power (cotton, brewing, mills, trading posts) were concentrated.

During the pre-colonial period the Islamic kingdoms in the north dominated the population groups in the south. But with the onset of colonisation and modern education the balance of forces was reversed.

At independence in August 1960, it was the French-speaking petty bourgeoisie of the Sara ethnic group, that, around Francois Tombalbaye, president of the country in 1962 and of the single official party, took possession of the new state apparatus.

The Arab-speaking petty bourgeoisie in the north (merchants and intellectuals) thus saw itself ousted from access to an important source of enrichment and power. This layer would be the breeding ground for the opposition elements who would try to organise armed opposition to the new regime. Moreover, this was a largely fictitious state. For example, until 1964 the French directly administered the north of the country.

The administrative power of the neo-colonial state never had a real national scope. The first measures aiming to extend its influence to the north of the country and the exactions of an exclusively southern administration were the spark of the Moubi revolt at Mangalme in the central eastern zone of the country in October 1965.

Then behind their traditional chief, the Derdei, who was at the time in refuge in Libya but whose son Goukouni Oueddei had joined the National Liberation Front of Chad (FROLINAT) created in 1966, the Tubus rose up in the department of Borkou-Ennedi-Tibesti (BET) in March 1968.

## AN ARTIFICIAL STATE SUPPORTED BY FRANCE

From the end of 1968 the French forces based in Chad aided the Chadian army in putting down the Tubu rebels. The Tombalbaye regime, shaken by these revolts, asked for a direct intervention by a French expeditionary corps.

About 2,000 men of the Foreign Legion and Marines landed in April 1969 to 'pacify' the country. General De Gaulle's "pacification" was marked by tortures and massacres that took several thousand victims. When the French expeditionary force was withdrawn in June 1971 some 2,000 French soldiers remained, 600 of whom were military advisors — one for every thirteen Chadian soldiers.

Parallel to its armed action, the French government, disturbed by the scope of the revolt, imposed administrative reforms that tried to reduce the causes of irredentism among the northern populations while strengthening the power of the neo-colonial state.

This 'mission for administrative reform' (MRA) proposed allotting certain administrative tasks to the north, to Muslim chiefs. The effect would in fact confirm the autonomy of this region. But after a short period in which Tombalbaye agreed to play the French game of 'national reconciliation', he was to sink into tribal fanaticism.

Inspired by the 'authenticity' doctrine of Mobutu in Zaire, Tombalbaye renamed towns and people, reinforced the ethnic base of the state apparatus, dissolved his own party, and instituted the practice of *yondo* (initiation rites of the Sara ethnic group) for all state employees.

More isolated than ever by this 'cultural revolution', the dictator was overthrown in April 1975 by a military coup d'état supported by France. This coup installed a Supreme Military Council (CSM) led by General Felix Malloum.

For Paris it then became a problem of avoiding a complete collapse of the Chadian state. This is a state that devoted more than a third of its budget — financed mainly by French aid and exports, more than 80 per cent of which went to the former colonial mother country — to military spending.

But French imperialism, traditionally having several centres of interest in Chad, was torn between different options. The sectors of the colonial bourgeoisie linked directly to the exploitation of 'useful' Chad (cotton and import-export) and their lobby in Paris would look favourably on a partition of the country that would leave the desert north to Libyan and Islamic influence.

But the French government, also feeling itself linked by the strategic interest of Chad to the heart of the African continent wanted to be able to create the conditions for imperialist exploitation of the mineral and energy wealth recently discovered in the north (oil, uranium). Above all, it feared the harmful consequences of the partition on its other neo-colonies in Africa.

Thus, French diplomacy continued to look for a team capable of stemming the decomposition of the regime installed in N'Djamena. But these contradictions were to give rise to fluctuations in the French options indeed even to simultaneously following divergent orientations and thus a continual changing of local allies. These schemes also helped to accelerate the fragmentation of the local political scene.

However, the French government began to consider more and more concretely the perspective of getting the armed struggle ended through negotiations between the CSM and the FROLINAT. However, several years would still be necessary before this policy began to take shape in practice, in conditions such that it could not succeed in stabilising the Chadian state nor in putting an end to the war.

On the contrary, this policy could only increase the greed of the different military and political factions. At the same time as the governmental regime was collapsing, the FROLINAT was breaking up through a process of formation of different blocs within it.

### FROLINAT

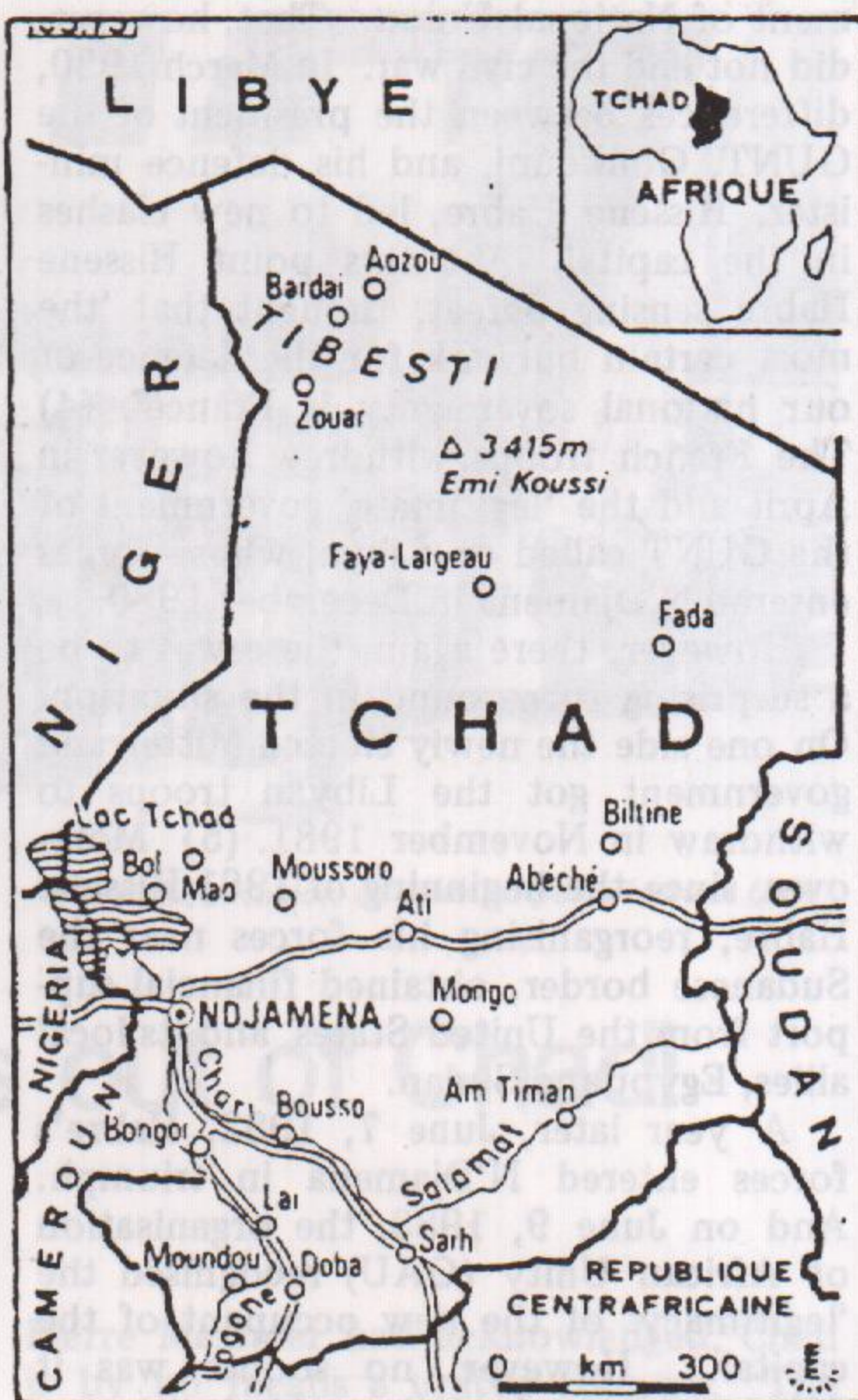
The armed opposition of FROLINAT could have become the crucible in which an authentic national consciousness of the Chadian masses was forged. This would, therefore, have offered an alternative to the collapsing neo-colonial state, to the regionalist pressures of the traditionalist society, to the different imperialist proposals, and the many pressures of the African states in the region.

But the initial nationalist and democratic objective of FROLINAT was not achieved. What is more, its programme rapidly became a mere ideological facade. The reality was quite different. It copied the practices of the regionalists; it maintained authoritarian relationships with the rural masses, as well as a strictly militaristic conception of the struggle. Finally it made all sorts of compromises in all directions (notably concerning the French military presence).

With a base restricted to the North of the country, FROLINAT remained a movement defending the interests and democratic demands of the Islamic masses in the North.

After the installation of a one-party system by Tombalbaye, and the repression of a rare urban popular mobilisation in the capital in September 1963, causing 300 deaths, the axis of the struggle shifted to the rural regions in the North and central eastern areas. But the often spontaneous revolts of these populations against the central administration strongly resembled peasant revolts. Elements in the Arab-speaking petty bourgeoisie, kept out of the state apparatus, tried to take the leadership of these rebellions.

All tendencies together — from militant nationalists to Islamic borderhoods — founded FROLINAT in 1966 in Nyala in the Sudan.



Most of the initial nucleus were former members of the National Union of Chad (UNT, an urban movement which had participated in the political life of the country since 1958). Along with the president, Ibrahim Abatcha, their aim was, on the basis of a national and democratic programme, to combine the rebellions underway to form a real armed-struggle front against the regime.

However, the initial project was to very quickly degenerate. Firstly the Chad Liberation Front (FLT), an organisation exclusively composed of people of Ouadai origin, kept aloof from the unitary process.

Later, after the death in combat of Abatcha, the leadership of FROLINAT fell into the hands of a petty bourgeois intellectual, Dr Abba Siddick, a former minister of Chad in the regime that had prepared the decolonisation in 1958.

Under Abatcha's leadership it was diplomatic activity from Algiers or Tripoli that predominated. At the same time, on the ground the Front was divided between the First Army of the East and the Second Army of the North, led respectively by Goukouni and Hissene Habre, a former sub-prefect of the Tombalbaye regime who joined the armed struggle at the end of 1971. The links between these two guerrilla armies did not go beyond the co-ordination in the central organs of the Front which met outside the country.

Beset by internal conflicts that tended to take the shape of ethnic or regional quarrels and the form of fratricidal clashes, FROLINAT began to degenerate. Little by little, it became a conglomeration of militarist cliques, without a real national political project.

This, after the expulsion of Baghlani, leader of an Arab religious current, which was to form FROLINAT 'Volcano' in

the east, bloody battles took place between the two camps. A definitive split took place in 1971 between the Army of the North, and the 'original' FROLINAT of Abba Siddick, supported by the First Army of the East or People's Liberation Forces (FPL).

The leadership of the Northern army transformed itself into the Command Council of the Armed Forces of the North (CCFAN). Later, a crisis within the CCFAN around what attitude to adopt towards Libya, which gave aid to FROLINAT but occupied the Aozou strip, led to the departure of Hissene Habre and his tribe, the Foranes Annakaza, which installed its fighters in Biltine in the east.

However, despite their divisions, the different rebel forces occupied a large portion of the country in the north and east, where the guerrillas raised taxes, controlled the local authorities, received the customs rights on transactions with neighbouring countries, etc. But this implantation remained localised.

None of the tendencies in FROLINAT had defined a policy towards the peasant masses of southern Chad. However, 600,000 peasants cultivated cotton for Cotontchad, a company with French participation. The great majority of them kept aloof from the struggle waged by FROLINAT.

The military action of FROLINAT being limited to the desert or semi-desert regions, it was very dependent on external aid and backup. Thus, in accordance with their own concerns, Sudan, Libya and even Nigeria influenced FROLINAT's struggle.

Libya, for example, successively supported Abba Siddick against Habre and Goukouni (imprisoned in Libya 1971-72), then Goukouni against Habre, then the pro-Libyan Arab faction of Acyl Ahmat (a split from FROLINAT 'Volcano') against Goukouni, then all the tendencies at once against Habre and the Southerners, then the Southerners of Kamougue who favored the partition of 'useful' Chad in 1979, and now Goukouni's Transitional Government of National Union (GUNT) as a whole.

Nigeria encouraged the formation of the People's Liberation Movement of Chad (MPLT) in the Lake Chad region to the west. Sudan supported FROLINAT, and then Hissene Habre in the last years. Finally, French imperialism did not hesitate to play several different cards. This process went so far that in 1979, during the Kano negotiations in Kenya, besides bordering African countries, and France, no less than eleven Chadian tendencies were represented, most of them coming from FROLINAT. (1)

### THE CHADIAN IMBROGLIO

Once it became clear that the French government had firmly adopted the per-

1. See *Inprecor* (IV's French-language sister publication), No. 75, April 17, 1980.

spective of negotiations between N'Djamena and the rebels, there was a strong pressure on FROLINAT to produce a legitimate spokesperson. Therefore there was an ephemeral unity of FROLINAT under the aegis of Libya.

