

WORLD OUTLOOK

PERSPECTIVE MONDIALE

Un service de presse ouvrier

Vol. 3, No. 1

January 1, 1965

21, rue d'Aboukir - PARIS-2

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"We have sent arms to the Congolese nationalists and we will continue to send them," Nasser said.

"We have no reason to hide this fact. We do not recognize Tshombe, who is an agent of imperialism. The Congolese revolutionists need aid from all the nationalist forces in the world. Our position is clear, therefore, and we announce it without any equivocation; we have sent arms and will continue to send arms to the Congo."

Nasser added: "This policy is the result of our total independence. We will co-operate with other countries in the whole world on the basis of nonintervention in our affairs. If the Americans imagine that because they grant us aid they can dictate policy to us, they are mistaken and my answer to them is, no. We are ready to consume less tea, coffee and other food products in order to maintain our independence. Otherwise we would run the risk of completely losing our independence and the struggle of 1956 would have been in vain."

The United Press reported Nasser as saying, "We drink tea seven days now, we can cut it down to five. We drink coffee six days, we can cut it down to four. We eat meat four days, we can cut it down to three. We are people of dignity and we do not accept disdain from anyone."

Agence France Press quoted him as declaring, "The United States is delivering wheat, meat and chickens worth £50,000,000 [\$113,500,000] a year. They don't furnish us factories. If it is necessary, we can give up this £50,000,000 and drink less tea and coffee."

On December 24 it was reported that Washington officials were not prepared to offer any comment on this speech by Nasser and another one the next day in which he called for greater self-reliance in armaments, industries and agriculture.

But "sources said," according to the New York Herald Tribune [December 25 European edition], "that the U.A.R.'s recent request for \$35 million in surplus food will be shelved without further consideration."

And along with that move, the same "sources" destroyed the last shred of pretense about the "humanitarian" aims of the Johnson administration in Africa.

On the same day in Saigon, a novel turn occurred in the American intervention. The puppet Lt. Gen. Nguyen Khanh turned and bit the hand that manipulated the strings controlling him.

On December 23, as Nasser spoke up in Cairo, the Vietnamese "strongman" set up by the Pentagon, the State Department and the Central Intelligence Agency, denounced U.S. interference in the internal affairs of South Vietnam.

Openly referring to Maxwell D. Taylor, the U.S. ambassador, Khanh said:

"The United States and their representatives in Vietnam like Taylor should work with the decisive elements in the nation -- those that have the power of decision -- and not try to exert pressure.

"If you want to have a good solution for one problem you must be more realistic. . . you must be more practical and not have a dream of having Vietnam be an image of the United States, because the way of life and the people are entirely different.

"Mostly one should not impose on the Vietnamese people and the Vietnamese Army those leaders they do not want.

"The attitude of Gen. Taylor during the last 48 hours -- as far as my small head is concerned -- and his activities have been beyond imagination as far as an ambassador is concerned."

It should prove interesting to see how long a puppet can keep its head on its shoulders in defiance of blows apparently aimed at knocking it off. In any case, if a puppet feels forced to talk like this, it is not difficult to see how fraudulent is Washington's claim that U.S. troops are in South Vietnam only as "instructors" and "observers," and that the sole objective of U.S. intervention in the civil war there is to defend "democracy."

ATOMIC BOOBY TRAP

It was reported in Paris that on December 14, during the recent NATO meeting, General Trettner, inspector general of the West German Bundeswehr, had proposed laying nuclear mines along the eastern frontier of his country. On December 17, the New York Herald Tribune revealed that it was suggested in November by West German Defense Minister Kai-Uwe von Hassel in conversations with Secretary of Defense McNamara.

McNamara admitted on December 17 that this type of nuclear weapon had been stockpiled in "Western Europe" and that the Supreme Allied Commander had plans for their use "under appropriate conditions."

The atomic booby traps could wipe out "ten million Germans" living in the eastern zone and also affect "the entire population of the federal republic," according to M. A. Weinstein, military specialist of the Frankfurter Allgemeine. The London Sunday Times [December 20] said they could produce "thick fallout, which might kill more of the defenders than the enemy."

Von Hassell said soothingly on December 17 that "political control" of the mines would remain in U.S. hands. On December 22, he said still more soothingly in face of the furor, especially in Germany, that no atomic minefield had been laid "on the zonal border" and none is planned.

MISSISSIPPI HORROR STORY

By Evelyn Sell

Americans had a bitter experience during the paratrooper assault on Stanleyville. President Johnson called it "solely and simply a rescue mission." UN Secretary General U Thant rubber-stamped it with the assurance that it was "a purely humanitarian measure." And at the same time, the news broke about last June's murder plot against three young civil-rights workers in the state of Mississippi.

For example, the November 28 Detroit Free Press carried an article reciting such things as the "throat slitting of the nuns and an undisclosed number of Dutch priests. . . a bloodbath against all whites. . . The bodies [of 45 Europeans] were found mutilated beyond recognition, and in several cases cannibalism was suspected."

On the very same front page, where these allegations -- which sound so much like atrocity propaganda -- appeared, another article carried the title: "Mississippi Horror Story: A Doctor's Report."

This was written by Dr. David Spain, clinical professor of pathology at New York Downstate Medical Center. He was called down to Mississippi by Dr. Charles Goodrich, a member of the Medical Committee for Human Rights which was organized to aid civil-rights workers in the South. The bodies of three young civil-rights workers, missing since June 21, had finally been found in August and the families of two of the victims wanted an expert pathologist at the autopsy as an independent observer.

Local authorities refused to allow independent observers and tried to block any examinations after the official one. With the help of the Lawyers' Constitutional Defense Committee (organized to give legal aid to southern Negroes) and the courageous insistence of Mrs. Chaney, the mother of the Negro victim, Dr. Spain was at last able to examine the body of 21-year-old James Chaney. (As a result of her determination to reveal the truth about the triple murder, Mrs. Chaney's home was bombed and shot into shortly after she signed the papers requesting Dr. Spain's examination of her son's body.)

Dr. Spain had already read the reports about the official examination. "But the report just didn't make good medical sense to me. The statements that the bodies were badly decomposed and that there was no evidence of mutilation or other injury were contradictory -- if the bodies were badly decomposed, it would be extremely unlikely that an official determination could be made as to the extent of bodily injuries."

