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No. 3

July 4, 1974

PRICE: 50 cents U.S. & Canada/ 20 pence Britain

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INTERNATIONAL PRESS CORRESPONDENCE

Fortnightly information organ of the United Secretariat of the Fourth International published in English, French, Spanish, and German.

Signed articles do not necessarily represent the views of INPRECOR.

SUBSCRIPTIONS: 1 year (25 issues) - US\$7.50; Canadian \$7.50; £3.

AIR MAIL TO U. S. AND CANADA - \$16.00

SPECIAL SIX-ISSUE AIR MAIL INTRODUCTORY SUBSCRIPTION - \$3.50 U.S. & Canada;

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eight months after the october war: a new situation emerging

by JON ROTHSCHILD

Egyptian officials estimated the crowd that greeted Richard Nixon when he arrived in Cairo June 12 at 2 million. The Sadat government had overlooked no step to ensure that the U.S. president, while he might have to restrict his American appearances to selected audiences of used car salesmen and other cockroach capitalists, would be properly received in the Egyptian capital. Workers were given time off at full pay to line the streets of Nixon's motorcade, schools were closed, and the mass media urged the whole population of Cairo to come out to greet the "man of peace," who only eight months ago was supplying the Israeli military with the equipment it needed to defend the gains of its June 1967 aggression. Banners in English were even hung up. "Long live Nixon, the man of peace!" "We have confidence in Nixon!" and "God loves Nixon!" were among the most popular, the last one casting Allah into an ever more exclusive category.

But in spite of the carefully orchestrated character of the welcome, and in spite of the undeniable fact that Nixon tried to use the pomp and public relations of his Arab East tour to bolster his increasingly precarious position in the United States, the size of the crowds, the lengths to which the Egyptian and Syrian regimes went to please their guest, and the agreements and statements signed in Cairo, Jidda, Damascus, Jerusalem, and Amman all point to elements of a new political situation in the Arab East. In fact, it is likely that this new situation will mean changes in the alignment of forces in the East that will be just as great as those engendered by the Israeli victory of 1967. The precise effects of all the factors involved in the new situation may not be fully clear for some time. But a few of the chief elements can already be sketched out: a change in the relationship of forces between the Israeli and Arab regimes; a change in the relationship of forces between the Israeli regime and U.S. imperialism; an increase, even if temporary, in the prestige of the Egyptian and Syrian governments; a decline in the Kremlin's influence in the region; a new penetration of the region by U.S. capital and a consequent increase in the political influence of Washington at the expense not only of Moscow but of U.S. imperialism's European competitors as well.

All these factors will in turn lead to important changes in the internal conditions of most of the states of the region. The aftermath of the Israeli aggression of 1967 saw the rise of the Palestinian resistance movement, which became a determining factor in the political life of the Arab East. And in turn, the way in which the Palestinian movement responds to the aftermath of the October War will have a significant effect on the future political evolution of the Arab East. The Palestinian response, because of its importance and complexity, deserves to be treated separately. But that response cannot be properly

understood without an examination of the objective situation within which the Palestinian movement -- and the revolutionary movement in the whole Arab East as well -- will have to function.

The October War and the peaceful solution

In early 1970, Gamal Abdel Nasser, then Egyptian head of state, launched a "war of attrition" against the Israeli forces camped on the eastern bank of the Suez Canal. His aim was not to drive the occupiers off the Sinai peninsula, but to put sufficient pressure on the Zionist state to compel it to make concessions that could allow Cairo to open negotiations with

**the warmth. . . reflects
the present confluence of
interest between U.S.
imperialism & the Arab
ruling classes**



a possibility of achieving a partial Israeli withdrawal. War of attrition is the worst kind of battle for the Israeli state to fight. It offers no opportunities for the decisive lightning breakthroughs in which the Zionist command excels. It costs money, as equipment is used up without producing any compensatory military or political gains. And it costs casualties, which are immediately felt in a country with a population of less than 3 million.

The Israeli regime responded to Nasser's war of attrition by carrying out deep-penetration air raids on the Nile Valley, hitting, apart from military targets, factories and workers neighborhoods. These raids on civilian targets, combined with the simultaneous rise of the Palestinian resistance movement, which had taken its place as the second-most active sector of the colonial revolution (after Vietnam), and the increase in Israeli terrorism against the occupied Arab populations, began to erode the international support that the Zionist state had until then been able to count on. At the same time, the Egyptian government purchased advanced anti-aircraft missiles from the Soviet Union, and that made the Israeli raids increasingly costly.