When Abba Siddick was renounced by his followers in 1977, all the tendencies, save that of Hissene Habre, unified under the leadership of Goukouni in mid-March 1978. By concerted pressure on their local allies, France and Libya succeeded a week later in getting generals Malloum and Goukouni to sign a ceasefire agreement. However, this had no follow up.

In February 1978 Goukouni's FROLINAT launched a military offensive, and gained control of half the country, taking 2,000 governmental prisoners. Giscard d'Estaing wanted negotiation but not to see his allies crushed. He sent 2,500 men, and military material, and halted the advance of the FROLINAT columns. Paradoxically Libya and France were then favourable to negotiation.

'Several times during the last few months', noted a specialist on Chad, 'the Libyan government seems to have tried to hold back the FROLINAT offensive to some extent. The last occasion was on April 23, 1978, when it sent a telegram to Goukouni asking him to "cease the present hostilities". The Chadian chief was displeased'. (2)

While protecting N'Djamena, Paris pushed General Malloum and Hissene Habre, in discussion since 1977, to govern together. On the basis of a fundamental charter adopted in August 1978 Hissene Habre was named prime minister, and Malloum president.

With the Habre-Malloum tandem, the imperialists thought that they had the beginnings of a solution to the Chadian conflict within their grasp. Habre's forces were armed by France, and their officers were sent to the mother country for training. Paris exulted, hailing Habre's rise to power as "an important stage in the process of unifying Chad and a milestone on the road to peace". (3) But what actually happened proved to be quite different.

The first Battle of N'Djamena took place in February 1979. On the basis of pro-Muslim propaganda, Habre mobilised his supporters against the Southerners and the president. Thanks to the benevolent neutrality of the French troops and aid from Goukouni's forces, Habre seized control of the capital.

Government employees and population groups originating in the South (70 to 80,000 people) went back to their home areas. In April 1979, on the basis of these elements, a general committee was set up for administering the South. Paradoxically it got support from Libya. Following the ethnic clashes at Moudou in the South, Paris revived its diplomatic initiative in the attempt to avoid a partition of the country.

In November 1979, all the tendencies together formed a Transitional Govern-

ment of National Union. That, however, did not end the civil war. In March 1980, differences between the president of the GUNT, Goukouni, and his defence minister, Hissene Habre, led to new clashes in the capital. At this point Hissene Habre sensing defeat, thought that 'the most certain bulwark for the defence of our national sovereignty is France'. (4) The French troops withdrew however in April and the 'legitimate' government of the GUNT called on Libya, whose forces entered N'Djamena in December 1980.

However, there again, there was to be a surprising turnaround in the situation. On one side the newly elected Mitterrand government got the Libyan troops to withdraw in November 1981. (5) Moreover, since the beginning of 1981 Hissene Habre, reorganising his forces near the Sudanese border, obtained financial support from the United States, and its local allies, Egypt and Sudan.

A year later, June 7, 1982, Habre's forces entered N'Djamena in triumph. And on June 9, 1983, the organisation of African Unity (OAU) recognised the 'legitimacy' of the new occupant of the capital. However, no sooner was it officially recognised than this legitimacy was thrown into question by those excluded from power — that is the other tendencies comprising the GUNT. In June 1983, they launched an offensive in the North.

In July-August the Mitterrand government responded to the desperate appeal of Hissene Habre by sending hundreds of tons of military material, and around 3,000 French soldiers, at the risk of finding themselves caught up in a colonial war.

#### NO TO FRENCH INTERVENTION

The salient features of the Chad conflict are, then, as follows — a state that since its inception has been largely a fiction; a national liberation movement that has never taken on really national dimensions and which over the years has broken down into a conglomeration of military cliques living off the masses; hopeless economic and administrative chaos.

None of the tendencies on the political scene today can claim to offer a perspective that corresponds even minimally to the historic aspirations of the Chadian masses. They also put their specific military interests above their relationship with the masses.

The fact that the imperialists have opted in favour of Hissene Habre does not change this state of things. It means only that this figure and the cohesion and military effectiveness of its troops seem to offer better promise for reconsolidating the Chadian state than the assets of other factions.

It should be remembered that in the Goukouni-GUNT camp supported by Libya there are such figures as Kamougue or Djogo, Southern military chiefs trained in France who participated in the repression against FROLINAT for years.

Furthermore, Goukouni himself in September 1979 called for slowing down the departure of French troops and later declared himself favourable to bringing in the inter-African force envisaged by France and the United States. (6)

The sole immediate aspiration of the Chadian masses is to be able to go about their lives with some security. This requires an end to the fighting, the departure of French troops, and the demilitarization of the society. But today these masses are under the control of opposing military factions or in exile, and in any case without any voice in the matter.

In this situation, talking about defending the national integrity of a state that has never really been one, involves defending the faction that for the moment has been able to get control of this moribund state apparatus.

To presume to propose the building of a central state, or a federation, or a partition to decide the future of Chad involves trying to achieve and maintain combinations among the chiefs of the various factions. This is no way to promote national unity. National unity in fact can come only by the masses themselves overcoming the present regional and ethnic lines of division, which the conflicting military cliques both reflect and foster.

A government that claims to have the mandate of the French workers must recognize the right of the Chadian peoples to self-determination. And that means first of all withdrawing French troops, stopping the flow of arms to feed the conflict, and not getting caught up in the logic of a colonial war. ■

2. Robert Buitenhuys, *Le FRONTLINAT et les revoltes populaires du Tchad, 1965-1976*, Edition Mouton, Paris, 1978, p. 457. See also *le Monde* of April 25, 1978.

3. *Le Monde*, September 1, 1978.

4. *Le Monde*, February 7, 1980.

5. See *Inprecor*, No. 114, December 7, 1981.

6. *Le Monde*, May 10-11, 1981.

**SUBSCRIBE TO  
INTERNATIONAL VIEWPOINT**



Embarkation of French paratroopers (DR)

## French troops out of Chad!

The following comment on the Mitterrand government's intervention in the civil war in Chad is from the August 26 issue of *Rouge*, the paper of the Ligue Communiste Revolutionnaire, French section of the Fourth International.

In an interview in *Le Monde* on August 26, Francois Mitterrand had finally to explain the reasons that led him to send the paras to Chad.

When the story that what was involved was a mere "training mission" fell flat, it was hard for him to try to "stonewall it" any further.

What has been sent in is a full-fledged intervention force, and it has been deployed along the front line dividing the country. More than three thousand soldiers are involved, equipped with Puma helicopters, dozens of trucks, and machineguns, Milan antitank missiles, rocket launchers, mortars, anti-aircraft guns, and several Crotale missile batteries. This veritable armada is backed up by Jaguar and Mirage planes, escorted by a KC-135 refueling plane.

As these lines are being written, the president's statements have not yet been published. But his essential arguments are known through a semi-official interview given to Eric Rouleau and published in *Le Monde* of August 17.

Every one of the explanations Mitterrand offered his journalistic guest strengthen our conviction that the French expeditionary force must be withdrawn immediately.

"Mitterrand's objective is clear," Rouleau wrote in the article mentioned above: "He is trying to halt the spread of the conflict, which could lead to an East-West confrontation and keep us out of a pointless war. But at the same time, he is trying to hold to his guiding principles, in particular defense of the territorial integrity and independence of an allied country."

What principles is Rouleau talking about? As the former Gaullist minister

Pierre Messmer had acknowledged, Chad is by no means a united country. The factions that have held power successively in N'Djamena have never held the slightest legitimacy in the eyes of the people.

As for the so-called Libyan interference, it should be noted that Colonel Qadhafi has not taken any liberties that Washington and Paris have not themselves taken in this region.

In 1968, de Gaulle involved our country in a military conflict to rescue that dictator Tombalbaye, who was threatened by the Tibesti guerrillas. Ten years later, Giscard sent Jaguars to protect President Malloum from the Frolinat guerrillas.

And everyone knows that Hissene Habre — a former agent of the French secret services — only succeeded in overthrowing Goukouni Oueddei in 1982 (who was supported at the time by France) thanks to the help of the U.S.

In reality, our rulers have gotten involved for only one reason. They are determined to maintain, at any cost, the framework of neocolonial accords that tie Chad to France within the franc zone, and to stop any upset in this explosive area from setting off a chain reaction destabilizing the local oligarchies.

With a clear-eyed and cynical outlook, *Le Monde's* special correspondent on the battle front wrote August 20 that the French government's aim was "to show our African allies that France can make an effective contribution to assuring their security. In a nutshell, this means showing that the old mother country still has the means for conducting a policy in the region."

To believe Eric Rouleau, France will not apply a policy in Africa similar to the one that Ronald Reagan is pursuing in Central America. "These two countries differ on practically everything, on the objective of the operation and the means for carrying it out, as well as on their analyses and motivations."

The conflict in Chad has provoked arguments between Paris and Washington. This reflects the stiff competition that French imperialism is facing in its traditional preserve. For some months, the U.S. has been seeking systematically to undermine French influence in the French-speaking sub-Saharan countries and in North Africa.

However, this tension between Paris and Washington should not cover up the essential facts. In intervening in Chad, France is fully assuming the role that falls on it in the bloc of imperialist states.

The present crisis in Chad is forcing the imperialist countries once again to face the growing instability of sections of the third world on which it depends for raw materials.

In order to deal with this challenge, the major powers have equipped themselves with new means for intervening in the world's hot spots. The U.S. has a Rapid Deployment Force, involving 200,000 soldiers. And our rulers want to create a Force d'Action Rapide (FAR) that would include 80,000 professional soldiers.

The French government's operation in Chad thus fits perfectly into the overall strategy and deployment of the Western forces. It is no coincidence that, parallel to the landing of our paras, the Pentagon sent 5,500 soldiers to participate in maneuvers with the Egyptian army and 7,000 others to take part in exercises in the Sudan, Oman, and Somalia.

"Convinced that there is no military solution to the complex problems posed in Chad, the president of the republic favors a freely agreed-to conciliation, that is, negotiations," Rouleau wrote.

In an attempt to convince the French people that his aim is conciliation, Mitterrand has just sent the left Radical Maurice Faure on a mission to the various parties involved. The fact remains that the government has involved itself in the infernal logic of a war that may last for years, a war that will cost hundreds of billions of francs and which once again will flout the wishes and aspirations of the peoples of Chad as well as the rest of Africa.

The presence of three thousand French soldiers will in no way help to achieve a democratic solution of the Chadian question. A solution in the interests of the greatest number in fact requires respecting the right of self-determination of the various peoples who live together in this artificial state left over from the colonial period.

In the immediate period ahead the Mitterrand government's action can have only one result — to bolster the Hissene Habre clique's control over half of the country and to consolidate the reactionary African potentates that have begun stepping up their appeals for help from French imperialism.

Whether or not the present partition of the country leads to a new confrontation or the situation festers, the result for the civilian populations will be more suffering and more poverty. ■

# Libya: caricatures and reality

This article was published in Rouge, newspaper of the Revolutionary Communist League, French section of the Fourth International, No 1076, dated August 26-September 1, 1983.

Claude GABRIEL

During the conflict in Chad we have found ourselves once more plunged into the midst of a brainwashing campaign. At the same time as the government is justifying its military intervention to the French workers by banging away at the theme of the 'Qadhafi dictatorship', it is covertly making contact with Tripoli. The question of the nature of the relationship between the Libyan regime and imperialism has been raised once again.

Since the start, Qadhafi has been motivated by a nationalist and anti-imperialist line. He has forged an original type of political regime, based on what was the motor force of the 1969 uprising — getting rid of the corrupt social layers linked to the monarchy and the Senussi Islamic Brotherhood. The radical populists of the new regime claimed to be founding a state based on the people's committees. But the thought of the 'guide' collected in the 'Green Books' has evolved progressively from Islamic fundamentalism to a more rational outlook.

Undoubtedly the Libyan political system does not go beyond the confines of formal democracy. It is a strong, authoritarian and repressive state. But there is no way that it can be claimed today that it is the bloody dictatorship that some like to depict.

*Libyan forces leaving N'Djamena in November 1981 (DR)*



The Libyan Jamahiriya (which means more or less 'the state of the masses') has thus bit by bit come to represent a danger for certain imperialist interests, for certain links in the chain of manipulation of the neo-colonial regimes in Africa. Tripoli has aided those military coups d'état that make superficial reference to the ideal of 'restoring' the Jamahiriya. The Libyan regime has supported different parties or political adventurers whose programmes mix nationalism and Islamic ideas.

This regime has put itself at the side of the Palestinian resistance without, for all that, breaking with the tradition of manipulation and blackmail of the Arab regimes against their leaderships. Libya supports Nicaragua and Grenada. Enough reason for Washington to talk of Libya 'a hotbed of international terrorism'. Thus it is quite clear that imperialism's threats against Libya should be immediately denounced.

The Kremlin has established direct links with the Libyan government. In a good number of cases, Tripoli's diplomatic line has followed the interests of the USSR, and it is sometimes difficult to distinguish between Tripoli's own policies and how it is used by the bureaucracy.

Thus the 'radical' policies of Qadhafi remain inconsistent. The proof of this is the reactionary content of its aid to one of the cliques in Chad, or the halt on aid to the Eritrean people from the time when Moscow gave its support to the military regime in Ethiopia. It did the same in regard to the Sahara. Having pre-

sented itself at the side of Algeria as the great rearguard of the Polisario Front, Qadhafi then stated on June 18, 1983, 'Libya has fulfilled its duty in the Western Sahara. There will be no further dispute between ourselves and Morocco on this question. The immediate problem for Arabs is to confront the Zionist danger.'