His examination confirmed his suspicion that the official report was false. He examined the frail boy's wrist. "The wrist

was broken," the doctor wrote, ". . . bones were smashed so badly that his wrist must have been literally flapping when he was carried . . . Then I noticed Chaney's jaw. It was broken -- the lower jaw was completely shattered, split vertically, from some tremendous force. . . I carefully examined the body, and found that the bones in the right shoulder were crushed -- again, from some strong and direct blow. . . this frail boy had been beaten in an inhuman fashion. The blows that had so terribly shattered his bones -- I surmised he must have been beaten with chains, or a pipe -- were in themselves sufficient to cause death. . . It was obvious to any first-year medical student that this boy had been beaten to a pulp."

The story of the triple murder was reconstructed by noted Negro author Louis Lomax who gathered his material from light-skinned Negroes who had infiltrated the Ku Klux Klan. Lomax wrote: "Chaney is tied to a tree and beaten with chains. His bones snap and his screams are soon ended. There is no noise now except for the thud of chains crushing flesh -- and the crack of ribs and bones." The other two civil-rights workers, Michael Schwerner and Andrew Goodman, break from their captors who had forced them to watch the murder of their colleague. The two white students are clubbed and all three are later shot and buried.

Five months after these murders the FBI, after great pressure from Negroes, finally charged 21 men with deliberately plotting and carrying out the triple murder. Almost all are members of the Ku Klux Klan. Three are officers of the law: Sheriff Rainey, Deputy Sheriff Price and Patrolman Otha Neal Burkes. On December 10 a U.S. Commissioner dismissed charges against 19 of these men on the grounds that the FBI evidence (a signed confession by one of the plotters) was "hearsay" and not sufficient evidence to hold the accused men. Charges against the other two were later dropped as well. All 21 still face a grand jury hearing to determine whether they should be brought to trial.

The fact that three police officers were included in this group of murderers is no surprise to anyone familiar with "law and order" in the south. While in Mississippi awaiting permission to examine Chaney's body, Dr. Spain reports that he "browsed through a file of reports from field teams of the Medical Committee for Human Rights. The first report described extended treatment given a young Negro civil-rights worker for 15 or 20 burns scattered all over his body. He had been stopped by police in a small Mississippi town for questioning, and while they questioned him they jabbed lighted cigarettes into his flesh. The burns weren't treated, and they were ulcerous and infected when the medical volunteers found the boy."

Dr. Spain continues, "After conversation with physicians who have been in Mississippi, I believe that incidents of this nature -- with varying degrees of brutality -- go on regularly and relentlessly every day of the week. They are too frequent to be considered 'newsworthy.'"

With facts like the above staring one in the face, it is not surprising to find letters like the following appearing in the public letter box of the Detroit Free Press (December 11):

"The happenings in the Congo are, to me and any other fellow human, to say the least, inhuman, barbaric and unmerciful. These happenings are brought on from fear and tiredness.

"Fear that the white man will continue to take, giving nothing but slavery and degradation and tired of him doing just that.

"Yet these people have been called savages. What is a savage? What makes a savage?

"The atrocious things that have been done and still are being done to the black man in America by the white man, can they be any more inhuman, barbaric or unmerciful?

"One might say it's not the same thing, but isn't it?

"The white man did not have to go to the Congo and be subjected to such monstrous things, but the black man brought to America by trickery and force has no choice."

AMERICAN NEGROES CAN'T STOMACH TSHOMBE

Shortly before the Belgian paratroopers were flown into the Congo by the U.S. Air Force, six top American Negro leaders sent a letter to President Johnson asking for a complete revision of American policies in Africa including the withdrawal of support from Tshombe.

The letter stated: "The present hostilities constitute an immediate threat not only to the Congo but to world peace. We urge that the United States Government support all reasonable initiatives by the Organization of African Unity, in co-operation with the United Nations, to stop the fighting."

The ideas in the letter flowed from resolutions adopted by the American Negro Leadership Conference on Africa which met September 24-27. Theodore E. Brown, director of the group, stated that the members "deplored the massacres of the white hostages but that bloodshed might have been avoided if other policies had been followed and if a solution had been sought within an African framework."

While these comments deplore with equal vigor the rebel "massacres of the white hostages" and the policies of the United States government, Malcolm X, recently returned from Africa, concentrates his fire on the "criminal action of the United States

government in conjunction with Belgium in the Congo." Asked about the reports of massacres of white hostages, Malcolm X replied, "When Lyndon B. Johnson began to finance Tshombe's white mercenaries, it was only natural to expect such things to happen. The weight of the guilt is on the white mercenaries. It's too bad they had to die, but when you shed tears for those hostages, shed tears for the Congolese who died, too. . . Congolese have been massacred by white people for years and years. . . ."

ALGERIA'S FIRST AGRICULTURAL CO-OPERATIVE

By Henri Dumoulin

ALGIERS -- At the congress of the FLN [Front de Libération Nationale] last April, a struggle occurred behind closed doors over the next phase of the agrarian reform and its timing. [See World Outlook May 22, 1964.]

While the European colons -- both the big and little ones -- saw all their land, about 3,000,000 hectares [one hectare = 2.47 acres], nationalized and placed under self-management in 1963, no measures were taken at the time with regard to Algerian owners.

There were certain indications during the summer of 1964 that land ownership would be limited to 50 or 100 hectares, depending on the quality of the soil, and that the organization of the small fellahs into co-operatives would begin before the 1964-65 season.

But doubtlessly the weight of the poor peasantry was not able to be applied with sufficient force at the congress last April, because this body, so far as agrarian reform was concerned, was content to demand. . . a campaign to explain its content.

In reality, as events have shown, this constituted a half-victory for the opponents of agrarian reform. But the struggle did not end; it will not end so long as close to 2,000,000 peasant families continue to live in extreme poverty.

Through the complex ramifications of the struggles of clans -- and nepotism -- what is developing in reality is a subterranean, but profound, class struggle.

In a statement on October 2, President Ben Bella announced that "the third phase of the agrarian revolution will be undertaken in a year, after the harvests of 1965, in accordance with a process and stages to be fixed by an agrarian reform law."