As the war of attrition dragged on, the American ruling class devised a "peace plan" for the Arab East. Named after William Rogers, then the U.S. secretary of state, it entailed a cease-fire between the Arab regimes and Israel and the opening of negotiations aimed at arranging an Israeli withdrawal from some of the Arab territories occupied since June 1967 in exchange for Arab recognition of the legitimacy of the Zionist state. A subordinate, and not always openly articulated, aspect of the Rogers Plan held out the possibility of the establishment of a rump Palestinian state in the West Bank of the Jordan River after the Israeli withdrawal.

The Nasser government accepted the Rogers Plan in principle and the war of attrition was ended. Sections of the Israeli ruling class, concerned about the growth of the Palestinian movement, were likewise inclined to accept it, seeing it as a way of exchanging small parcels of territory for long-term insurance against the rising threat to Zionism represented by the Arab revolution and its most active component, the Palestinian movement. But the overwhelming majority of the leadership of the Palestinian resistance rejected the plan as an attempt to liquidate the Palestinian cause. The Palestinian rejection of the Rogers Plan, combined with the revolutionary threat the fedayeen represented in Jordan, resulted in King Hussein's launching a war of annihilation against the Palestinian movement in September 1970. Hussein's victory in the civil war should have allowed for implementation of the "peaceful solution" to the Arab-Israeli conflict, according to the calculations of U.S. imperialism and the Arab regimes.

But ironically, Hussein's very success doomed the Rogers Plan. With the power of the Palestinian movement thoroughly broken, the Israeli rulers saw no reason to concede territory. Tel Aviv's position consequently hardened. Further, the Palestinian defeat triggered a general shift to the right in the politics of the Arab region. With Israeli power seemingly absolute, with the war of attrition ended, and with the decline of the Palestinian movement, U.S. imperialism saw no reason for dissatisfaction with the status quo, especially as it was preoccupied with the deteriorating situation in Indochina. So the Rogers Plan was shelved. Washington made no effort to impose -- or even propose -- a "peaceful solution."

Throughout 1971, 1972, and most of 1973, then, the Arab regimes were trapped in a situation of "no war, no peace." The military power of Egypt and Syria was bolstered by the latest in Soviet weaponry, but neither Cairo nor Damascus

had sufficient strength, or for that matter desire, to attempt to dislodge the Israeli occupation troops by force. Concurrently, the mass movement in Egypt began to rise. In 1972 and 1973 student strikes and demonstrations in Cairo and Alexandria led to big clashes with the police. In Helwan, center of the Egyptian textile industry, there were strikes in both the public and private sectors. Vanguard elements in the Egyptian trade-union movement were beginning to forge links with the radical students, some of whom were developing critiques of the politics and ideology of Nasserism. The Egyptian economy, like the economies of most underdeveloped capitalist countries, was especially suffering the effects of the international crisis of the capitalist economy. The Arab masses were demanding that "their" governments take steps to liquidate the fruits of the 1967 Israeli aggression. Sadat's prestige in the Arab world had sunk so low that his name was little more than a joke from the Nile Valley to the Arab-Persian Gulf. A new idiom was coming into vogue in the Arabic language: When someone made a statement others considered absurd exaggeration or stupid bombast he would be answered with the question, Who do you think you are, Anwar el-Sadat?

Under such conditions, no Arab regime could simply give up and directly accept a capitulatory settlement with Tel Aviv. The Sadat regime made every effort to hold out concessions to U.S. imperialism in order to induce it to put some pressure on the Israeli state, the most dramatic example being the expulsion in the summer of 1972 of the Soviet military technicians working in Egypt. But nothing worked. By the autumn of 1973, the Sadat government was in danger of imminent collapse, as even sections of the armed forces began to turn against the regime.

With the perspective of launching a "war of liberation" ruled out by the very nature of the Egyptian and Syrian regimes, and with overt acceptance of Israeli demands for open capitulation excluded by the probability of a revolutionary mass reaction, the "peaceful solution," like the Sadat regime itself, seemed at an impasse.