## A PARTICULAR CASE

Such is the ambiguity of this sort of regime. Their state policies seem to have many aspects similar to those of the Stalinist regimes, although the social interests they defend are those of the petty bourgeois layers coming out of the nationalist movement.

Libyan populism has been able to keep itself in power through the years mainly because of the oil revenues. These are considerable, assuring an income of 5,280 US dollars per head. This has allowed the stabilisation of a relative social peace, by favouring the petty bourgeoisie within the apparatus of a 'good payer' state and by ensuring a reasonable income to the workers.

Libya is an exceptional case in the continent, having been able to develop simultaneously intensive agriculture and modern industry, free of the previous very extravagant ruling classes.

However, Libya remains profoundly dependent on its oil exports in a market controlled by imperialism. The situation is deteriorating. Since 1980 the government has had to apply a policy of draconian restriction on investments. This has only served to exacerbate the competition of Western suppliers. In addition the effects of the world crisis also weigh heavily on all the countries of the Maghreb.

## CONTRADICTIONARY INTEREST

Thus, it is not surprising that Qadhafi, at the height of his polemic against the Fez plan for Palestine, accepted the policy of an economic Greater Maghreb with Algeria, Tunisia and Morocco. His problem is to respond to the needs of a dependent economy, oriented towards importing of Western technology, at a time when he is obliged to seek the best relationship of forces to face up to the international crisis.

Qadhafi, fearing economic and political isolation, is trying to maximize all Libya's advantages in the framework of a Greater Maghreb group. To achieve this aim he is ready to recognise — as he just stated during his visit to Tunisia — that he was mistaken in thinking that only the 'revolutionary regimes' could bring about Arab unity. Radicalism is now giving place to pragmatism.

Thus, it is not surprising that we have seen the French government blowing hot and cold. In these times of increased competition in the field of producers goods the existence of an open market cannot fail to make capitalists' mouths water.

# Solidarnosc's challenge

Solidarnosc, on the third anniversary of the Gdansk agreements once more showed the strength and determination of its militants. On August 31, 1983 several tens of thousands demonstrated in most of the major cities, despite an impressive and aggressive police presence. The Polish junta which, as usual, did everything it could to play down the scope of the mobilisation, was nevertheless forced to recognise that demonstrations had taken place in Warsaw, Gdansk, Cracow, Nowa Huta, Wroclaw, Poznan, Lublin, Czestochowa and other towns. In Nowa Huta, Wroclaw, Lublin and Czestochowa confrontations with the police lasted late into the night.

Moreover, the appeal to boycott public transport was widely followed in the major cities. In Warsaw for example, the work-

ers in the FSO car factory (Polski FIAT) and from the Huta Warszawa steelworks — both on the outskirts of the city — went on foot to the city centre. On the other hand, it is still not known what happened in the go-slows and work stoppages by the workers of the whole country for which Lech Walesa called on August 23.

Lech Walesa, commenting on these mobilisations on September 1, considered that 'this August 31 has been a big success, perhaps the greatest the union has had'. 'It is not a question,' continued the leader of Solidarnosc, 'of putting ourselves face to face with tanks, but showing how many we are. It is very necessary that someone draws the consequences.'

Jacqueline ALLIO

One week away from the third anniversary of signing the Gdansk agreements the Western media transmitted a more than symbolic image. In the same room where the legal birth of the independent trade unions was proclaimed on August 31, 1980, Mieczyslaw Rakowski met 2,000 workers from the Lenin shipyards, led by Lech Walesa.

It was a stormy session. The attacks on the outlawed Solidarnosc by the government representative, accusing it of being the root of all evil, provoked only catcalls and whistles. When, contradicting himself, he affirmed that 'Solidarnosc no longer exists', he saw the whole room stand up and reply, 'That's not true. Solidarnosc lives and will live. We want free trade unions. Freedom for the imprisoned leaders.'

Several extracts of this meeting were broadcast by Polish television. Coming after the announcement of the capitulation by W. Hardek of Cracow — one of the leaders of the Temporary Co-ordinating committee, TKK, leadership of the clandestine union — this broadcast would have undoubtedly helped to mitigate the effects of this desertion, which could not but sow disarray among the activists of the underground union.

It also followed an ultimatum thrown at the regime by the clandestine Solidarnosc commission in the Lenin shipyards, demanding that it enter into negotiations with the union, and calling on the workers of the Baltic coast and the whole of Poland to start a go-slow from August 23 if this was refused. Lech Walesa supported this call by placing a bunch of flowers on the monument to the Gdansk dead on August 15.

The regime responded to these threats in the strongest terms. The same day Rakowski stated on television, 'We will



A giant Solidarnosc banner greets the pope in Poland (DR)

not negotiate either with Walesa or a clandestine group'. In this he returned to the familiar arguments according to which 'the Gdansk agreements were made with the working class and not with counter-revolutionary adventurers'.

As we know, the face to face meeting with the workers of the Lenin shipyard ended in a fiasco for Rakowski and an overwhelming victory for Walesa, acclaimed by his comrades. It was then difficult to evaluate the breadth of the strike movement — particularly because of the permanent slowing down of production due to the lack of raw materials — and to measure its resonance in the rest of the country.

But one thing is already certain — the intimidatory measures of the government in proclaiming a state of emergency throughout the region after the ultimatum delivered by the Gdansk workers, have not succeeded in making them bend their heads.

At the same time the regime has also had to recognise that neither has the campaign it launched against the Catholic Church, accusing it of 'inquisitorial practices and spiritual terrorism', succeeded in making the Catholic hierarchy shut up. In a communique dated August 26, following Rakowski's visit to the Lenin shipyards, the bishops, taking the pope's words on the ideals of

August 1980 as their own, reaffirmed the necessity of giving a response to the 'just expectations of the people' concerning 'a general amnesty, trade-union plurality, re-employment of people sacked for their convictions, the right of students to study, and finally the re-establishment of all the clubs of Catholic intellectuals'.

The two events in themselves say a lot about the degree of political instability which continues in Poland two months after the pope's visit, and the explosive nature of the situation on the eve of the August 31 mobilisations.

#### THE REALITY AND THE LIMITS OF THE AMNESTY

In a declaration dated July 3, the TKK stated, 'A raising of the state of war which is not accompanied by the abrogation of all the legislation adopted in that framework, legislation which has done away with any possibility of independent social initiatives and actions, but would instead guarantee the regime prerogatives comparable to those it had under the state of war, would be only a gesture with no real political import.'

In fact, since December 13, 1981 the Polish working class has not only been fighting for the lifting of the state of war and the freeing of *all* political prisoners, but also for the re-establishment of all the democratic and trade-union rights recognised by the Gdansk agreements or won since by Solidarnosc. What remains of these agreements? 'Mass broadcast on a Sunday' in the words of Walesa.

This is why, from the time the content of the measures taken at the same time as the state of war was lifted was known, the TKK launched an appeal to the Polish workers to celebrate the third anniversary of the Gdansk agreements by taking to the streets on August 31, and by organising a boycott of public transport for two hours.

This was its response to the 'amnesty' proclaimed by General Jaruzelski on July 22. An 'amnesty' which freed some and kept others in prison, among them the main leaders of Solidarnosc before December 13, 1981 and of the resistance movement after that date. An 'amnesty' which was accompanied by new laws passed by the Diet allowing the reimprisonment of those who participate in a 'dissolved organisation' or in 'the organisation of any protest actions against the law' and the stamping out of all independent thought in an even more effective manner than previously. Not to mention the introduction of a new paragraph into the constitution which allows the re-introduction of a state of emergency at any time.

These laws were accompanied by new measures which restricted workers freedoms still more, and envisaged an increase in work time, as well as the abolition of the free Saturdays won by Solidarnosc.

Limited as it is, the July amnesty is nevertheless an expression of the relationship of forces imposed on the regime

by the mass movement over the last eighteen months. Despite the state of war, despite the repression, despite the outlawing of the union, the position of the junta remains unstable, and it was necessary for it to make some concessions in the political arena, as it could not do so on the economic level. Measures bringing about an improvement in the standard of living, while not bringing the regime the sympathy of the workers, would at least have enabled it to reduce a section of them to silence.

But the developing crisis in which Poland finds itself, the growing mess that industry is in, the incapacity of the government to reduce the foreign debt, have and continue to make it impossible for Jaruzelski to make the least gesture on the economic level, and try to stem the discontent of the working class in this way. (1)

Thus, the social base of the regime remains more than fragile. At the beginning of June, during the meeting of the Central Committee of the PUWP (Polish United Workers Party), a leader of the party in Wroclaw declared that 'a section of the PUWP membership still have moral, ideological and political dilemmas', to the point where a large number of PUWP members still have not joined the new trade unions which still had only three million members at the time. But, it should be emphasized that even these very exaggerated figures are still well this side of not only those of the previous industry-wide unions, but even the numbers of PUWP members before August 1980.

#### THE REGIME REMAINS UNSTABLE

It is not surprising that the ruling team has been getting worried and that Jaruzelski, in his closing remarks to the Central Committee had insisted on the fact that a good number of base cells 'had not been reactivated', accusing a large section of the PUWP membership of 'having given proof of passivity'.

This also explains the great fear of the bureaucrats, glued to their armchairs in the party headquarters during the pope's visit, watching the crowds who greeted him. They were able to do this thanks to the television broadcasts laid on specially for the PUWP apparatchiks. Bureaucrats who, according to the report of an 'observer' in a Warsaw underground bulletin, were 'dumbfounded by the number of the enemy, by the thought that all the youth were against them. Bitter because all that they had to offer was offered before the pope came, and now they have nothing more in their hands to buy the people, everything is starting up again, and they don't see what methods to use to win against the people. Worried because they only feel strong militarily, and that is not much. Bureaucrats whose spirit is crushed in the same way that they were physically scared faced with Solidarnosc. Anguished by the failure of forty years of ideological work'. (2)

Jaruzelski and his clique could show

themselves to be even more worried as the different factions of the bureaucracy are deeply divided on the line of conduct to follow, and by the divergent interests of the different pressure groups and apparatuses. The insidious attacks by Moscow against Rakowski are not made to reassure them. The persistent and continually renewed rumours of possible dismissal of the team in place witness to the instability of the regime and its difficulties in resolving the major political, social and economic problems with which it is confronted.

In this sense, and as was foreseeable, the pope's visit changed nothing fundamental in the situation. Those who had any illusions on this have had to be disillusioned, beginning with the faction of the bureaucracy that supports Jaruzelski. For months they had not hidden their hopes — against all the warnings of the 'hardliners' and their allies in Moscow — that maintaining this invitation to this citizen not like any other would allow them to reach a conciliation with the people and give the junta credit for a more liberal course. This last element was indispensable for giving a pretext to the Western governments for giving up their policy of economic sanctions without false shame (a policy that was challenged from the beginning by financial circles, and which was kept much more in declarations of intent than in practice) and to come to the help of the junta.

These facts have given, on this, some hope to Jaruzelski since the Western banks agreed to reschedule the payment of the debt. From this point of view the pope's visit in fact contributed to increasing the room for manoeuvre of the present ruling team against the 'hardline' faction. But it is quite a different story as to how it has affected the attitude of the Polish people towards the regime.

#### THE CHURCH'S ATTITUDE

However, the faction in power knows that it can count on an open attitude towards it from one section of the Catholic hierarchy. The parting words of the president of the republic, assuring the pope that his visit had revealed 'convergent opinions on a good number of points between the head of the church and the Polish government', notably concerning the 'need for confidence, understanding and reconciliation' as well as the defence of a 'spirit of tolerance' were not simply polite formulas, nor a simple expression of the weakness of a bureaucracy reduced

1. The present Polish foreign debt is 27 billion dollars. Net national production dropped by 9% in 1982 compared to the previous year, and agricultural production dropped by 4.5%. Investments in industry dropped by 20% to the 1971 level, and particularly affected purchases of machinery and equipment. Some 50% of machines are out of use, or on the way to being so, in the agricultural and construction sectors. The rise in the cost of living was 105% in 1982, with average rises of 237% in food costs, and 185% for consumer goods. The rise in real wages did not go above 51% on average.

2. *Wola*, clandestine Solidarnosc bulletin in Warsaw, no 21-22, June 27, 1983.



to getting the support of the head of the church at any price. The attitude of the top clergy after the pope's visit reflected a corresponding concern to maintain good relations with the Polish authorities. The sanctions taken against numerous priests judged too combative or too inclined to put themselves at the service of Solidarnosc — particularly through sudden transfers to distant country parishes — represent direct blows against the activity of the underground union.

The editors of a Solidarnosc bulletin in Cracow, in an issue prior to the pope's visit, noted that the news arriving from the enterprises more and more often expressed 'a concern about the present development of contacts between representatives of the Catholic church and Solidarnosc members. Particularly in the last few weeks one can see new elements in the clergy's attitude. As our readers suggest, the compromise that the church tried to negotiate with Jaruzelski before the pope's visit is perhaps going to be paired with a demand for change in some of the clergy's activities, above all among the ordinary priests'.