In the same period, he announced that this law would be passed before the end of 1964.

The head of the government also announced in the October 2 statement the confiscation of the holdings of traitors and agents of colonialism. Some 100,000 hectares were thus added to the self-managed agricultural socialist sector.

Within the framework of the explanatory campaign carried out by the party and the national organizations in relation to the poor peasantry, an effort was made to organize the small fellahs in Peasant Unions.

An unexpected success was thus registered in a particular case, as Amar Ouzegane, the new editor of Révolution Africaine, disclosed in an editorial in the November 21 issue:

"At Taourirt, near Maillot [in Grande-Kabylie], a hundred poor and middle peasants, living in a barren region, were invited by the FLN party official to set up a Peasant Union. This mass organization which is designed to bring together the fellah owners in order to mobilize them for the creation of co-operatives, is to serve as the basis of support for the third phase of the Agrarian Reform.

"It was thought that the fellahs of Taourirt would have to be satisfied with an elementary co-operative in which they would use equipment and credit in common, but would divide the benefits on a pro rata basis according to the area of individual ownership and amount of labor.

"These fellahs at once chose a more advanced form:

"(1) They converted the land of the whole village as well as the instruments of labor into a collective property of 200 hectares.

"(2) They decided to work together on the whole unit of production, bringing together the former private properties.

"(3) They chose equal division of the revenues, no matter what each individual had contributed personally, whether 20 hectares, 10 hectares, 5 hectares, 1 hectare, or a strip the size of a handkerchief, and no matter what the nature of the crop might be."

Of course, up to now, this represents an exceptional case, due first of all to the initiative of the peasants themselves. But the favorable reception given to this step by the party press augurs well for the future. Moreover, it is encouraging to see this concrete manifestation of the socialist spirit in the Grande-Kabylie, a region where the counterrevolution has made special efforts to find a mass base among the peasants. It is to be hoped that this example will be widely followed.

In its December 5 issue, Révolution Africaine carried an article, "Agrarian Reform and Agrarian Revolution," providing data

that in and of themselves constitute the best argument for limiting land ownership. And the December 12 issue, again citing the Taourirt example, presents it as "a decisive precedent, a proof of the success of the agrarian reform." It will deal a fatal blow to Algerian feudalism and enable other small fellahs to fully enjoy the fruits of their labor.

It is not excluded that this new advance in propaganda constitutes preparation for a new wave of revolutionary measures that would make possible a deepening of the Algerian Revolution and the resumption of its march forward.

In any case, a Congress of the Tillers of the Soil, organized by the UGTA [Union Générale des Travailleurs Algériens], was projected for the end of December. It will seek to organize the mass of small fellahs and landless peasants. It will make it possible to gather more precise information on the level of consciousness of the peasant masses. It will likewise doubtless be a powerful means of pressure that can be utilized by the revolutionary power against feudalism and the big Algerian owners.

The importance of this gathering should not be underestimated. The nationalization of the lands of the Europeans, it may be recalled, coincided with the Congress of the Workers of Agricultural Self-Management in October 1963. It was also a powerful demonstration of the popular mobilization. Let us hope that this next congress will register successes as important as those and wield maximum pressure for the concretization of the agrarian reform.

Whatever the results of the congress itself may be, the effort at organizing the peasantry which was carried out through the meetings and pre-congresses required in preparing for it, will bear fruit. It will help forge an instrument through which the revolutionary Algerian peasantry will make its voice heard more powerfully on the country's political scene in the future.

MEDICAL DETECTIVES UNRAVEL STRANGE CAUSE OF DEATH

"Ever since the winter of 1962-63 Britain's doctors have been searching for an answer" to the deaths of 20,000 old people that year. Now they know. They "froze to death, or died of diseases rendered acute by cold," reports the December 23 United Press.

A group of British medical experts made this monumental discovery by using thermometers that take lower readings than the standard instrument. Thus they stumbled across cases of "hypothermia"; i.e., freezing. The victims were not trying to commit suicide, their pensions were simply too low to provide more than "lonely rooms or flats" lacking "minimum standards of warmth." Besides this, they needed "the right sort of food."

DISCUSSION FLARES IN ITALIAN CP OVER AMENDOLA ARTICLE

By Sirio Di Giuliomaria

Three topics have been uppermost in the Italian workers' movement in recent months:

- (1) The municipal and provincial elections.
- (2) A discussion kicked off by an article written by Giorgio Amendola of the PCI [Italian Communist party].
- (3) The demonstrations touched off by Tshombe's visit to Rome.

Elections

The provincial elections, held November 22, registered a slight improvement in the position of the PCI in comparison with the 1963 elections (from 25.7% of the vote to 26.0%). The PSIUP [Italian Socialist Party of Proletarian Unity] obtained 2.9% of the votes. This was considered good for the new party that split off from the PSI [Italian Socialist party].

The PSI dropped from 14.3% to 11.3%. The PSDI [Italian Social Democratic party] rose a shade from 6.4% to 6.6%. The PRI (Republican party) vote also changed but slightly, from 1.3% to 1.2%. The DC (Christian Democrats) dropped from 38.5% to 37.4%. (We have presented the data for the provincial rather than municipal elections, since the former are less influenced by purely local factors.)

The PCI made some rather significant gains in the "red regions" (Emilia and Tuscany), in some big cities like Rome, and in the outskirts of the big cities in the north. However, in the south the PCI lost votes to the PSIUP and the PSI, paying in this way for its previous policy of collaborating with sectors of the bourgeoisie.

Discussion on a "United Party"

A discussion on the possibilities for a united party of the working class in Italy has been fostered for some time by Rinascita, the PCI's weekly theoretical magazine. PCI, PSIUP and PSI leaders have participated in this.

The discussion took a sharp turn, with an immediate rise in interest in wide sectors, when, in reply to a letter by Noberto Bobbio (a Turin University professor of Social Democratic inclination), Giorgio Amendola, a member of the National Secretariat of the PCI, published an article in the November 28 issue.