The October War was launched to resolve that dilemma. It was a war aimed at "peace," a military action designed to provoke diplomatic activity that less drastic action had failed to produce. The goal of the Egyptian and Syrian governments was to canalize the rise of popular discontent and at the same time force U.S. imperialism to intervene in the conflict to pressure Tel Aviv to abandon its ultra-arrogant attitude, to settle the contentious "Palestinian problem," and to direct massive economic aid to the faltering economies of the non-oil-producing Arab states.

And the war's results

Militarily, the October War was a defeat for the Arab regimes. The Israeli army advanced further into Syria. On the Egyptian front, while Egyptian troops were able to retake some territory east of the Suez Canal, the Israeli breakthrough in the central sector of the canal and the enclave created on the western bank effectively surrounded the Egyptian III Corps on the southern sector of the eastern bank. Had the cease-fire not gone into effect, it is probable that the III Corps would have been annihilated, a preparatory step for the Zionist command turning its attention to the II Corps on the northern sector of the canal.

But the purely military situation must be viewed in the political context of the needs of the Zionist state. Since its foundation in 1948, that state has been able to determine the military course of events in the region with virtually complete

freedom. It has been able to decide what territory to take and when; it has been able to strike with impunity at any part of the eastern Arab world. Continual demonstration of that power has been -- and will continue to be -- a cornerstone of Zionist policy. So the facts that the Arab armies made some gains at the beginning of the war, that at the war's conclusion some of those gains still remained intact on the Egyptian front, and that the Syrian army (hitherto considered the weakest Arab army by the Zionist command) was able to wage a war of attrition for several months after the October cease-fire modified the relationship of forces between the Israeli state and the Arab regimes. There can be no doubt that Tel Aviv's inability to decisively crush the Syrian and Egyptian armies as it did in 1967 is one of the factors that has allowed implementation of the "peaceful solution" to be placed on the order of the day.

At the same time, the war shifted the relationship of forces between Tel Aviv and Washington in favor of the latter. Here again, the change must be viewed in the context of the needs of Zionist policy. While it is true that the Israeli regime has always been a subordinate ally of Washington, it is important not to assimilate the position of the Zionist regime to that of a U.S. puppet like the Saigon government. The Israeli ruling class has a genuine social base. It is supported by the vast majority of the Israeli-Jewish population, which is, in large part, proletarian in composition. So the interests of the Israeli ruling class, while they generally dovetail those of U.S. imperialism, are not identical to them.

In the past -- especially since 1967 -- the Israeli government has been able to deal with Washington from a position of strength. U.S. imperialism simply had no other option than to maintain the Israeli state as the only feasible counterrevolutionary cop in the region. The entire ruling class in the United States, even that section of it whose major economic interests lie in the Arab world, has been unanimous in its unconditional support to the Israeli military machine. This has meant that Washington has had little leverage against the Israeli government whenever conflicts of interest have arisen. U.S. imperialism's only serious source of pressure -- denying aid or arms to Tel Aviv -- would have been as damaging to Washington's interests as to Tel Aviv's. That situation has now been partially modified by the October War. It is absolutely clear, for example, that the Israeli regime did not want to accept the cease-fire that prevented it from pursuing its offensive on the Egyptian front to the bitter end. It broke the cease-fire once to complete its encirclement of the Egyptian III Corps. It would have liked to break it a second time to annihilate the III Corps. But, as Moshe Dayan rather ruefully observed, it is not easy to go against the wishes of a country that is supplying you in the morning with the ammunition you have to use that afternoon. While, as we shall see, U.S. imperialism has in no way changed its commitment to preserve the Zionist state and to equip it with an armed force that can be used successfully against the Arab revolution, it is nevertheless true that Washington is now in a much stronger position than it was before the October War to impose its demands on the Israeli rulers.

These two factors -- Washington's strengthened ascendancy over Tel Aviv and the shift in the relationship of forces between Israel and the Arab states -- have enabled the Egyptian and Syrian governments to engage in a formidable campaign of mystification aimed at portraying the sequels to the October War as steps toward the liberation of Palestine and Sadat as a modern-day Saladin embodying the hopes of the whole Arab nation. One aspect of that mystification has been the spreading of the notion that the American government has in some way altered its commitment to the Zionist state, that it



Sadat and Arafat of Fateh. How will Palestinians react?

is now interested in freely doling out economic assistance to the Arab peoples. The temporary increase in Sadat's prestige has enabled him to complete his turn to U.S. imperialism under the pretext that he is not selling out the aspirations of the Arab masses but on the contrary is helping to fulfill them.