To illustrate this point the editors published a letter from a group of workers from the Lenin steel workers in Nowa Huta, which informed them that, 'people who go to the church to ask for Mass to be said for the workers or trade unionists feel unwelcome, indeed rejected. The church authorities are treating people who, in these difficult times, are coming together to seek mutual aid and consolation in prayer with arrogance and contempt'.

These workers were above all protesting against the attitude of cardinal Macariski who several times, having undertaken to say a mass at the Solidarnosc altar of Mistrzejowice in Nowa Huta, quite simply let down the faithful who assembled.

'This way of treating us surprised us a lot, we the workers, because we remember a little while ago, when we still acted within the legality, that he blessed the cross and the banners of our union. Do they have such fear of us, the workers, the real trade unionists? If this is the case, we can affirm that we have not changed. We remain faithful believers. But we cannot accept the fact that the high authorities of the church do not treat us seriously. We know what we want and what is the objective we are trying for. There remains only one question — do we march together or separately?' (3)

These words put into their rightful place the recent declarations of bishops mentioned above and the range of the rhetorical flights of the said cardinal Macharski in particular. At the same time as the Catholic hierarchy reacts against the attacks made on it by the regime it is taking its distance from Solidarnosc. This shows that, while claiming to be above the fray, the church is pursuing its own ends and does not intend to subsume its own interests into those of a mass movement whose desire for autonomy and whose political aims objectively put into

question its own authority. Thus it is true that the church is only really strong when the power of bureaucracy and the potential power of the working class are weakened.

However, the attitude of the Catholic hierarchy has not gone without provoking some profound reactions among the clergy. There are many priests who, each Sunday, far from restricting themselves to appeals for reconciliation, encourage the faithful to action.

For example, there was the priest in Warsaw, who, after the so-called amnesty, declared in his sermon, 'We were waiting for them to efface all the offences, and not for democratically elected people to remain in prison. I speak to all those who have left the country or are still in prison. I say to you "God will give you victory".' After this a priest read from the pulpit, 'for the liberty of the nation, that those in clandestinity and the workers who have been sacked may find fraternal aid, that the media will not serve to put out lies, finally, that the Polish people, free from all fear, can realise the noble ideals of August 1980.'



Solidarnosc supporters (DR)

How can one but see the pressure of the masses in these words, and its effect on the spirit of a whole section of the clergy directly in touch with the workers and sensitive to their worries and their hopes?

### NO FREEDOM WITHOUT SOLIDARNOSC

It is less the repeated appeals for 'the necessary dialogue between the regime and society' that the Polish workers will have retained from the pope's visit than the passages from his speeches on 'the will to win', on the respect due to democratic human and citizen rights, and particularly on recognition of the right to organise in trade unions, a right which is not a matter for the state but which is an 'innate right', and the right to workers self management.

Assessing John-Paul II's visit from the point of view of its political character, an

anonymous unionist stated in a clandestine bulletin 'I attribute particular importance not to the words of Jean-Paul II, who is a past master in the art of allusion and ambiguity, nor to the statements of Jaruzelski or Jablonski, who are champions in treachery, but to the shouts and the demonstrations of the masses gathered for the giant Masses...The people from the small enterprises and atomised milieus — peasants, artisans — who are subjected daily to propaganda and indoctrination by the press and the television, have been able to convince themselves that Solidarnosc lives, that it is strong and powerful and is not thinking of capitulating.' (4) The feeling of strength which came out from the crowd penetrated every demonstration organised spontaneously from each gathering.

In Cracow in particular nearly half a million marched for hours shouting 'There is no freedom without Solidarnosc! Poland is us! Free elections, amnesty, democracy! Freedom for all political prisoners!' Other than the slogans of support for the pope, for Lech Walesa, for their imprisoned leaders, and the memory of their comrades fallen under the repression, the participants in this demonstration constantly addressed themselves to those who were standing and watching them, chanting, 'Come with us, they won't hit us today!' To the members of the militia in particular they shouted, 'Throw away your truncheons, come with us! Be human, don't strike your brother!'

This feeling of strength was also found a week after the raising of the state of war, during the demonstration of 10,000 people gathered under the sign of the clandestine union to celebrate the 39th anniversary of the Warsaw uprising. It was also found among the thousands of people who the day before took part in a Mass celebrated in the capital to pray for the realisation of Solidarnosc's ideals.

But it certainly seems that once more the degree of organisation of the underground movement is below the level of combativity of the masses. The preparation for the August 31 mobilisations brought out certain disagreements within Solidarnosc, between the TKK on one side and the Lenin shipyards in Gdansk and Walesa on the other. These latter launched an appeal which went further than that of the TKK. Their appeal was also supported a little later by a leader of the TKK, Zbigniew Bujak, although without knowing exactly if other regions approved this initiative and if they were ready to solidarise with the workers of the Baltic coast.

The question of co-ordination of the clandestine structures of Solidarnosc and their debate to define the political perspectives of the movement seem more decisive than ever in order to offer a way forward for the mobilisation of the mass movement. ■

3. *Tymczasem*, clandestine Solidarnosc bulletin in Cracow, no 11, May 3, 1983.

4. *Zomorznosc*, clandestine Solidarnosc bulletin in Cracow, no 60, July 2, 1983.

# Rightwing shift in British labour movement gives rise to witch hunt

On August 11 the British daily newspapers headlined the sacking of 13 'red moles' by the management of the nationalised British car firm, British Leyland, at its plant in Cowley, Oxford. Allegedly sacked for having given false references the thirteen were accused in the press of having been part of a 'plot' to 'takeover' British industry, organised by the newspaper *Socialist Action*.

*Socialist Action* is a newspaper that has been recently launched within the Labour Party fighting for revolutionary socialist ideas. It is supported by, among others, the Socialist

Brian HERON

This year's annual conference of the British Trades Union Congress (TUC — the single trade-union federation, representing 10 million members) has been a dramatic affair.

Frank Chapple, the TUC chairman for this year, and a leading rightwing spokesperson for the most Cold War oriented section of the bureaucracy, spoke out at the beginning of the TUC giving his support to Neil Kinnock in the election for Labour Party leader due to take place at Labour Party conference at the the beginning of October. This caused much surprise in the press and in some political quarters, up till now Kinnock had been regarded as the 'centre left' candidate against the two candidates of the right, Roy Hattersley and Peter Shore. Chapple's own union, the engineers and plumbers union EETPU, is not participating in the election because it does not agree with the democratic principles on which the election is organized. (1)

Against the wishes of the largest union, the Transport and General Workers Union (TGWU, with 1.25 million members) the TUC elected a new General Council, composed of representatives from the smaller unions as well as the larger traditional industrial unions. For the first time this contains a large number of representatives from unions that are not affiliated to the Labour Party. (2) The TUC itself also refused to take the traditional greetings from the Labour Party leadership, and refused to accept or organise or participate in a meeting of the Labour leadership candidates even as a fringe event.

A series of statements were made both before and during the TUC by a number of leading figures, including Len Murray the general secretary of the TUC, on the necessity for talks with the Tory government about their proposed union legislation. This went against the principle and policy laid down by the TUC, and defended by the left, notably Arthur Scargill, the president of the very leftwing National Union of Mineworkers, who is opposed to these talks and instead is in favour of organising a fightback

League, British section of the Fourth International.

In the article below Brian Heron, an activist in the Labour Party in Scotland, and a regular contributor to *Socialist Action*, outlines the political context and reasons for this red-baiting attack, how sections of the CND and labour movement leadership have followed the lead of the bourgeoisie in trying to brand *Socialist Action* supporters as 'infiltrators', and the response through a national campaign against political victimisation that is now getting under way.

against the Tory government based on the industrial and trade-union movement.

At the same time the policy of incomes control, disguised in terms of a 'National Economic Assessment', has been re-endorsed by the TUC. There have also been a number of statements inside and outside the TUC by leaders of the trade-union movement backing off from the policy of opposition to the European Economic Community.

## TUC SHIFTS TO THE RIGHT

To summarise these developments we can see an attempt to politically shift the axis of the TUC in quite fundamental ways. First, for the TUC to drop the main radical policies of the labour movement over the last period — opposition to Britain's independent nuclear weapons, as well as to Cruise missiles; opposition to the EEC; and opposition to any form of incomes policy.

Removing these radical policies from the TUC's position clears the way for the second major thrust, which is now very apparent. To loosen the TUC's commitment to a straight Labour Party victory, and to open the door to those political discussions and policies necessary to begin the task of constructing a coalition between the Labour Party and the Social Democratic Party/Liberal Party Alliance.

In the June General Election the Alliance came within 700,000 votes of the Labour Party. The balance sheet that major sections of the trade-union bureaucracy make of this result is that it is necessary to reconstruct the opposition to the Tories in line with this electoral balance of forces. Thus it is necessary to start removing the political obstacles to the possibility of a coalition. We can see, therefore, that the political relationship of forces within the labour movement has shifted substantially in favour of the right.

This confirms the prediction we made about the effects of the Thatcher victory. We said that it could, would, and must be seen as a major political defeat for the workers movement. And that it would push ahead various trends that were already apparent within the workers move-

ment, give them extra impetus, and create the conditions for a major offensive against the minority that still wishes to fight to defend the independence of the labour movement, and the political independence expressed by the existence of the Labour Party. The door is open for a massive offensive against that minority — this establishes the political atmosphere we now face within the labour movement.

These trends were clearly visible before the election. First and foremost we had Tony Benn, the best known leader of the Labour Party left wing, deciding to wrap up his opposition to the Labour left and centre, on the spurious basis of the need for unity in the election period. This so-called unity was destroyed by the right wing who had control and the initiative during the election. We saw Frank Chapple endorsing an SDP candidate in Islington, an important central London constituency, traditionally a Labour stronghold where the local Labour Party has left wing policies and candidates.

## THATCHER'S VICTORY OPENS DOOR TO RIGHT WING OFFENSIVE

Now these trends have been given a tremendous push by the election of Thatcher. The result of this political atmosphere, and the political offensive

1. The Leader and Deputy Leader of the Labour Party are elected by an electoral college in which the constituency parties (local branches) and parliamentary representatives have 30 per cent of the votes each, and the affiliated trades unions 40 per cent. Only members of parliament are entitled to stand for election and formerly they were the only ones entitled to vote. The involvement of the whole party in the election is one of the democratic reforms fought for and won by the Bennite left.

2. Most trade unions, particularly the traditional and industrial ones are affiliated to the Labour Party. Members pay a 'political levy' which is automatically included in the union dues unless they state they do not wish to pay ('contracting out'). The unions then pay the affiliation fee for the appropriate number of members to the Labour Party and are thus entitled to wield the 'block vote' at Labour Party conference. About 6 million trade unionists are affiliated to the Labour Party in this way. One of the aspects of the new legislation proposed by the Tories is to make it obligatory for unions to revote every five years whether or not to remain affiliated and to make the payment of the political levy separate from dues payment.

opened up by the right, has been significant division and demoralisation among the left. We have already seen that Kinnock, considered by the Labour Party and the press as a candidate from the left, is now the candidate considered to be the best candidate to conduct the witch hunt, he has already committed himself to do that. He has also stated his opposition to the EEC, and it is obvious that he intends to go further in this direction having attained the leadership of the Labour Party.

The rot has gone deeper. Michael Meacher, a candidate for the deputy leadership of the Labour Party who is seen as the candidate of the Bennites, has stated that he is against pursuing the witch hunt, but he is not in favour of readmitting the five members of the editorial board of the *Militant* newspaper who have already been expelled. Hardly a coherent, consistent or fighting stance on the question. He has also explained that he is now for a referendum on the question of unilateralism, rather than carrying through Labour's commitment to this policy, thus allowing it to be decided by the influence of the bourgeois media, etc.

So, this shift to the right, and the political offensive that has opened up, essentially to prepare the conditions for coalitionism, have had a serious impact within the left, what we have dubbed the Bennite left. The witch hunt is more and more necessary, particularly within the Labour Party to prepare the conditions for coalitionism.

#### WITCH HUNTING THE LEFT

It is possible for the TUC to make its shift on policy questions, on the Labour leadership question, without going in for a full scale purge. It can do it by isolating particular unions, facing up to the left oppositions which undoubtedly exist and are growing to defend the radical policies of the labour movement and union democracy, and a left leadership of the Labour Party.

In the Labour Party itself this shift will require much greater tactical flexibility and more careful preparation than took place at the TUC. At local branch and constituency level in the Labour Party about 80 per cent of the membership could be described as supporting the left, defending the present leftwing policies we have mentioned and would vote for Bennite candidates for the leadership of the party. This means it cannot be a question of political persuasion or arguments that the right can use to change the relationship of forces. Right at the centre of its political preparation must be a purge of the party to shift the balance in the direction in which it wishes to go. Therefore, the witch hunt is not going to go away or become less of a feature of the political situation within the labour movement. On the contrary, it is likely to be one of the main questions, particularly within the Labour Party, over the next short-term period.

The second basic point that we have to understand is that all rightwing victories,

of the sort that Thatcher's victory represented, always come with a systematic purge, or an attempt at it, of militants in industry. We have witnessed similar things before, after the defeat of the General Strike in 1926 for example, and there are many international examples. From that point of view the attack on *Socialist Action* supporters in the British Leyland car plant at Cowley in Oxford is simply a signal of a broader policy designed to uproot militants and militant leaders in the factories.