A united party of Italy's working class, Amendola said, should

be a new party, capable of elaborating a new policy and strategy in the struggle for socialism in Italy. "Neither of the two solutions placed before the working class of the capitalist countries of Western Europe during the past 50 years, the Social Democratic solution and the Communist solution, have so far proved valid for carrying out a socialist transformation of society, a change in the system. If one does not start by acknowledging this -- which is a criticism and self-criticism at one and the same time -- he cannot understand the need for a radical turn which may help to overcome the causes which, during the past 50 years, have prevented the working-class movement of the advanced capitalist countries from offering a decisive contribution to the advance of socialism in the world."

Amendola declared that it remains to be seen whether the factors that caused the splits in the working-class movement are still valid and whether new conditions have materialized which may make possible a regrouping of the leftist forces in Italy.

"In Italy," he said, "the reunification cannot be achieved on either the Social Democratic or Communist positions. This cannot be done, owing to the relationship of forces, and it should not be done, if we want to build a new party." [Emphasis in original.]

The new party, according to the Communist leader, should be the party of the Italian road to socialism, a party where all tendencies could find free expression, regardless of their philosophies. "The Communists," he hastened to assure his comrades, "will, of course, continue their Marxist struggle within the united party, in a permanent democratic debate of their ideas."

The article touched off an immediate row in the PCI. It spread through the rank and file, indignation being voiced in many sectors. Amendola's article points toward a two-party system like the one in Britain, and is a step backward from the official position of the PCI in favor of a plurality of parties. It calls in question the 1921 split out of which the PCI was born. Amendola's talk about the "failure of Communism" sounds like the Social Democratic attacks, although the Social Democrats, of course, equate Communism and Stalinism.

These and similar criticisms were levelled against Amendola by rank-and-file militants. Meanwhile Rinascita published two articles attacking Amendola's views. The official organ of the PSIUP expressed disagreement. Lelio Basso, the PSIUP leader, returned officially to the political scene, after a long illness, by participating in a public debate on the subject. At the debate, which was attended by about 400 Socialist and Communist militants, a speech by Livio Maitan, the well-known Italian Trotskyist leader, received heavy applause.

Since the political requisites for a united party do not exist, the issue is not a concrete one. Thus the immediate effect of Amen-

dola's article was to open a tendency fight inside the PCI on a problem deeply felt by all sectors of the party. Even top bureaucrats, concerned about the interests of the apparatus, came out against Amendola's positions. The reactions from the ranks in the form of motions and declarations, while slower are no less important. It is expected that a big debate will develop around the problem in the coming months. Amendola and his supporters (mainly the federations of the "red regions") are in for trouble.

Eggs in the Shell for Tshombe

In his so-called "testament," Togliatti talked about the need to oppose the Chinese positions through a concrete policy towards the "Third World." Since then, the PCI has faced the problem of showing that something more than words was meant. Opportunity knocked when Tshombe visited Rome on December 10.

The situation was unusually hot for the PCI leaders, because three other factors were involved:

- (1) Big pressure from the ranks, especially the Communist Youth of Rome, to turn to action.
- (2) The possibility of exploiting the event to embarrass the Socialists, who are participating in a coalition government.
- (3) Anger among the demonstrators owing to the extreme violence of the police. (It seems that the police went beyond the instructions of the Minister of Interior himself, thus acting as a class force manipulated by political forces outside the government.)

On December 10 and 11, hundreds of young Communist militants demonstrated in the streets of Rome against the "Quisling," as they call Tshombe.

Hundreds of plainclothesmen mingled with the demonstrators, savagely beating them. Many were arrested (but most of them were released the same day). Even some Communist members of parliament were beaten and arrested. This met with violent denunciation in parliament, Communist and PSIUP members sharply attacking the government. Similar demonstrations took place in many other cities of Italy.

While this was going on, high-school students were demonstrating in Naples over problems connected with school. The police again moved in with a brutality such as has not been seen since the new Center-Left government took office.

On December 11, while on his way to visit the Minister of Industry in Rome, Tshombe got the right reception. A Communist girl, Laura Gonzalez, let fly with three eggs for the "Quisling." She was arrested at once and booked.

On Sunday, December 13, at a mass meeting in the theater of Rome, she was enthusiastically called up to the rostrum and given a seat.

At this meeting another unusual incident occurred. Alicata, the official PCI speaker (he is a member of the national secretariat and editor of the daily party paper L'Unita) said that the Socialist leaders should not be attacked too sharply.

He was interrupted by hostile shouts of "Down with the united party!"

Alicata responded by saying, "You see, we do not always tell you pleasant things; sometimes we are even compelled to tell you unpleasant things!"

TORONTO TROTSKYISTS IN MUNICIPAL CAMPAIGN

TORONTO -- The vote was extremely light in the December municipal election. Out of 419,824 registered voters, only 35.4% went to the polls. The ISA [League for Socialist Action] supported two candidates. Ross Dowson, the ISA mayoralty candidate got 3,026 votes, almost three times his poll of two years ago. Patricia Mitchel, ISA candidate for one of four controller posts, received 6,750.

As usual, the capitalist press and radio blacked out the socialist candidates, but they made a breakthrough into television when CBC decided to stage a "Toronto File" program that included the minority candidates.

Dowson, speaking for the Trotskyist viewpoint, opened his contribution to the panel by stressing the need for a totally new administration -- a labor administration in City Hall to represent the workers instead of Big Business. He exposed the myth of nonparty municipal politics as a device to relieve the Liberal-Tory incumbents from programmatic commitments, turning the rivalry of 117 candidates for 37 offices into a personality contest.

Phyllis Clarke, Communist party candidate for controller, told the TV audience, on the other hand, that she was opposed to party labels in the municipal arena. The CP press had earlier attacked Dowson's candidacy as not to "be seriously considered for support." The CP candidate lost about one-third of the votes she won in 1962, going down to 10,824.

Patricia Mitchel very effectively presented the municipal program on which she ran. This included the liquidation of a special police squad designed to harass striking printers and costing the taxpayers \$40,000 a week; increased civil control over the police

commission now headed by the mayor; the elimination of tax exemptions covering properties to the value of \$400,000,000, particularly such monopolistic corporations as Bell Telephone; an extensive program of low-cost subsidized housing which authorities admitted in 1958 should be 1,000 units a year but which had resulted in only 350 units in the six years since then; an end to the scandalous situation where 1,220 are on the waiting list for hospital beds [she advocated the construction of municipally owned hospitals under municipally controlled boards]; an attack on the problem of down-town traffic congestion by granting free access to municipally owned transit facilities, thus limiting outlays on expensive thruways, underpasses and parking lots.