All this represents the background to Nixon's tour of the Arab East. The warmth with which he was received reflects the present confluence of interest between U.S. imperialism and the Arab ruling classes.

Washington's new offensive

The central objective of the U.S. ruling class in the "peace process" now under way in the Arab East is to recover the ground it lost in the region during the late 1960s and early 1970s and to extend its influence in the area, solidifying that influence by establishing bonds of economic and political dependence between the Arab states and Washington. This involves reducing Soviet power and influence and strengthening its hold on the oil-producing states, notably Saudi Arabia, in order to make economic gains at the expense of European imperialism. The costs of this American operation will be borne not by the U.S. capitalist class but by its Israeli fortress. In exchange for the expansion of American economic and political influence, the Zionist state will have to make certain territorial concessions.

In the June 12 issue of the Paris daily *Le Monde*, Eric Rouleau summarized some of the current objectives of U.S. policy in the Arab East: "To supplant the USSR in the countries in which it still exercises a certain influence; to win new political and economic positions; possibly to oust European competitors, who are also seeking markets to restabilize their balance of trade and payments; no goal seems too ambitious for American strategists today. True, the conjuncture born of the October War is encouraging them. Commercial exchanges between the United States and the Near East are on the rise again. Egypt and Syria have loosened up their laws to attract foreign capital; the Cairo government is generously handing out oil exploration contracts to American companies. And, while awaiting receipt of the \$250 million Nixon has promised for reconstruction of the cities along the Suez Canal, American technicians are contributing to unblocking the waterway." U.S. investment in Egypt is already showing signs of becoming an important sector of American investment in the underdeveloped world. Five big hotels are scheduled to be built in Egypt (one will be directed by Nixon's brother). The Import-Export Bank has granted Egypt two loans that amount to \$180 million. The Nixon administration has proposed \$250 million worth of government aid to Cairo.

The declaration signed by Nixon and Sadat on June 14 codified the plans to increase U.S. penetration of the Egyptian economy. In the declaration Nixon declared his willingness to "help strengthen the financial structure of Egypt," to help reconstruct the cities along the Suez Canal, to encourage U.S. corporations to invest in Egypt, and to urge Congress to approve large-scale aid to Cairo. An especially significant portion of the declaration stated that Washington and Cairo "will begin negotiation of an agreement for cooperation in the field of nuclear energy under guaranteed safeguards. Upon conclusion of such an agreement the United States is prepared to sell nuclear reactors and fuel to Egypt."

"Actually," Henry Tanner pointed out in the June 15 New York Times, "the sale of nuclear fuel to Egypt will begin immediately. The joint declaration instructs the U.S. Atomic Energy Commission to conclude a provisional agreement with Egypt covering such sales pending completion of negotiations on the full agreement." (It should be noted that Egypt already has two atomic reactors, which were provided by the Soviet Union. The new agreement with Washington will free Cairo from dependence on Moscow for nuclear fuel for those reactors.) On June 16 the Cairo daily *al-Ahram* reported that work on the first Egyptian atomic power station to be built with U.S. assistance would begin in 1975. The station is scheduled to be operative by 1981; it will cost \$250 million. Work on a second station will reportedly begin in 1977; it will be finished by 1983. The second reactor will be equipped with units for desalinating sea water.

Sections of the U.S. press reacted to the Egyptian-American agreement by voicing concern that Sadat could duplicate Indira Gandhi's tactics and consign the plutonium byproduct of the atomic reactors for production of a fission bomb. That possibility, however, is the least important aspect of the agreement. The really significant thing -- apart from the symbolic and propaganda effect of the deal, which may be analogous to the propaganda reaped by the Kremlin when it picked up the tab for the Aswan dam -- is that the agreement establishes long-term economic bonds between Washington and the Egyptian government. Mere construction of the plants will take nearly a decade. Further, the increase in electric power resulting from the reactors' output will provide elements for an economic infrastructure that will make further American investment that much more attractive and profitable.