Thatcher's victory was very much the result of the split in the anti-Tory vote engineered by the production of a new bourgeois party, the SPD. She failed to win an overall popular majority. This fundamental weakness means that the employers and the state must mobilise all the more directly to resolve the problem of leadership that they face, and intervene directly to deal with the question of the relationship of forces on the factory floor and elsewhere. This, if anything, makes a purge of industry more likely over the next period.

The question to answer just now is why this witch hunt started in industry aimed at supporters of the paper *Socialist Action*.

There are two basic reasons for this. First of all a certain measure of understanding that it is necessary to hit at the weakest link. *Socialist Action* is a relatively recent development as a newspaper, and as an organised current within the Bennite left in the unions and the Labour Party. It is well understood that to hit the left at a weak link means you are more likely to achieve victory, and to cause confusion within the Bennite left as a whole. The bourgeoisie obviously made a careful balance sheet of the witch hunt against the Militant tendency and understood that such a witch hunt can cause divisions among the left provoking different responses, and sought to achieve something similar among leftwing trade unionists.

#### SOCIALIST ACTION SUPPORTERS UNDER ATTACK

We should also note that there is an aspect of the witch hunt directly related to the importance and significance of *Socialist Action* itself. It is a current within the Bennite left which acts on and understands the importance of the relationship between the battle in the unions — the formation of new Broad Left opposition groupings increasingly focused on the struggle in the Labour Party — and the need to be organised within the Labour Party itself. It is also understood the *Socialist Action* supporters are not a sectarian current like those around the *Militant* but are capable of operating in a broad united way, and are therefore more dangerous from the point of view of the potential for organising the left wing in the unions and Labour Party.

For both these reasons *Socialist Action* supporters have been the target of a massive witch hunt over the last month,

starting with thirteen and then a further three being sacked from Cowley.

When such a witch hunt takes place, all sorts of scum and reactionary ideas rise to the surface. One of the worst of these reactionary ideas and reactionary moves was that centred around women. Six of the sacked workers were young women, and much play was made of the perfidious role of women in respect to the so-called plot to seize power in British Leyland and there was an attempt to create a general atmosphere that made the presence of women in industry and in trade-union politics illegitimate.

Naturally the attack by the employers on *Socialist Action* supporters was utilised very rapidly by the leadership of the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament (CND, the mass movement opposing nuclear missiles) and then by the Labour Party leadership itself.

#### CND LEADERSHIP MOVES TO DROP UNILATERALIST POLICY

In a relatively short period following the sacking of the 13 from Cowley there were statements in the press by leaders of CND, including the chairperson Joan Ruddock and Bruce Kent the secretary, attacking the role of *Socialist Action* supporters and supporters of the youth paper *Revolution* for their 'infiltration' and 'takeover' of Labour CND, the branch of the campaign organised in the Labour Party and a sizeable leftwing current of the mass movement, and in Youth CND, the fastest growing component of the movement within which supporters of *Revolution* have considerable influence because of the work they have done to build it.

This attack arises from the fact that the CND leadership are proposing to retreat considerably from their positions of unambiguous defence of unilateral disarmament. In the context of the election results and the rise of the SDP they are seeking, just as sections of the labour movement leadership are seeking, to establish a set of policies relevant to the prospect of linking up with the Alliance, to the prospect of coalitionism.

Therefore, they are attempting a major political struggle to establish the main policy stand of CND as for the nuclear freeze, that is, no more nuclear weapons over and above those already in Britain. It is no exaggeration to say that the leading forces opposing this move are Labour CND and Youth CND, and the *Socialist Action* and *Revolution* supporters within the movement in the local branches. Thus the attack by the employers at Cowley was seen as a golden opportunity to undermine and attack the political role of *Socialist Action* and *Revolution* supporters in the main mass movement in Britain today.

The third aspect of the witch hunt which flowed rapidly from the Cowley events was the discovery by sections of the press of a plot by one thousand moles in the Labour Party. Newspapers came out with headlines like 'New

Trotsky problem in Labour Party', or '1,000 moles discovered in Labour Party'.

Comments in the press were quite interesting. They made a clear distinction between supporters of *Socialist Action* and *Militant* from the point of view of *Socialist Action's* capacity to have a broader and more united front policy than *Militant*, lack of sectarianism, greater intelligence in political tactics and so on.

#### NEW ROUND OF WITCH HUNT IN LABOUR PARTY

Interestingly the general secretary of the Labour Party, Jim Mortimer, squashed these stories by explaining that they were a vast overexaggeration. But we should be clear that the main reason for this was because the Labour bureaucracy has learnt something from its year-long battle with *Militant*. In many circumstances the public battle, the press campaign battle, builds the support and the following of those victimised. So, although they have not retreated on their plans for a witch hunt, they are on the contrary massively stepping them up, they want to do so in silence, without the attention of the press.

For several days *Socialist Action* supporters came under massive media attack, a witch hunt in every corner of the labour movement and mass movement. A witch hunt that tried to render them a current without any legitimacy in the labour movement, the mass movement, or the left wing. In such circumstances it proved almost impossible to win immediate allies to fight back. For several days *Socialist Action* supporters stood alone in their attempt to defend themselves, with the exception of the support from sections of the rank and file leadership at Cowley, the shop stewards.

The prospect of establishing a national campaign in defence of those militants under attack was very, very limited. Therefore it was necessary for *Socialist Action* to work out a defence policy that would allow it to break through this log-jam of complicit silence.

The first breakthrough came with a statement from Eric Heffer, longtime member of parliament opposing McCarthyism and witchhunting activities. He is one of the candidates in the Labour Party leadership contest most associated with Bennism, although with some differences and distinctions with it.

This support from Heffer indicated that sufficient numbers of people now understood that the attack in Cowley was part and parcel of a general attack on *Socialist Action* supporters across the board, and then on the left as a whole, and that it was now possible to move ahead in a defence campaign. *Socialist Action* considered that the campaign had to start from the Cowley victimisations, despite the fact that over the short term the centre of the witch hunt would be of course the attempt to smash the *Socialist*

#### DRAFT STATEMENT AGAINST POLITICAL VICTIMISATION

This draft statement will form the basis for calling a national campaign committee in defence of bourgeois democratic rights, against political victimisation at work.

"We are deeply concerned that the recent dismissal by British Leyland at Cowley of workers for their political views is merely one example of increasing evidence of the victimisation of workers who are considered radical or socialist. In our view an employer is not entitled to censor ideas or penalise normal trade union activity.

The press treatment of the Cowley story was gravely disturbing in assuming guilt where none was proven. Yet few voices were heard in criticism. This is a new McCarthyite tendency to condemn people by association and, taken with the activity of organisations like the Economic League, it is a tendency which ought to be reversed. We would welcome your support in forming a committee to counter this tendency and to give support to those who are victimised at work for their political convictions."

Statements of support should be sent to:

Alex Lyon  
23 Larkhill Rise  
London SW 14  
Great Britain

*Action* current out of the debate and struggle within the Labour Party. The issue posed at Cowley was a basic bourgeois and democratic right — the right of people, regardless of their political convictions, to have a job.

On the basis of this bourgeois democratic right *Socialist Action* began to build a campaign which had the ultimate aim of mobilising within the labour movement in defence of the rights of *Socialist Action* supporters, but which started by assembling those forces prepared to act on a national level in defence of the bourgeois democratic right so rapidly overthrown by the Cowley management.

A national campaign on this basis is being prepared and led by Alex Lyon, a former Labour minister, and a candidate for the presidency of the National Council for Civil Liberties, and supported by some bourgeois academics and other figures, for the establishment of a committee against political victimisation, blacklisting, etc., and starts from the fact that Cowley was such an incident.

#### NATIONAL CAMPAIGN FOR DEMOCRATIC RIGHTS

The draft statement which is to form the basis of this campaign is published here. Initial signatories include not only Alex Lyon but Professor Steven Rose, Stuart Hall, John Saville and Antony Arblaster. This statement will form the basis of many resolutions to trade-union branches, Labour Party branches, etc., and for support committees and activities in support of bourgeois democratic rights, and against political victimisation at work.

Through this campaign *Socialist Action* supporters hope to catch the sections of the Labour leadership in the cross-fire between the struggle of this campaign to defend bourgeois democratic rights and the actions of the employers at Cowley, and thus open cracks in the Labour leadership on the question of de-

fence of the rights of *Socialist Action* supporters, and thus create the best framework in which it would be possible to resist what will inevitably happen in a witch hunt of the views and activities of *Socialist Action* supporters in the Labour Party.

The campaign has so far produced a dossier on the activities of the Economic League, a shadowy organisation of the British employing class, whose directors and sources of funds read like a Who's Who of British capitalism, and whose function is to provide systematic information to employers on the activities of left-wingers and socialists in industry and the trade unions. This dossier also includes the draft statement and other material. So far it has been distributed to every delegation at the TUC conference, where the statement has been supported by a number of union leaders including Ray Buckton leader of the train drivers union and new chairman of the TUC, Jimmy Knapp, general secretary of the National Union of Railwaymen and Alan Sapper of the cinema technicians union.

It will also be widely circulated inside and outside the labour movement, and will lead to a meeting being prepared shortly to establish a campaign committee whose aim will be to seek interviews with victimised workers and uncover political vetting and blacklisting in British industry.

In this context *Socialist Action* supporters seek the widest possible international support for this campaign that they have initiated, supported and is now under way. This support can come in many forms, but in the first instance should come in the form of statements similar to that published here from leading academics, political and labour movement figures, those who have a record of defending civil liberties and democratic rights. *Socialist Action* believes that this would aid struggles against political victimisation in the countries themselves, and also enormously aid the campaign in Britain. ■

# Eyewitness account of anti-Tamil pogrom

COLOMBO — Sri Lanka, often referred to as the paradise island in tourist brochures, has entered into the gravest social crisis in its history.

The scale and the barbarity of the violence used by mobs made up of members of the Sinhala majority against members of the minority Tamil nation have surpassed those of the anti-Tamil pogroms of 1958, 1977, and 1981.

The hysteria that gripped the majority of Sinhalese is continuing; fresh rumors have been leading to new outbursts of attacks, search for "Tigers" (the term used to describe Tamil nationalist guerrillas in the North) and the burning and looting of Tamil shops and houses, as well as the killing of innocent Tamil people living in Sinhala areas.

It is difficult to estimate the number of innocent Tamils killed in this pogrom, and it will take a long time before we can calculate the damage it has done to the economy.

According to government figures, over 17 factories have been destroyed, amongst them some of the largest workplaces in and around Colombo, such as Cuntex, Hirdramani, and Raharaja's. These workplaces, which employed more than 2,000 workers each, have been burnt down by Sinhala goon squads.

Every known Tamil shop has been burned and looted. This has been the pattern not only in Colombo but also in every town and village throughout Sri Lanka, with some isolated exceptions. The jewelry shops in Sea Street, Colombo, have for some unknown reason received special protection from the police.

According to government estimates in early August, there were over 25,000 Tamil families in various refugee camps in Colombo alone. Apart from this, there were more camps in Kandy, Galle, and all other main towns.

Most of these refugees will never be able to return to their former homes because their belongings have been looted or burnt and their houses have been completely destroyed. In most cases, their entire neighborhoods have been totally destroyed.

The army, navy, and air force units that were sent in to "prevent" violence have in fact played a key role in fanning the flames of communal hatred. In some instances, they have taken the initiative, and in others they have supplied petrol and other inflammable material to Sinhala goons.

In all instances, the state military forces have stood by while goons destroyed Tamil lives and property. The police

have rarely intervened against the arsonists and Sinhala mobs.

The few Sinhala people who had the courage to try to protect their Tamil brothers and sisters have been attacked or threatened. The barbarity of those involved can be gauged by the manner in which innocent Tamils were killed by these mobs — beaten to death and their private parts burnt; people have been tied to lamp posts and set on fire; vehicles with little children in them have been overturned and burnt with all inside.

Only July 26, the government announced the deaths of 35 Tamil prisoners, most of them held in remand under the Prevention of Terrorism Act. Two days later, the government announced the death of a further 18 detainees. According to the official communique "other prisoners" set upon these Tamil prisoners and killed them.

The official version is particularly suspicious in the light of the fact that the persons killed are regarded by the security forces as hardline separatists.

Among those killed were Dr. S. Rajasunderam, secretary of the Ghandiyam Movement in Vavuniya and an activist in the Movement for Inter-Racial Justice and Equality.

The wave of anti-Tamil violence was unleashed following the deaths of 13 Sinhala soldiers in Jaffna in a clash with Tamil guerrillas.

The government had decided to bury these soldiers with full military honours at the Kanatte Cemetery in the Borella district of Colombo. Although only close relations of the dead were apparently notified, some 7,000 persons had gathered at the cemetery.

According to government reports, the bodies could not be brought to the cemetery in time, and so they decided to call off the burial in Colombo and turn over the bodies to the relatives.

After this, the crowd that had gathered at the cemetery supposedly became incensed and went on a rampage, burning Tamil shops and beating up Tamils.