One of the main issues singled out in the ISA campaign was automation. The development of automation in Canada has already led to the closing down of two important Toronto plants and to the elimination of about 4,000 jobs a week in the country as a whole.

In its major campaign leaflet, of which 60,000 copies were distributed, the ISA declared that automation "is posing the necessity for an entirely new society -- a socialist society of production for use, and consumption, not on the basis of ownership, but need."

The first step in this direction, the program said, "is to install a labor administration in Toronto's City Hall."

THE DEFEAT OF THE COALITION GOVERNMENT IN CEYLON

By Edmund Samarakkody,
Secretary of the Lanka Sama Samaja Party (Revolutionary)

The defeat of the SLFP coalition government in parliament [December 3] was the result of the defection of a section of the SLFP [Sri Lanka Freedom party] that voted against the government on the Throne speech.

This crisis in the coalition government was the reflection of the impasse which this government has come to within six months. The increasing financial difficulties of the government consequent on poor exports for the main primary products made it impossible for the government to grant any concessions to the working class and toiling people. Any expenditure of money, or tax relief, or subsidies to ease the living conditions of the working masses was practically ruled out. The government continued to enforce its wage-freeze policy as before and therefore was opposed to working-class demands and remained antiworking class. The policy of severe import restrictions was also maintained. Accordingly, consumer goods were scarce and remain high in price as before. Unemployment continued to increase.

While the coalition government refused to be pressured by the working class and the Left, it sought to win over sections of the capitalist class and the rightist forces. The following concessions to the rightist forces need to be noted:

- (1) Abandonment of the proposal to allow licences for tapping of toddy to please the Maha Sangha [Buddhist clergy].
- (2) Failure to implement the proposal to tax tea estates of the rich.
- (3) Failure to implement the proposal to tax immensely rich house owners.
- (4) Further concessions to Sinhalese Buddhist bourgeois reaction by a cabinet decision to bring legislation to give "proper place to Buddhism."
- (5) Failure to grant any concessions to the Tamil minority on the language issue. On the contrary the implementation of the government language policy to the severe harassment of Tamil government employees.
- (6) Concessions to Sinhalese chauvinism through the recent Indo-Ceylon Agreement by which the coalition government proposes to send by force to India 525,000 persons of Indian origin (mainly plantation workers).

Consequent on the clear gains made by Sinhala Buddhist reaction, these forces of reaction insisted on further demands from the coalition government. The break away of a section of the right wing of the SLFP was in fact not on one particular issue, but on the broad issue of insufficiency of concessions to the Right. The struggle between the opposition led by the UNP [United National party] and the SLFP coalition government was in fact the competition between these two bourgeois centres to test which bourgeois group was ready to make more concessions to the worst reactionary forces.

The issues of the "press take over," "licences to tap toddy," "safeguarding Buddhism from Marxism," produced sufficient confusion and helped to camouflage this struggle as one between the rightist forces in the country led by the UNP and the Left forces in the country led by the SLFP coalition government. But in fact this was far removed from any polarisation of class forces. On the other hand, the logical results of the coalition between the bourgeoisie and a section of the working class through the LSSP (Reformist) [Lanka Sama Samaja party -- reformist wing] was the sowing of further illusions in class collaboration as a method for the working class.

However, six months after coalition, due to the inability of the coalition to solve the problems of the wage earners and toiling people, a very gradual process of disillusionment in the coalition

had begun. But illusions and faith in the coalition broadly remained within the working masses. What remained concealed was brought out by the defeat of the coalition government in parliament. It is clear that the extent of the illusions of the working class and toiling people in the coalition is still considerable. Now, of course, the process of disillusionment that had commenced has been arrested, and will remain so, till, probably, the new government is elected at the general elections. At present, however, the coalition government appears to have the backing of a large section of the working class and the village poor. In the result, the coalition government has contrived to maintain a left coloration.

Does mass support for a government with a left coloration mean polarisation of left forces around that government? This, by no means, is a new question in Ceylon. The break away of Bandaranaike from the UNP helped to arrest the polarisation that might have taken place at that time. This was the beginning of class collaboration as a conscious policy for the working class.

Politics of coalition began in 1956 with the participation of Phillip and William, etc., in a bourgeois government, the MEP [Mahajana Eksath Peramuna -- People's United Front] led by Bandaranaike. The left coloration of this government by the participation of ex-Sama Samajists and the resulting mass support to the government did not mean the polarisation of the Left forces round the MEP. The back door acceptance of the theory of polarisation in 1956 led the LSSP to decide on the policy of "responsive co-operation" to the bourgeois government of Bandaranaike. The situation after the LSSP-SLFP coalition of June 1964 was only a further development of coalition politics. This second coalition with the participation of the majority of the largest left party in a bourgeois government has resulted in a more pronounced left coloration for the bourgeois government.

In the situation, the government has obtained the support and sympathy of a fair section of the working class and toiling people. But the character of the changes in the mass situation is definitely not polarisation. It is once again the reflection of confusion of the masses resulting from a more effective form of class collaboration -- LSSP-SLFP coalition. The present conflict is therefore only the struggle for governmental power by two bourgeois groups -- the one led by the UNP and the other by the SLFP of Mrs. Bandaranaike with the support of a section of the Left.

A prominent spokesman of the coalition (Colvin R. de Silva) has accidentally blurted the truth and brought out the real content of the situation. According to this spokesman, the choice for the working class and masses in Ceylon is like the choice that faced the American working class; that is, the choice between Goldwater and Lyndon Johnson. If the support for Mrs. Bandaranaike and coalition is similar to support of Johnson in the United States, then the theory of polarisation is jettisoned and must be rejected.

Besides, polarisation is not the mere fact that the working class and the toiling people in their thousands enthusiastically support a government. Polarisation is the gathering of the class around a class banner and a class programme, however indistinct or meagre. The gathering of the masses around the slogans of Buddhism, anti-Tamilism, antiplantation workers, can never be a polarisation of the class. For polarisation to begin, the working class must move to break from the policies of the coalition and class collaboration. Such a movement must be a movement away from the coalition government. And cannot be a gathering around it.