In this respect, Egypt offers a better field for imperialist investment than do many other underdeveloped capitalist countries. The Egyptian working class is not insignificant numerically; more than eighty years of imperialist investment (since the British occupation of 1881) have created an infrastructure more flexible and extensive than that which exists in most of Asia and Latin America, not to mention the rest of Africa. And finally, it is usually easier (and more profitable) for capital to flow into projects aimed at reconstructing industry that has been destroyed by war than to initiate totally new industrial development. The Egyptian plans to reconstruct and enlarge the Suez Canal, to rebuild the canal cities, and to expand the country's tourist industry are projects that are not at all unrealistic from the standpoint of Egyptian and international capitalism. For the American capitalist class, these projects represent not only profit-generating possibilities, but also political insurance that the Egyptian regime will not be in a position to break with Washington as it did after the 1967 war.

For Sadat, the importation of American capital will be doubly beneficial. First, the reconstruction process financed in part by U.S. capital will afford an opportunity to ease Egypt's unemployment and housing problems, as the refugee popula-

tion now concentrated in Cairo and the rest of the Nile delta can be expected to return to its homes along the canal. Second, the consequent "boom" of the Egyptian economy, especially if it is accompanied by further Israeli withdrawals from the Sinai peninsula, can be expected to divert the dissatisfaction of the Egyptian workers and peasants. Such is Sadat's hope.

The convergence of interests between the Egyptian and American regimes, then, is based on Sadat's determination to extract himself from his shaky economic and political situation with the aid of U.S. capital and U.S. imperialism's determination to simultaneously take advantage of the Egyptian market and reestablish its political influence over the most important country in the Arab world.

The second axis of Washington's drive toward Pax Americana in the Arab East runs through Saudi Arabia. Both Saudi Arabia and the emirates of the Arab-Persian Gulf have accumulated enormous sums of money from their oil income during recent years. Until recently, these holdings have sat idly in imperialist banks. The international monetary crisis and the devaluation of various Western currencies have heavily reduced the value of these holdings. This has led the states concerned to seek more profitable areas of investment. The direction Saudi investment has taken has clearly been of benefit to American capitalism. The Saudi regime has proposed investing in the American petroleum industry, a plan that fully corresponds to that industry's need for capital for expansion. Another section of Saudi holdings is going to finance projects being carried out elsewhere in the Arab world in cooperation with American imperialism. (The oil pipeline running from Suez to the Mediterranean is an example.)

The June 22 issue of *The Economist* took note of this aspect of the Saudi-American alliance: "It appears that the co-operation between Saudi Arabia and America that was announced two weeks ago is likely to become every bit as important as first suspected. Saudi Arabia's surplus oil revenues, which will be far bigger than any other country's, will largely be recycled through America both in investments and as imports of American goods and services. In the past few months Saudi officials have radically revised their traditional ultra-conservative attitudes towards investments. They realise that they cannot for long continue to invest their surplus funds in short-term accounts and they claim that they are only doing so now on the advice of western bankers. The Saudis want soon to start making large investments in selected American company stock, in property and in refinery and in petrochemical projects. The present state of the American stock market frightens many would-be investors, but the Saudis, who would invest for the long term, smell bargains. They emphasise, though, that they will be unwilling to take a wholly passive role and for that reason will expand some existing Arab banks, perhaps create some new ones, and perhaps form other organisations staffed with expert advisers, many of them non-Arab, to help to overcome their own self-acknowledged shortage of business expertise."

In the same article, the leading organ of British finance capital took a smug attitude toward some secondary effects of the U.S.-Saudi alliance. Discussing the recent meeting of the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC), held in Quito, Ecuador, *The Economist* observed: "The decision of the . . . OPEC . . . to raise some crude oil prices by 10-12 cents a barrel was hardly the most significant result of the meeting at Quito. Much more important was the refusal of Saudi Arabia, Opec's largest producer, to agree to even so nominal an increase and to express its disagreement publicly. This should kill any remaining doubts about the Saudi's pre-

viously announced intention to lower prices. What is more, the public disagreement, which was backed up by hard words from the Saudis in private, probably means that they will continue to push on other fronts for price reductions. Given their strength in oil, the Saudis can hardly fail to succeed unless something totally unforeseen happens."