President J. R. Jayawardene backed up this version of the events and sought to support the idea that the outburst was spontaneous, saying that "the Sinhala nation, by the violent acts they have committed in the last few days," had tried to put the government on notice that it had to take a tough stand against separatists.

A closer examination of the pattern of events does not support the view that the pogrom was the result of a spontaneous outburst. In general, ordinary Sinhala people were not involved in riots except

where there were rumors of "Tigers" attacking their localities. In most cases, the attacks were spearheaded by known criminals and thugs.

In some instances, the army, navy, or the air force were involved. Moreover, these actions seem to have been well planned. Shops were not burnt with makeshift inflammable material — often fuel barrels were placed in the shops or factories that were burnt. The army and police made no serious attempt to stop the attacks.

Last but not least, the government-controlled news media had in the preceding week printed a number of reports and articles that heightened racial tension and anti-Tamil feelings.

Mr. J. R. Jayawardene himself gave interviews to the BBC and the *Daily Telegraph* in Britain, indicating that he was going to take a tough stand against the separatists.

Now the government wants to pass legislation that would make it illegal for any political party or individual to raise the demand for a "separate state." Any such person would be barred from contesting elections and lose civil rights. Furthermore, all such persons will forfeit their property and will not be admitted to any profession.

So, the government wants to force the Tamil people to abandon the demand for a separate state, Eelam, by stepping up the repression.

It is very unlikely that the vast majority of the Tamil people would be intimidated by threats of this sort. The proposed law would only mean denying parliamentary representation to any genuine Tamil party.

As far as the Tamil guerrillas are concerned, such measures will make no difference for their strategic orientations. Thus, the Tamil-speaking areas of the North and East will remain the Achilles' heel of Mr. J. R. Jayawardene's policy. It is certainly unlikely that the guerrillas will be frightened by the prospect of being deprived of their civic rights.

Meanwhile, the food shortage created by the pogrom is beginning to affect the Sinhala population as well. The prices of essential foods have risen by 70% to 80%. For example, rice, which was at between 7 and 9 Rupees per kilo is now at 15 Rupees. Coconuts have risen from about 2 Rupees to 5 Rupees. Fish and beef are almost unobtainable. The government may be able to get this situation under control but prices will not come back to their original levels.

Still more serious is the loss of jobs as

a result of the destruction of factories and businesses. In the country as a whole, 50,000 people may have lost their jobs.

The government may also find that the bad publicity the country has gotten may seriously reduce tourist business.

Clearly, the government is reaping the fruits of their own policies. They mobilised goon squads against their political opponents in the Presidential elections, the Referendum (December 1982) and the local government and by-elections in 1983.

The government also refused to initiate a meaningful dialogue with representatives of the Tamil people and thereby undermined the credibility of the TULF (the Tamil United Liberation Front — the party that represented the Tamils) in the North and the East.

Despite what its election manifestos say, the government failed to make any meaningful concessions to the Tamils, who were subjected to various discriminatory laws. Instead, the regime embarked on a policy of increased repression — the Prevention of Terrorism Act, the stationing of a large contingent of troops in Tamil areas, refusal to recruit Tamil people for government jobs. It justified these actions on the grounds that they were needed to stamp out "terrorism."

The government-controlled media fail to distinguish between those who stood for creating a separate state through armed struggle and the vast majority of Tamil nationalists who did not. This political propaganda consistently fanned the flames of racial hatred. So, it was not surprising that the anti-Tamil violence that erupted on Sunday night (July 25) took such a barbaric and ugly turn. Once President Jayawardene and his government embarked on this policy, they could not control all the consequences of their actions.

In the weeks and months to come, when all the economic and social consequences begin to become clear, Mr. Jayawardene and his government may find themselves in an acute political crisis.

On Friday, July 29, events took a new twist. The worst seemed to be over by Thursday evening. The government had announced a relaxation of curfew regulations. However, a small news item in the *Island* reported that on Thursday a group of six people had tried to attack the Fort railway station and had been killed. This small item had grown into something much bigger by Friday afternoon, when word got around that "Tigers" had come to Colombo and that they were shooting at security forces from roof tops.

Very quickly, Colombo was plunged into another paroxysm of hysteria. By the early afternoon people were pursuing every Tamil still living amidst the Sinhalese, supposedly in order to destroy the "Tigers."

It is still difficult to get an accurate estimate of the number killed and wounded in this second outburst. The government figures are that thirty people were killed. Most of those who perished

had petrol poured on them and were set on fire. While they were rolling on the ground in agony, the mobs continued to beat these unfortunate victims with sticks and metal rods. The situation had gotten totally out of hand. The army and the police themselves became frightened.

In response to this turn, the Prime Minister himself "addressed the nation" and made it clear that no "Tiger" had either come to Colombo district or engaged in any violent act in that area.

He went on to say that the rumor about "Tigers in Colombo" had arisen as a result of an incident that occurred in Fort, where certain persons had thrown a bomb at security forces. The persons involved were all Sinhalese. Meanwhile over thirty people had been killed and hundreds more injured and all of them were Tamil.

On Friday, the government clamped down a curfew beginning at 2:00 p.m. The curfew was to continue throughout Saturday and Sunday. It was lifted only on Monday at 5:30 a.m. (to be reimposed on Monday, August 1, at 2:00 p.m.)

The most important development on Saturday, however, was that the government announced a ban on three political parties — the Communist Party of Sri Lanka, the Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna (JVP), and the Nava Sama Samaja party. At first, the government gave no reasons for this peculiar decision. Like the rest of the left, these three parties have been opposed to communal violence.

The first indication of the reason for the government's objective came in the speech of Minister of State Mr. Ananda Tissa Alwis broadcast over the radio. He claimed that there had been a definite plan behind the communal violence — a hidden hand. The plan was to be put into effect in stages.

The first stage was to set the Sinhala against the Tamils, then the Sinhala

against the Muslims, and thereafter Sinhalese against Sinhalese — that is Buddhists against non-Buddhists. He capped it all by saying that the whole plot had been planned in another country — a foreign power.

However, the minister explained, since Sri Lanka was friendly to all countries, it would not do to divulge the name of the country where this plot was hatched. This statement, however, was missing from the English version of his speech, as the BBC World Service noted.

Thus, it became obvious that the government was seeking to put the blame for the pogrom on leftists who were supposedly "conspiring" to overthrow the state by fanning communal violence.

On Sunday, the government said that the parties had been banned either because they were involved in the events that occurred after July 25 or that these parties would be an obstacle of the restoration of law and order.

The government also announced that they had sealed the printshops of *Attha*, the Communist Party paper; *Seenuwa*, the JVP paper; *Vane Satana*, the NSSP paper; and *Dinakara*, the paper of the main bourgeois opposition party, the SLFP.

This operation was set in motion with considerable deceit. In fact, the SLFP of Mrs Bandaranaike is opposed to all forms of separatism and terrorism.

The decision to silence all opposition parties that had any ability to inform the people of what really happened in the week beginning July 24 was obviously taken because the government was afraid that the real facts about these events would come to light and that this would make life very uncomfortable for the government.

The regime had obviously reached a crucial turning point. ■

---

## Reactionary terror in Sri Lanka — Statement by Bureau of the Fourth International

The following statement was issued by the Bureau of the United Secretariat of the Fourth International on August 1, 1983.

For a week now, an unprecedented wave of terror has been unleashed against the Tamil minority on the island of Sri Lanka [formerly called Ceylon]. Tamils make up 20 percent of the population.

Hundreds of Tamils have been massacred in what can only be described as pogroms. Many men, women, and children have been burned alive. Others have been tortured to death. More than 50 Tamil political prisoners were savagely killed inside the prisons.

These massacres and the self-defense measures taken by sectors of the Tamil minority in these conditions have been used by the conservative government of

J. R. Jayawardene as a pretext to launch an out-an-out witch-hunt.

The majority of the Tamil nationalist organizations, and three left organizations — the Communist Party, the People's Liberation Front (JVP), and the New Equal Society Party (NSSP), which is a left split from the Social Democratic Ceylon Equal Society Party (LSSP) — have been banned.

More than 150 leaders and figures in the workers movement have been detained. The left is accused of having systematically organized the riots, massacres, and looting in Colombo. This is a complete lie.

This wave of reactionary terror has to be placed in the more general context of political, social and economic develop-

ments in Sri Lanka over the last few years.

Mrs. Bandaranaike's coalition government of the reformist parties (LSSP and CP) and the bourgeois-liberal Sri Lanka Freedom Party (SLFP) had deeply divided and demoralized the working masses through its repression of the [1971] JVP youth insurrection, its anti-Tamil policies, and its austerity measures. This paved the way for the return of the conservative United National Party (UNP), led by Jayawardene, to power in 1977. This government carried out a systematic political attack on the organized workers movement. It broke strikes, limited democratic rights, and changed the constitution in order to stay in power.

The workers movement, thrown on the defensive and disoriented by its discredited and bankrupt traditional leaderships, was increasingly weakened, not just in parliamentary terms (where representation from the workers parties was reduced to one member of parliament from the CP) but also on the trade union level. The conservatives hoped that by doing this they would encourage imperialist capital to invest in the island and get the economy moving again after the stagnation of the Bandaranaike period.

But the international economic crisis was to hit the debt-ridden Sri Lankan economy shortly afterwards. The International Monetary Fund demanded stepped-up austerity measures, especially against subsidized food prices, free education, and the social security system. The living standards of the masses began to slide. People were becoming politicized again.

In the October 1982 presidential elections, 47 percent of the electorate, and the absolute majority of voters in the industrialized zones in the south and southwest and in the Tamil north, voted for the opposition according to official figures.

It is clear that today the reactionary terror aims to stop this politicization, to step up the repression and the trend toward banning workers organizations, and to ensure the maintenance of a strong state increasingly based on the bourgeois army.

The Fourth International denounces the bloody crimes of the Ceylonese semi-colonial bourgeoisie against the Tamil minority and the toiling masses of Sri Lanka.

It calls on the workers and democratic organizations throughout the world to defend the victims of repression in Sri Lanka and to demand the restoration of democratic rights without restriction.

It calls on all anti-imperialist and anti-capitalist militants to come to the aid of their brothers and sisters in Sri Lanka.

Free all political prisoners in Sri Lanka!

Lift the ban on all the Tamil and workers organizations!

Full democratic rights for all the masses in Sri Lanka!

For the right of the Tamil nationality to self-determination! ■

## Lessons of the Liege general strike

After fourteen weeks on strike the employees of the city of Liege have suffered a defeat. Their trade-union leaders reached agreement with their employers on a new wage agreement. This agreement would mean at minimum a wage cut of 17 per cent, if inflation runs at 4.5 per cent over the next three years — while it could well reach double that.

The article below, from the August 26 edition of *La Gauche*, paper of the Revolutionary Workers League, Belgian section of the Fourth International, assesses the role of the political parties, who as the ruling group on the council constituted the employers, and the unions. The workers were members of the ALR, the local council employees section of the union for the whole of the public sector, the Confederation Generale de Service Publique. This union belongs to the Federation General du Travail de Belgique, the socialist trade union confederation.



After fourteen weeks of strike the rubbish piles up (DR)

The plan which has been forced on the city workers of Liege constitutes a very serious defeat of the workers by the government.

It is particularly serious given the high level of combativity shown by the thousands of workers during the fourteen weeks of the strike. Through the battle the workers increased their demonstrations, occupations, other exemplary actions, attempts to popularise the struggle among the other sectors and the steel workers, attempts towards the self-organisation of the struggle. They stood firm against the campaigns of the right wing, the threats of Nothomb (Minister of the Interior), the provocations by the police, financial difficulties and the pressure from the ruling council group.

In the end this wonderful fund of combativity has been wasted.

The LRT, which had several members centrally involved in the dispute, will make a detailed assessment of the outcome with the active militants, to attempt to avoid reactions of fatalism and demoralisation. But for the LRT it is not the combativity of the workers which is in question. What is in question is the line of the traditional leaderships of the workers movement, both political parties and in the trade unions, not excluding the environmentalists. These leaderships all capitulated to the austerity policies of Nothomb, Martens and company. They did so for one fundamental reason — they have no alternative, and refuse to lead a resolute struggle to kick out the government.

## THE ROLE OF THE POLITICAL PARTIES

On October 10, 1982, the workers of Liege elected a 'progressive' majority, composed of the Socialist Party, Walloon Rally, Walloon People's Rally, and the Ecologists (PS-RW-RPW-Eco), against the rightwing bloc of the Christian Democrats and Liberals (PSC-PRL). Through this vote they wanted to block the offensive of the Martens-Gol government. But the new council betrayed their hopes.

Despite all its fudging, the so-called progressive council adopted the same attitude as the right. It accepted the framework of the Nothomb instructions, which demand that the budget balances and salaries be reduced.

The council did not really look for any alternative ways to avoid a confrontation with the super-profit makers in the region — the banks, the pharmaceutical industry, petrol tankers, and luxury goods producers.

But, above all, the ruling council group did not choose the only overall coherent way forward — to reject any cut in wages, and fight resolutely alongside the workers to defeat the government.

### NO SOCIALIST ALTERNATIVE IN LIEGE

From the beginning of the conflict a large group of the socialist representatives around the Burgomaster (mayor) Close and Digneffe (as well as Bertrand of the RW) took a position in favour of applying austerity measures to the workers wages. They did not even try to work out other solutions. Given the union pressure, they had to simply stall a while before being able to directly confront the workers.