If the road forward for the working class and the toiling people is through a break from the policies of class collaboration, it follows that a party of the working class must be guided by a policy of irreconcilable opposition to a bourgeois coalition government. Only such a policy could lead to removing the illusions of coalition and class collaboration.

The call to the reformists to break with the bourgeoisie is at the same time a call to the working class to break from the politics of coalition. For the working class to get back to the road of class struggle is the need of the hour.

The slogan of "All Anti-UNP Forces Unite!" is the slogan of class collaboration and must be rejected.

The slogan leading to the road of class struggle is "All Anticapitalist Forces Unite!"

The regroupment of the working class is concretised by the slogan: "Forward to the United Front of all working-class parties and organisations to fight the capitalist class and its organisations whether led by the UNP, SLFP, or a bourgeois combination of the Right or Left."

90,000 HOMELESS IN BRITAIN

There are at least 90,000 homeless men and women in Britain today, according to a survey made by social workers in such cities as London, Manchester and Leeds. The problem "has assumed the proportions of a national epidemic."

"In 1962-63 there were 12,000 men in London alone living in hostels and common lodging-houses: around 1,000 men and women slept out," said the London Observer's [December 20] account of the report. As examples of "sleeping out," we are given the following: "Each night about 87 men and five women sleep on benches at Waterloo Station. They are made to move on at least twice a night. Victor Station, too, is a refuge until it closes at midnight."

Book Review

CUZCO: LAND AND DEATH

By Livio Maitan

The peasant movement of the Cuzco region has been the epicenter of the revolutionary struggle in Peru in recent years and remains of crucial importance despite tangible changes in the economic and social structure in some districts, despite Belaunde's "reformist" maneuvers, and despite repressive victimization of many of its leaders and cadres.

This peasant movement has now found an intelligent and sensitive chronicler who understands its deep-going causes and who has caught its moving spirit in both faithful and dramatic sketches. There is nothing novel, of course, in a journalist outside the revolutionary movement achieving a better living synthesis of a revolutionary process than authors whose main resources are their political ties and outlook. What others have done for other countries in other circumstances, Hugo Neira has done for the Cuzco movement in Peru. His book Cuzco: Tierra y Muerte [Cuzco: Land and Death]* thoroughly merits the immediate success it enjoyed; and it deserves to be translated and circulated, at least among revolutionary circles, in all countries of the world.**

In a one-page introduction, Neira succinctly summarizes the background of his trip to Cuzco and his account:

"Subject: In December 1963, the city of Quillabamba was taken by unions carrying out an order to go on strike issued in Cuzco by the Federation in order to win the release of imprisoned union leaders, among them, Hugo Blanco. Because of this, 'Civic Committees' were organized in the cities against the trade union league of the Cuzqueña federations. . . Then I was sent to Cuzco to determine what was going on among the peasants.

"Time: From December 1963 to March 1964. But it can occur again at any time and with greater seriousness.

"Basic Problem: Ownership of the land in the South.

"Departments: Cuzco and Puno.

*Problemas de Hoy, Lima. 1964. Available in Spanish only.

**Hugo Neira was correspondent of the Lima daily Expreso, and part of the book consists of his articles. The first two editions, although rather sumptuous with their evocative photographs, were quickly sold out. A more popular new edition was issued in mid November.

"Social Situation: Out of 9 million hectares of arable land and natural pasture, 3% of the owners possess 83% of the farm area and 97% of the owners possess 17% of the remaining area.

"Reason for the Conflict: There is no adequate agrarian law and the peasants, organized in unions, oppose the tenant system, demanding ownership of the land.

"Additional: They live in very bad conditions with a daily intake of less than 1,200 calories, comparable to that of a concentration camp. High infant mortality -- smallpox, tuberculosis, whooping cough and dysentery. Three million exploited peasants at the margin of society.

"Maximum wage: Eight soles [about \$.32] a day."

Thus the account opens at a phase of the movement marked by a new wave of land occupation. In certain zones at least, the struggle had already reached a climax -- it is sufficient to note that the main inspirer and organizer of the peasants, Hugo Blanco, had already been held long months in prison at Arequipa. However, Neira shows us the Cuzco Peasant Federation in all its strength and prestige in action under the leaders who came forward with the arrest of Hugo and continued the struggle. He shows us a movement that has undergone many experiences, that has matured, is capable of struggling in different fields, that has gained real positions, maintaining in some zones at least the embryo of dual power. He shows us leaders with whom the landlords have had to negotiate humbly at times, leaders who have acquired a style of their own in demonstrations and tests of strength. In other words, he shows us the elemental and irresistible power of the masses and at the same time the audacity and sagacity of the leaders: all this on the backdrop of the ancient capital of the Inca empire, where the landlords, filled with fright and hate, wanted to avoid any rough and dangerous direct confrontation with the peasants in revolt.

A Peasant Demonstration

The book opens with the description of a solemn demonstration of mourning over the death of a trade-union leader killed in a highway accident:

"Since dawn, along all the roads, the copper-colored people had been coming toward Cuzco, 'center of the world.' The crowd swelled in narrow Recoleta street, all the way to Tullumayo and Tres Cruces. In the midst of this taciturn multitude was the headquarters of the Federación de Campesinos [Peasant Federation]. Here in a sea of trade-union banners, they were paying their respects before the remains of Emiliano Huamantla. . .

"Down through the streets, like a serpent of olden times, the cortege descended, this ancient people stirring from their lethargy

to conduct in the sacred city one of the major ceremonies of Cuzco. . . .

"I set out walking in the midst of this multitude, almost all of them in rags and tatters. They had an air, an obstinate fervor, a visible will to be, to persist despite the misery. . . I have never seen such faces -- like the blind -- resistant and bitter with sorrow. . . . In the Avenue of the Sun, the funeral procession moved by the thousands. Other thousands watched from the sidewalks. . . . But those going along the cobblestones were politicalized Indians or mestizos."

The young daughters of the bourgeoisie or petty bourgeoisie watched the cortege from above, from the windows of their homes:

"In response to the terrible spectacle at their feet, they showed the same awesome lack of consciousness as the bourgeoisie in the capital in face of powerful demonstrations that, in desperation, could tear their world, their pleasures, their privileges up by the roots."