The interpenetration of Saudi and U.S. capital ensures on the one hand that the Saudi rulers will not take measures that would damage U.S. economic interests, as their own would be simultaneously damaged as well. In addition, it means that mounting Saudi investments in the rest of the Arab world (especially Egypt) can serve as a supplementary force playing the same role as the American investments both politically and economically. The Saudi-American alliance is further cemented by the agreements that have been signed between the two countries providing for large-scale sales of U.S. arms to Riyadh. On the one hand, bolstering the strength of the Saudi armed forces provides Washington with yet another reliable cop in the Arab-Persian Gulf; and on the other hand, the fact that Saudi Arabia will pay for its arms in cash will have the effect of relieving balance of payments pressure on the United States, as some of the oil revenue flowing to Saudi Arabia will be redirected back to the United States. This is an advantage that no European imperialist power can avail itself of.

The strengthening of Washington's already important bond with Saudi Arabia and the solidifying of the new Egyptian-American relationship were rounded out with the reestablishment of diplomatic relations between Washington and Damascus. The Syrian-American rapprochement will undoubtedly proceed at a slower pace than the one between Egypt and the United States, both because of Syria's greater dependence on the Soviet bureaucracy and because of the relatively less profitable market that Syria represents for U.S. imperialism. Nevertheless, the Nixon administration has asked the U.S. Congress for \$100 million in contingency aid for Syria, and it is scarcely likely that the Baathist regime will evince either the inclination or the ability to maintain its earlier anti-Washington policy in face of pressure from Egypt and Saudi Arabia and aid offers from the U.S. government.

The Israeli connection

The new drive of U.S. imperialism to expand its influence and power in the Arab world does not at all mean that Washington has decided to nullify its alliance with the Israeli state. The Israeli rulers are well aware that the agreements signed between the United States and the Arab countries will not strengthen the ability of the Arab states to fight Israel. On June 12, speaking at the Weizmann science institute in Rehovoth, Israeli Prime Minister Yitzak Rabin observed that "when the Arab states are preparing for war, it's not rapprochement with the United States that they want. They aim at that only when they need material aid to develop their economies. That is why this development of Arab-American relations should not touch off too much uneasiness in Israel, especially since we know that the United States wants a strong Israel."

Associated Press reports indicated that Israeli rulers were saying much the same thing in private. One unidentified leader remarked, "If you draw up a balance of the risks and advantages that this rapprochement represents for Israel, you see that the result is clearly positive, in large part because this process cannot go on except at the expense of the Soviet Union. And Israel prefers to see an increase in the influence in the Arab countries of a friendly country like the United

States rather than of a superpower that is hostile to Israel, like the Soviet Union."

When Nixon got to Jerusalem on his tour, he left no doubt that American imperialism did indeed "want a strong Israel." The joint Israeli-American communiqué released at the end of the visit promised for the first time "long-term" military aid to the Zionist state. Previously, U.S. aid to Israel had been negotiated on a year-by-year basis. The military aid Washington will extend to Israel during the next several years was reported to have been fixed at an average of \$1,500 million a year. In addition, Nixon signed an agreement promising Israel the same sort of nuclear aid as had been granted Egypt. In fact, the new opening of Egypt to American investment will increase, not decrease, Israel's importance to Washington. The Egyptian regime is still far from having developed enough stability to serve as a reliable imperialist watchdog in the Arab East. The expansion of U.S. investment in Egypt will simply mean that Washington will have more to protect, and this assures the Zionist state of continued U.S. support.

Nevertheless, the new course of U.S. policy in the Arab East does not fully correspond to the immediate interests of the Israeli ruling class. The Israeli rulers will have no choice but to relinquish some of the Arab territory they have held since 1967. And while relinquishing some territory surely represents no long-term threat to the existence of the Zionist state, it is still the case that the majority of the Israeli ruling class would prefer not to yield territorial concessions. This relative conflict between Washington and Tel Aviv will have a twofold effect on Israeli policy. First, Tel Aviv will demand the highest possible price from Washington in exchange for its territorial losses, whatever they may be. This undoubtedly partially accounts for the current large increase in American aid to Israel. Second, the Israeli rulers will attempt to find ways of reasserting their military hegemony over the Arab East, ways that do not fundamentally conflict with Washington's carefully arranged "peace scenario." The necessity of the Israeli ruling class finding ways to do this is all the more pressing in view of the ideological "earthquake" touched off in Israel by its relative setback during the October War, that is, its inability to annihilate the Egyptian and Syrian armies.