A current more to the left emerged in this period within the PS. For a while it delayed the hardening of the situation. But it did not have the courage to finally confront the PS apparatus and to continue unconditionally refusing to negotiate in the framework of a cut.

Thanks to this lack of consistent opposition, the rightwing current was then able to get its last plan adopted unanimously, except for three abstentions.

The leadership of the French-speaking PS clearly supported this current. There is nothing surprising in this as Spitaels was one of the first to apply wage-cuts and redundancies for CSTs and CRTs (job creation scheme workers). A plan which he had elaborated when in the government.

### ECOLOGISTS: REDUCE PRESTIGE SPENDING AND SALARIES!

It didn't take six months for these militants to adopt the same objectives and take the same step as the other partners — make the workers pay for the crisis virtually alone.

Even compared to their own positions, which we have criticised for years, it did

not take six months for them to capitulate. And all their elected representatives, without abstention, voted for a plan which put the full burden onto the lower-wage earners and increased the wage differentials.

At no point did the Ecolos try to push for measures against merchants and bankers. That shows clearly both that they do not have a progressive alternative to offer and that, to keep a share of the communal power, they are ready to capitulate.

### WHAT THE UNIONS DID

At one time the trade-union movement appeared to take its distance from the ruling council group. A protest demonstration was even organised outside the PS headquarters. But in the end the union leadership in its turn gave in to austerity. In fact this capitulation had already been signalled by the behaviour of the bureaucracy throughout the conflict.

Firstly the Executive always staked its bets on dialogue with the council (which necessitated social peace) rather than negotiation supported by the workers in struggle.

Secondly, even the combative members of the Executive never had the courage to confront the intersectoral (of all sectors of the public service) or inter-professional (of the public and private sectors) offices. They accepted all their diktats so as not to put their posts as fulltimers in danger. But the union tops left them to face the anger of the workers alone.

### NO EXTENSION OF THE STRUGGLE

'We stayed isolated' said the union leadership, pretending not to know that solidarity has to be won; it will not be given.

'It's Gillon's fault, it's Gayetot's fault', said the officials of the Liege city union on the sly. (Gillon is leader of the metalworkers union in Liege. Gayetot is national leader of the CGSP who comes from Liege). But which of them had the courage to confront the union bureaucracy, to go in person to use all their weight in an assembly of the steelworkers at Cockerill, or of the ALR (town council employees) at Charleroi.

A number of sectors had workstoppages of several hours, after hearing of the situation from the city workers themselves. But they well knew that to win would require a broad cross-sectoral movement and thus decision-making general assemblies. Gillon did not want this.

### NO HARDENING UP OF THE STRIKE

Neither did the Liege city Executive of the ALR want to keep to a combative line in its workplace. Right up till the end it refused the further steps proposed by the firefighters or the hospital workers.

In the last three weeks the union leadership really capitulated. It proceeded to

discuss the way in which the wage cut would be carried out after a climate of social peace had first been restored, with the restart of rubbish collection and a 'warning' to those militants who instead put forward another stage in the struggle. Any negotiation which is not carried out on the basis of a relationship of forces leads to a retreat.

It is enough to compare the last two votes of the council. Between the two were eight days during which the union leadership gave up maintaining the fight.

The reason for such a discrepancy between the combativity of the workers and the attitude of the union leaderships is that the workers did not have the leadership of the strike. Nowhere were there decision-making mass meetings to assess the plan before the negotiations were concluded. The town union was called together the next day to be told, and the CPAS (staff of the local welfare assistance board) ten days later!

The big gatherings on the square were stopped when the Executive realised that they might lose control of them. The general meetings in the Congress Palace were stopped once the most militant workers discovered their ability to enthuse the assembly and even to force the union committee to accept that the meeting could take decisions by vote.

Finally, the strike committee, composed of the union committee enlarged to include all the militant workers, was folded up after the workers decided to go themselves to meet their comrades at the Cockerill steel works.

What struck us once more was how a determined struggle can very rapidly raise the class consciousness of many workers. It only took a few weeks for the active militants to understand that the struggle, on the local level, could only be won if it took on the scope of a cross-sectoral struggle to bring down the government, and thus the objective had to be to prepare for a general strike.

Despite the weight of the bureaucracy, a large number of the workers obviously tried to take back the strike into their own hands. That is a gain in experience and a lesson that they will remember for some time.

But, if the struggle is not to be lost, this experience will have to be written into the statutes, into the actual functioning of the unions. It will have to be reflected in the election of more militant representatives during the elections next spring. It is also going to be necessary to strengthen the current of militants in the intersectoral within the CGSP who fight for an anti-capitalist perspective and prepare, in the long term, to join up with those in the interprofessional within the FGFB.

Perhaps these two axes will give a way of avoiding demoralisation, and getting the fight restarted on the basis of concrete perspectives. The LRT which was present in the struggle through its active militants, its shop stewards, its bulletin *The Communist*, its paper *La Gauche*, will commit itself to this objective. ■



# Danish Fourth Internationalists hold congress

The Danish section of the Fourth International, the Socialistisk Arbejderparti (SAP, Socialist Workers Party) held its fourth regular conference August 19-21 in Copenhagen.

The report of the congress in the SAP's paper *Klassekampen* stressed that the meeting took place in a context of growing crisis and tension both in Denmark and internationally.

"This congress was held in a situation in which the U.S. imperialists are closer than ever to an outright war against Nicaragua, in which the [right-wing Danish] Schlueter government is clearly preparing a new wave of attacks on the working people, a situation in which there is unrest in the working class after the blows it has suffered at the hands of the government but not yet any broad, effective response from the workers movement."

The Social Democrats deliberately yielded the government to the Schlueter coalition in the fall of 1982 so that it could carry out austerity measures that they could not get working-class voters to accept.

The Schlueter government has since become known as the "Toilet Seat" coalition, because the initials of the bourgeois parties that make it up seem to spell that out in Danish and because the name corresponded to the esteem in which the population holds the rightist regime.

The bourgeois government immediately attacked unemployment benefits, which represented an important part of the income of casual workers such as dockers. The dock workers strike in response was defeated by a rightist campaign that involved a new level of police repression.

Since the end of the action, dockworkers leader Karl Jorgensen has been held in prison on a conspiracy charge, and the Schlueter government is trying to get through legislation that would permit "preventive detention" of persons considered by the police "likely" to cause violence.

## GROWING RESISTANCE BY DANISH WORKERS MOVEMENT

In recent months, the dockers have taken the initiative in drawing up a program for a united-front workers government. [See "Danish Dockers Propose Programme for Fighting Government," by Kim Tverskor, IV, No 35, August 1, 1983.]

Days before the SAP conference, the Danish National Labor Confederation (LO) organizations in Copenhagen and

Fredriksberg decided to organize protest demonstrations against Schlueter on October 4 and called on other LO district organizations to hold protest marches.

The weekend before the SAP congress, a conference of 400 shop stewards from the country's biggest trade-union, the General Workers Union (SiD) called for ousting the Schlueter government and for a working-class policy. It raised demands for eliminating the limitations on sick pay, for nationalization of newly discovered oil and gas fields, a fair tax policy, nationalization of credit institutions and insurance companies, as well as of the drugs industry. It also called for training the jobless and opportunities for youth to learn skills by doing jobs.

In a declaration to the union leadership, the SiD conference made the following points:

"The way out of the crisis for Denmark is not more cuts in wages but the introduction of a 35-hour week without any cut in pay.

"There must be changes in the present system of labor law, which is being misused to repress union activity and to force the unions to hold their members down."

The political resolution at the SAP conference was "The Offensive of the Bourgeoisie, the Bankruptcy of Reformism, and the Tasks of Revolutionists." It was concretized by a tasks resolution.

## THE RESPONSE OF THE SAP

The political resolution stressed: "The party's work must be focused on building the broadest possible mobilization to oust the bourgeois government. The fight for a Danish rejection of the 572 new atomic missiles must be continuously broadened. This demand has to be won through ousting the government. The new wave of austerity measures has to be met by broad protest actions directed toward preparing the way for a political general strike to bring down the bourgeois government.

"The Social Democrats and the other workers parties have to be called on to reject collaboration with the bourgeois parties and to set up a government based on the workers parties."

The resolution pointed out: "The dockers in Copenhagen have proposed a series of programmatic points that a government based on the workers parties should begin to implement. A similar proposal has just been made by an assembly of shop stewards in the SiD. Such initiatives must be extended so that the de-

mand for a working-class policy can gain broad, active backing from the workplaces and the trade unions."

Along with backing such exemplary initiatives from sections of the workers movement, *Klassekampen* pointed out: "The SAP will put forward a full socialist program for fighting the crisis. This program will indicate not only the next step in the campaign to oust the Schlueter government and stop the imposition of wage restrictions and social cutbacks but will set the signposts toward a settling of accounts with the capitalist system, which produces crises, poverty, and oppression."

## REVOLUTIONARY UNITY

In connection with this, the resolution laid out a perspective of unity of all the revolutionary forces in Denmark:

"The SAP believes that it is necessary to combat the divisions that exist among those who want to build a revolutionary socialist party. The Left Socialists (Venstresocialisterne, a left centrist group represented in parliament) has always been a mixed bag, but it includes various currents that have taken up the task of building a revolutionary party and therefore of preparing the socialist revolution.

"In order to strengthen the work of building a revolutionary party in Denmark, it is important to carry out an organized discussion between the SAP, revolutionary sectors in the Left Socialists, and revolutionists who do not belong to either of these two organizations.

"These discussions must also take up the question of building a revolutionary international. Such discussions must be conducted in the framework of increased practical political collaboration. Only in this way will it be possible to make progress toward a solid convergence of the revolutionary forces."

## THE IMPORTANCE OF THE PEACE MOVEMENT

The congress also adopted a resolution entitled "The Renewed Arms Race, the Threat of War, and Socialism." It explains the imperialists' responsibility for the nuclear arms race and the threat of war.

The resolution stresses the importance of continuing and extending the protests against the step-up in nuclear armament and of standing fast behind the demand for unconditional rejection of the 572 new atomic missiles.

The resolution explains, moreover, why the Soviet bureaucrats neither can, nor will, lead a struggle that can succeed in restraining the imperialist rulers, who are arming for war in Central America, the Middle East, and other places.

## YOUTH

Considerable attention was also given to youth and to the youth organization that works with the SAP, the Socialist Ungdomsfoerbund (SUF — Young Social-

ist League). Klassekampen noted: "The collaboration between the SAP and the SUF will be increased, as cooperation between two independent organizations. This applied, for example, to work in the peace movement and in the unions, as well as in education and in producing and distributing the SUF's journal, Slaa Igen. ["Fight Back"]."

There was a discussion of the relative place of work among apprentices and among the youth in action committees fighting the housing crisis, and how the SAP could reinforce the SUF without endangering the latter's organizational independence.

One of the most important ongoing campaigns for the SAP is the fight to win

the release of the imprisoned dockers leader Karl Joergensen.

Frede Jacobssen, one of the editorial board of Klassekampen, reported on the solidarity campaign and demonstrated a video film that has been made to be shown in the various workplaces at the lunch hour. The SAP has printed 70,000 posters on the Joergensen case to be sold to workers.

The congress was marked by general political agreement. The resolutions passed without opposition. There were thirty delegates. They elected a new national leadership of 17 members. (Based on the reports of the congress in Klassekampen and Internationalen, the paper of the Swedish section, which sent a correspondent.) ■

## Stop the militarization of Puerto Rico

The following is the lead article from the July issue of La Verdad, paper of the Liga Internacionalista de los Trabajadores (Internationalist Workers League), the Fourth Internationalist organization in Puerto Rico.

In recent weeks, a series of U.S. government plans have been announced that point toward an unprecedented step-up in the militarization of our island.

Among the measures announced are (1) the reopening of the Ramey Base in Aguadilla, (2) the transfer of the Las Americas Military School from the Panama Canal Zone to Puerto Rico, (3) the transfer of 867 facilities in Fort Allen to the U.S. army in March 1983 for the training of Latin American military forces (although they have also talked about establishing the Las Americas Military School there), (4) cancellation of the phasing out of Fort Buchanan, and (5) the issuing of contracts for the modernization of the naval communications facilities in Fort Allen.

These measures are really alarming. Not content with the military occupation of two-thirds of Vieques, with Roosevelt Roads (the biggest naval base in the world) and with the Sabana Seca installations, among others, the U.S. government is projecting the supermilitarization of Puerto Rico.

The U.S. government alleges that these changes are necessary to counter Cuban influence in the Caribbean and in Central America. It talks about how many airplanes and soldiers Cuba has, but it does not say anything about the U.S. military presence in Central America and the Caribbean, which greatly exceeds the capacity of the Cuban government.

With its attacks on Cuba, the U.S. government is trying to conceal its real objective, which is to maintain U.S. economic control over Central America and the Caribbean.

For decades, the peoples of Latin America have been ruled by governments and military dictatorships that have submerged our Latin-American brothers and sisters in the worst poverty.

Although there has been nothing democratic about these governments, they have been propped up, including by military means, by the U.S. government, which economically controls the entire region.