The people participating in the demonstration felt a common emotion -- they were united in a common grief. However, the Cuzco movement has a politicalized vanguard that reflects -- in a relationship of forces particularly favorable to the revolutionary left -- the differentiations in the world workers movement. Neira does not fail to catch this:

"Thunderbolts were hurled at 'Yankee imperialism,' 'the oligarchy and the bosses.' Today Raúl Acosta, in his final days as General Secretary of the PCP [Peruvian Communist party], could be heard and one could feel the desperation or decadency of the old Stalinist guard. His speech was the weakest, the most inappropriate and heavy. This afternoon, Huamantica inspired Raúl Acosta. The political career of this Arequipa artisan was already finished -- his heavy party machinery could not sustain the pressures of the world crisis of socialism. A few days later, in Lima, a lawyer. . . Saturnino Paredes was publicly presented as the General Secretary of Acosta's party. In Cuzco, then, I heard his political testament. He appealed, almost implored, for unity. That was all. The peasants looked at him, disconcerted. . . . Who, finally, inherited Huamantica's place? This would be equivalent to knowing who commanded in Cuzco. No one completely. Those who spoke over his remains dwelt on the differences among Trotskyists, Communists in the party and out of it, Castroists and others. The Trotskyists associated their positions with the prestige of Chaupimayo, the region where Hugo Blanco demonstrated the advantages and also the defects of direct action. Thus when Luis Zarate, from Chaupimayo, spoke that afternoon, there was a rustling among the crowd."

This big demonstration of mourning was, in the final analysis, nothing but an opening expression of the fundamental situation reign-

ing in that part of Peru:

"Because of the meeting, alarm arose among the hacendados [rich land owners]. This could be seen the following day. They were fear-stricken. From the neighboring valleys men began to arrive whose names were synonymous with wealth, permanent power and haciendas [big land holdings]. They did not pause at the Cathedral or any office. With long strides they went to the Prefectura [the authorities]. Their aim: to demand guarantees. Or, which comes down to the same, to solicit the dispatch of detachments of assault guards to their haciendas threatened by invasions.

"The situation was tense. The Prefect lacked orders to unleash police reprisals. The peasant leaders had thrown into the scales this multitude who had gathered together to say farewell to Huamantla. If they were looking for a sounding board, they had found it. It is difficult to imagine that the owners would remain impassive in face of an indigenous movement that publicly asked for their heads. Surreptitiously, they were forming two armies. One of owners. Another of invaders. It was a crafty way of waging war under a government that was inert or in complicity and which had decided not to take sides. Social war.

"Something had happened much more serious than an earthquake -- the ownership of the land was being discussed. One invasion followed another. The peasants did not call them that. They gave them a different name: 'recuperation of the land.'"

Occupation of the Land

Against this general background, Neira describes with vigor the development of the drama in its various aspects -- from occupation of the land to more "peaceful" confrontations, which nevertheless disclose the depth of the crisis.

Here is a page on the occupation of the land:

"The invasions are peaceful. A crowd composed of peasants from neighboring localities, invades, almost always at dawn, the fields of a hacienda. But the ranch-house or neighboring home, and the servants of the bosses are left alone. Nothing is further from the character of the indigenous masses than to run wild. To invade, then, is not to sack, steal, burn or rape. It is simply to enter on the prohibited land of the hacienda. From their wooden balconies, the hacendados can see how their holdings change hands. But their lives are safe. . .

"They invade when the police are away. For the custodians of the law and order of the owners the game varies between boredom and the terrible. In places where the police wait, nothing happens. But the peasants invade other places. The Federation is more extensive than the steel helmets. There are more union locals than police

garrisons. . . .

"The invaders wait for the authorities to become aware of the deed and to give it a form of lawfulness. The hacienda then has already been invaded. Thousands of peasants have installed themselves in a semicircle. They are an imposing force. More than a political party, they are a people on the march. . . ."

It is scarcely necessary to state that sometimes these occupations end up in a bloody repression and the authorities, naturally, blame it all on "Communist agitators." Neira does not fail to emphasize, as against the official lies, the real logic of the phenomenon.

"It is not true, then, that the peasant masses are inspired by 'Communist extremists.' This is the most stupid accusation that can be made and it shows the most serious lack of understanding of the Cuzco events.

"The extremists are the masses themselves. They are tired of waiting. To imagine the opposite is to maintain that the Indian is incapable of thinking. It means believing once again in racial inferiority. . . . A new human condition is appearing. It is called intransigence and desperation. . . . In Cuzco there is no militia; there are assemblies. And in these everyone is both the mass and the command at the same time, governors and governed in this Andean pattern of direct democracy.

"The whole Sunday I scouted around in the provinces and districts surrounding Cuzco. In every village I found assemblies in which people were voting to continue the struggle for the land. In any other place in the Republic, among any other social classes is there more equality in reaching decisions than here? In any other level of our society is there an equal capacity for sacrifice?"

The pressure of the peasant mobilization and the power of the union organization were such that the landlords were compelled to go to the union if they wanted to negotiate an agreement. Sometimes they even had to let the leaders of the Federation decide on their differences with the peasants.

"In Recoleta street there is a house with flimsy green balconies. . . . It is the headquarters of the powerful Federación de Campesinos of Cuzco.

"Men and women come here from all corners of the Department. They talk to the leaders in Quechua. . . .

"And the hacendados themselves go there.

"It is the best way to reach a quick agreement. The peasants won't budge an inch unless they are told to by their local, affiliated to the Federation. . . .

"Because of this the hacendados come to Recoleta. They go to discuss with them. In this way they avoid judges, loss of time, invasions, hostilities, etc. The Federation is the true Ministry of Indigenous Affairs."

The correspondent of Expreso seeks to understand not only the fundamental significance but also certain specific characteristics of the essentially revolutionary process of which he was a witness. Two short chapters appear to us especially worthy of attention.

In the chapter, "The Peasant Enters the Peruvian Scene," he writes: "We have here an evident fact: the peasant unions are organizing under banners carrying the slogan 'Land or Death, We Will Win.' Yes, this is the influence of Cuba. Let us then recognize this reality. Is it perhaps a case of better penetration of the Communist party in this region? Not necessarily. Besides, everybody knows what a headache Cuba and the innumerable Castroists -- the example of the violent road and guerrilla warfare -- are for the bureaucratic Communist cadres of Latin America. We face a genuinely radical phenomenon. We live in a smaller universe. The geographical frontiers are enormous. But the evils of Peruvian society are even more enormous. . . . And the radio reaches the most remote hamlets. In the cold of the jalca [high Andean tableland] or in the hot, malarial valley bottoms, between loneliness and hunger, the peasants listen.

"'Land or death.' Up to now, only death."

As for the more properly political lineaments of the movement, Neira states in another chapter:

"This peasant movement is bringing together new multitudes. We should not fool ourselves: under the old poncho, in the midst of an apparently traditional or routine scene, these people have learned and consequently have changed. Unionism is a mutation. A spark can set fire to the whole sierra.

"For the moment no party as yet holds a monopoly on this network of realities. The leaders come from various groups. It seems that those with the most weight are from the FIR [Frente de Izquierda Revolucionario -- Front of the Revolutionary Left], the MIR [Movimiento de Izquierda Revolucionaria -- Movement of the Revolutionary Left], Trotskyist people. But there are also peasant leaders of great capacity linked to the PCP. . . ."

"Whether Valer is a Trotskyist, Sumire a Communist doesn't interest the peasants much. The peasant brushes these things aside. He only knows that these men are his leaders. As in the Gospel, only deeds count -- the revolutionists are the ones who are with them physically in their demands to take the land from the usurpating hacendados. . . ."

"And his allies are only those who speak to him -- and in Quechua. Thus the peasants only respect those who understand that the land must be theirs, here and now, without delay. . . ."

Hugo Blanco Looms Large

Sketches of a number of union and peasant leaders appear in Neira's pages. Emiliano Huamantica, a Communist who represents "the prudent left," Saturnino Huilca, "the new Indian," Manuel Concha Llerena, embodiment of the "fighting spirit" of the Federación of Convención, Angél Baca, "the reformist." Among the Trotskyists, the most outstanding figure is Vladimiro Valer.

"Vladimiro Valer spoke. Like almost all the Cuzqueño leaders, he is very young. A thick mustache, still thicker glasses, the bearing of a serious university student. And he is. But not in an academic way. He has studied the living reality of the peasant, and he discovered a weapon that no custom house can confiscate because it is more in the consciousness of men than in any thing or object -- the weapon of union organization. This is what he calls, paying tribute to his brother-in-law Hugo Blanco, the spirit of Chaupimayo. . . ."

"Valer spoke calmly. They had told me that he is a Trotskyist. I asked him and he replied frankly:

"'Certainly, I am a Trotskyist. Our party is the FIR, and its chairman is Hugo Blanco.' And he added: 'What is important for us is that the leadership should be unionist, revolutionary.'"

"'And if it happens to involve members of the Communist party?' I asked him.

"'We hold discussions on theory. But the peasant movement is unifying the left.'"

As we have said before, Neira's report covers a period six to nine months after the arrest of Hugo Blanco. But Hugo Blanco, whose name appears almost everywhere on the walls of the houses in Cuzco, and is even painted on the Inca ruins, astonishing the few American tourists, dominates the scene everywhere as the main inspirer, the genuine leader of the revolutionary peasant movement. The Indians acclaim him in their meetings and are waiting for him to resume his place. In the Cuzco prison, the prisoners told a journalist who was questioning them. "He is our union leader." "He is the leader of the peasants."

Here are some more quotations from the book:

"Fought by the right, his image distorted by prestige due to erroneous reports about him being a guerrilla fighter, injured by the silence, if not sabotage, of the traditional, bureaucratic groups of Communism, extolled by the FIR, feared and hated by the unorgan-

ized yanaconas [Indians bound to personal service to the landlords] and the hacendados, admired by the union ranks, Hugo Blanco looms over the whole South.

"This is the straight truth, without falsification, of what this man, who is a prisoner today in Arequipa, means to the peasant masses. . . . 'We owe him everything,' say the peasants. In fact every change in Convención and elsewhere in the country, was accelerated due to the danger they saw in the peasants having no hope other than hope in the revolutionary unionism of Blanco.

"Devotion to Blanco is total; they don't dare bring him to trial. I am referring to the unionized peasants. 'He is our chief,' they say. . . . And in every peasant's home there is an empty bed. It's the one that was waiting hopefully for the leader when he was going around the region organizing or when he was passing during the night, under the stars, fleeing from the police. . . .

"In the Plaza de Armas in Cuzco, the evening came, dressed in red, flaming. The meeting of the peasants was languishing. The crowd, disciplined, standing, listened, applauded, laughed or yawned.

"Then a student came forward. It could have been Valer or Fausto Cornejo. He took the mike and shouted in Quechua:

"Causachu compañero cuna, Hugo Blanco. . .

"The crowd awoke and responded with great shouts:

"Causachu, causachu, causachu.

"Long live! Long live! Long live!"

"I saw this repeated throughout the South. No other name arouses greater fervor among the men in striped ponchos who speak the euphonious Quechua. The shadow of Hugo Blanco was present at all the interviews I conducted in the South.

"I am not exaggerating: the unity of this agrarian movement that has no limits, like an immense ocean, whether in ideology or comportment, which can just as well turn peaceful and co-operative as explode in blood and gunfire, has, nevertheless, a name that unites the people of the mountains and the valleys, of the hacienda and the community -- Hugo Blanco. . .

"The peasant hasn't forgotten and he is waiting. The persecution, the anemia and troubles suffered by Blanco have converted him, perhaps more than his political theories, into a man whom the South will not forget."

During the period covered by Neira and immediately after, the police repression came down violently on the Cuzco movement and on

its main leaders. Almost all of them were imprisoned or deported. When I visited Cuzco at the end of November, its frightful prison still held almost two hundred peasant leaders of the region, including some forty Trotskyists. And of course Blanco, along with Molina, Cartolín and Huallpa -- all Trotskyists -- were still held in Arequipa. This massive repression created grave difficulties for the Federation and inspired terror throughout the region.

Nevertheless, the government and the landlords cannot delude themselves. The movement described by Neira in his magnificent account has profound roots and has already attained such a level of consciousness and organization that any "success" for the repression will prove quite ephemeral.