Today, many of our Latin American brothers and sisters are rising up against exploitation and injustice; they want to take control of the destinies of their respective countries.

The Nicaraguan people, for example, who were ruled for decades by the Somoza dynasty, fought against exploitation and extreme poverty and took control of the country in July 1979.

The new government has not been prepared to accept foreign intervention in the running of the country, and has not accepted any agreements whose conditions were detrimental to the Nicaraguan people. This has brought it attacks from the U.S., which is supporting the counter-revolutionary forces and has launched an economic boycott, which includes measures such as reducing the import quota for Nicaraguan sugar.

Like the Nicaraguan people, the Salvadoran people are now rising up against oppression and tyranny. Once again, the U.S. is not willing to give up its influence in the area, and is openly sending money

and military equipment to the blood-thirsty military dictatorship in Salvador.

It is for these militarist operations directed against our Latin-American brothers and sisters that the militarization of our country is intended to serve. This was in fact admitted by Commodore Diego Hernandez (a top U.S. military officer in the Caribbean), when he said that Roosevelt Roads would be the nerve center from which operations would be directed in the event of a military conflict in Central America.

We cannot let ourselves be used as a spearhead against the Latin-American peoples. The claim that the militarization of Puerto Rico would solve the problem of unemployment is a deception.

Have people forgotten that the level of unemployment on Vieques is higher than in the rest of the country, despite the fact that two thirds of it is taken up by the military.

Have people forgotten the economic and social stagnation that the so-called military economy has meant for the people of Vieques? Have they forgotten the serious problems of prostitution and public drunkenness that the navy has brought for the people of Vieques?

This represented such a threat to the security of men, women, and children on the island that they were obliged to organize to get the military out of the town (the civilian zone). Recently, the people of Vieques have protested about the resurgence of these problems, and clashes are expected.

At the same time as denying these facts, the government and the media that serve it has been flooding the country for years with propaganda about the "good life" in the army and trying to present it as an alternative source of jobs.

Why don't they say that 80% of the professional training in the military has no civilian application, and that 56% of Puerto Rican veterans suffer from mental disorders, while they get less government aid than veterans from the U.S.

The U.S. is defending its economic interests in Central America by tooth and claw. It is not democracy and freedom for our Latin-American brothers and sisters that interest them but oil, bauxite, and coal, among other things.

We Puerto Ricans cannot permit the militarization of our country. We have to oppose the transfer of the Las Americas School to Puerto Rico, the school that trained Anastacio Somoza and Humberto Romero (the Salvadoran dictator ousted in 1979), among others. This is not only because it is the best help we can give our Latin-American brothers and sisters, but because the supermilitarization of our country will bring such grave problems as prostitution, unemployment, destruction of the environment, and the threat of a military attack in the event of the U.S. becoming involved in a military conflict and our youth being used for cannon fodder in wars that are not in our interest.

Stop the militarization of Puerto Rico! ■

# The meaning of the Japan sea tragedy

The following article is from the September 9 issue of Rouge, the paper of the Ligue Communiste Revolutionnaire (LCR), French section of the Fourth International. It has been somewhat shortened for reasons of space.

Christian PICQUET

What happened on August 31 over the Japan sea? The only thing that is absolutely certain is that a Korean Airlines Boeing carrying 269 passengers was shot down after penetrating into Soviet airspace.

Obviously an action with such terrible and revolting consequences was an excellent pretext for launching a wave of anti-Communism. Ronald Reagan did not waste any time in issuing a blast against "a society that denies the rights of the individual and continually seeks to dominate other nations."

This is one way of trying to get people to forget that not so long ago the U.S. was dumping tons of napalm on Indochina and that today it is trying to strangle the Central American revolution. But cynicism is standard operating procedure for some governments.

Every day that goes by, the « reports » and « explanations » provided by the propaganda services of both blocs make the background to this incident more murky.

The Western sources — U.S. and Japanese — have been careful not to make public all the data in their possession. The three main questions raised by the destruction of the South Korean plane remain unanswered.

## THE UNANSWERED QUESTIONS

Why did the USSR do something like this?

It is hardly likely that the Kremlin decided to shoot down an airliner simply to put pressure on Washington in the present nuclear arms negotiations, as the cold war pundits have peremptorily claimed.

This unjustifiable action in fact put the Soviet Union in a difficult position in the eyes of world public opinion, and gave aid and comfort to the imperialists. It gravely disrupts the diplomatic maneuvers in which the Soviet Union engaged with the aim of extricating itself from a situation of confrontation that it finds economically very costly and of restoring detente.

How could the South Korean Boeing get so far off course?

The Western capitals have failed so far to offer a convincing explanation of why the KAL crew could fly for two and a half hours in a strictly forbidden zone.

A navigation error is improbable. The 747 had a three-tiered system, a sort of computer. All the instruments would have had to fail at the same time for the pilots not to realize what was happening.

At the same time, it is incomprehensible why the Japanese military radar stations and the civilian air controllers — who never lost contact with the aircraft and were in communication with it — did not intervene to get it to correct its course. This leads to the third question raised by this tragedy.

Did this incident come in the context of a game by the secret services on both sides?

Moscow accuses the Boeing crew with deliberately violating its air space in order to carry out an intelligence mission or test its defense mechanisms. Despite the natural horror at the Soviet action, this explanation is perfectly credible. The Western services have resorted frequently to such practices since the onset of the cold war.

Marcel Le Roy-Finville, a former officer of the French air service CDECE has told of assigning such missions to certain Caravelle pilots on the Paris-Moscow line in the 1950s.

« What I asked was very risky. Under whatever pretexts seemed plausible, pilots were at certain times to leave the air corridors and overfly an objective designated by the Americans. We knew that the Russians did not play around with Western aircraft wandering around over their territory. »

## A DEADLY LOGIC

Whatever the real explanation may be for this air tragedy, it indicates the threats posed to the peoples of the world by deteriorating East-West relations.

The military budgets of the Atlantic alliance states are skyrocketing. The new generation nuclear missiles are due to be installed in Europe by the end of this year. All the conventional forces are being reorganized to fight a « limited war » on the old continent.

The imperialist military strategists are not even looking for pretexts anymore in so-called advantages held by the Warsaw Pact. In a recent article in the *Air Force*

*Magazine*, Collins S. Gray, a White House adviser, said outright :

«The NATO plan for installing 572 Pershing 2 and Cruise missiles is not designed to balance the Soviet SS-20... NATO needs these 572 systems regardless of whether the SS-20 were reduced to zero.»

Facing this offensive, the Kremlin bureaucrats have responded simply by increasing their own military potential with the aim of forcing the enemy bloc to sit down to negotiate. They have gotten involved in a game of bargaining with NATO.

The Soviet response to the perspective of the installation of Pershings was to threaten to deploy intermediate-range missiles on the borders of Western Europe. And they have supported the anti-war movement that has developed on this side of the Iron Curtain only to the extent that it suited their immediate objectives.

This deadly logic promotes a race into the abyss, in which at any moment the international tension may touch off an uncontrollable situation. The Korean airliner is only the most recent and spectacular illustration of this.

## THE ROLE OF THE PEOPLES

The shooting down of the South Korean airliner is a stab in the backs of all those who are fighting the imperialist's super arms buildup. The Western governments are going to take advantage of this brutal action to justify their aggressive orientations.

The blood of the victims was hardly cold before Reagan called on the U.S. congress to think long and hard about « the Soviet aggression when they study the security of our people, and in fact, of all peoples who believe in liberty ». This already foreshadows a new increase in the Pentagon budget.

So, mass action is more necessary than ever. If there is a lesson to be drawn from these recent events, it is that no real progress can come out of the stacked-deck negotiations between the two blocs. It is the peoples themselves that have to step in to put an end to a process that can lead humanity to destruction. They have to force universal disarmament.

The only way to achieve this is to create the conditions for building an independent mass movement both East and West. The best way to do this for us is to put a stop to the war course that the capitalist powers have set and mobilize to achieve unilateral disarmament of these states. Every advance in this struggle against an enemy that is in the system of alliances to which our country belongs and in our country itself will be a vital encouragement to the struggles of peoples in other parts of the world.

In the context of such a perspective, the Fourth International will support the antiwar demonstrations scheduled for October throughout Western Europe. And in France, the LCR will try to make the planned demonstrations as broad as possible. ■

# Freedom for Ladislav Lis and Petr Uhl

On July 21, almost exactly 15 years after the Prague Spring was crushed by Warsaw Pact troops, Ladislav Lis was sentenced to 14 months in prison and three years of house arrest.

His case is a timely reminder that repression remains the main weapon of the Czechoslovak authorities against those who refuse to accept the "normalization" that followed the occupation of the country and who say so openly.

Lis, former spokesperson of Charter 77, was arrested in May 1979 at the same time as Petr Uhl and Vaclav Havel. But he was released six months later without being tried. On January 5, 1983, he was taken in for questioning. From then on, he was kept incommunicado. Despite all sorts of appeals, his wife was unable to find out where he was being held.

Clearly, the authorities intended to keep Lis from having any contact with the World Peace Conference that was held in Prague at the end of June. This is indicated by the explicit threats the secret police made to Lis' wife and his friends in Charter 77 about what would happen if they tried to get appeals on his behalf to the journalists and delegates in Prague for this conference.

Once the last journalist was gone, Lis was given a "streamlined" trial. There were not even any formal rights of defense. The Czechoslovak authorities even refused to grant visas to French lawyers who were ready to defend the imprisoned Charter 77 spokesperson.

Lis' sentence — which comes after the release without trial of a dozen oppositionists arrested following the seizure of a station wagon bringing illegal literature from France in 1981 — seems to reflect the irritation of the authorities at the fact that Charter 77 activity is continuing despite the repression against its members.

Despite heavy prison sentences, constant police harassment, and the forced exile of historic opposition figures, in recent months Charter 77 has shown its continuing vitality. In particular, it has intervened around the question of peace.

Not only are the authorities still far from silencing Charter 77, they have not succeeded either in limiting the opposition to this "historic" group. For example, their attacks against the cultural underground, which is very influential among the youth, do not seem to have discouraged this activity. This is indicated by the unofficial demonstration of about three hundred youth that took place in Prague on the occasion of the Peace Conference.

At the same time, the offensive recently launched against religious people (both priests and lay people) touched off the biggest protest movement seen in Czechoslovakia since August 1968.

In April, the police mounted full-scale raids in Christian circles, staged simultaneously in several cities. More than 250 persons were arrested and interrogated. Most of them were released after 24 hours. But about 17, including several Franciscan brothers, are still being held in prison. A letter of protest signed by 3,397 Christians, both Catholic and Protestant, was sent to Cardinal Tomasek, archbishop of Prague.

## THREATS AGAINST PETR UHL

This climate indicates that the authorities have no intention of relaxing their repression against opponents of their regime. But experience has also shown us that sustained international campaigns can force them to retreat. Examples of this are the release of Vaclav Havel and the release without trial of the persons arrested in May 1981.

By all indications, such a campaign is even more necessary today than in the past to demand the immediate release of Petr Uhl. Not only have his physical and psychological health been gravely affected by the conditions under which he is being held, but he is more and more



French demonstrators demand Petr Uhl's release (DR)

afraid that he will not be released from prison when his five-year term is up next May.

Uhl's wife, Anna Sabotova explained this in a letter to the participants in the Prague Peace Conference, in which she gave an account of her last visit in May 1983 (she gets two visits a year) to the Mirov prison. During the visit, she was accompanied by Petr's two children and his father-in-law, Jaroslav Sabata. The meeting took place in an oppressive and tense atmosphere:

"We were forbidden to shake his hand, even the children. This was a new measure announced to all visitors, (The alleged reason was to prevent the transmission of forbidden items, messages, money, etc.) Two officers were present during the visit and recorded the entire conversation.

"Moreover, a guard was posted to make sure that we talked only about family matters. He often interrupted us threatening to end the visit. He intervened even when we tried to explain some misunderstandings that had arisen because Petr was not getting our letters (two months ago they started just reading him a few passages from them).

"So, the conversation became difficult. At those points they ordered us impatiently to go on. Petr remarked drily that there was no rule that we had to talk. The guard intervened when Pavel, who is eight, showed his father a toy, although he had authorized this a minute before.

"From a remark Petr Uhl made, I realized that he fears further prosecution or transfer to a Third Category Prison (maximum security) as the result of many disciplinary sanctions.

"A phrase of Petr's led us to believe that in the small isolated group among whom he is being held (it is not altogether clear whether they are political prisoners or what), there is an abnormal situation, and that Petr fears that some of them have organized a 'plot' against him. This seems to be the source of his fear of further prosecution and an extension of his imprisonment. (Petr is due to be released in a year, after five years in prison. He was already imprisoned from 1969 to 1973.)"

Alarmed by this situation, by the constant strain under which Petr Uhl is living, his wife and father-in-law asked for a meeting with the prison educational officer and psychiatrist. These officials said that they had no intention of transferring Petr Uhl to a maximum security prison. But they did not "say anything definite about the possibility of further prosecution."

The Czechoslovak authorities cannot be left with a free hand to continue to hold in prison an oppositionist that they find particularly annoying. It is essential to step up actions in every country and internationally to demand the immediate release of Petr Uhl and of all those who, like him, are being forced to pay dearly for having the courage to say "no" to Husak's normalization. ■