Lebanese rescue workers remove body of child killed in Israeli bombing raid.

For the Zionist ruling class, there is one time-tested means of asserting power in the Arab East, and that is killing Arabs. Exactly which Arabs are killed must of course vary with the political and military situation in the region. With "disengagement" effected on the Egyptian front and beginning to take effect on the Syrian front, and with the Jordanian border quiet, one tempting target presents itself: Lebanon, a country that cannot defend itself and has a large Palestinian population to boot.

The Israeli rulers lost no time. Nixon left Israel for Jordan, the last stop in his "peace pilgrimage," on June 17. On June 18 Israeli planes struck at Palestinian refugee camps in Lebanon. On June 19 they struck again, and yet again on June 20. The Israeli regime's excuse for the attacks was the usual one: its need to "defend" itself by hitting back at Palestinian liberation fighters. "These consecutive raids are meant as a signal that we have reached a breaking point," an Israeli official said on June 20. "This new government is composed of military men who are not prepared to tolerate attacks on the civilian population." On June 24 Rabin announced that Israel had entered a stage of "perpetual war" against the Palestinian fedayeen.

Apart from the observation that there are few other countries in the world in which an official could explain that the government cannot tolerate attacks on civilians because it is composed of military men (who just happen to make their living by killing civilians) and apart from noting the irony -- or should we say pathological arrogance -- of explaining that the government will express its nontolerance of "attacks on the civilian population" by attacking a civilian population, we should point out that the raids on Lebanon have little if anything to do with opposing Palestinian "terrorism."

The fact of the matter is rather more simple. The raids, which after three days had killed at least 150 civilians, are an application under the current delicate circumstances of the long-standing Zionist policy of terrorizing the Arab world and flaunting the power of the Zionist state. They are the Israeli

regime's way of showing the Arab world that things have not changed that much after all. And they are a means of showing the Israeli population that the "earthquake" has not destroyed the Israeli state's ability to inflict murderous punishment on a section of the Arab world, "peace pilgrimage" or not.

The plans of U.S. imperialism in the Arab East today are transparent. Washington intends to bolster the role of Saudi Arabia within the Arab world and cement its alliance with the Saudi family on both the economic and political levels. It intends to pry the Sadat government away from the Soviet bureaucracy definitively, pouring capital into Egypt with the aim of deflecting the working-class and student movements there. The Syrian regime is to be neutralized, if it cannot be directly drawn into the American orbit as well. Opposition among the Arab masses to the new U.S. penetration of the eastern Arab world is to be countered through a combination of economic development financed by American capital and territorial concessions wrung out of the Zionist state. At the same time, the Israeli army will remain as the central guarantor of stability in the region. The result is to be a new American hegemony over all the states in the eastern Arab world.

Already the American plan has taken big steps forward. But it is far from having succeeded. The major obstacle to its success is the opposition -- actual or potential -- of the Arab workers and peasants. U.S. imperialism's re-entry into Egypt has already required and will continue to require changes in the Egyptian socioeconomic structure that will undoubtedly provoke opposition from the Egyptian population. And at the same time, there remains the "problem" that created the Arab-Israeli conflict in the first place: the denial of the national rights of the Palestinian Arabs.

The next stages in the development of the Arab East will therefore revolve around two decisive questions: the response of the Egyptian masses to Sadat's "de-Nasserization" program and the response of the Palestinian resistance movement to the attempts to impose the "peaceful solution." Future articles in INPRECOR will return to these two problems. □

BRITAIN

COPS MURDER ANTIFASCIST MILITANT

"It has been a long time since the violence of the capitalist class stalked the streets of this country quite as openly as on Saturday afternoon, 15 June," said the June 20 issue of Red Weekly, paper of the International Marxist Group, British section of the Fourth International. "While the National Front proudly paraded their vile doctrines of race hatred through the streets of London, the police meted out brutal punishment to those who dared to challenge the fascist threat.

"Between them they can claim the responsibility for the death of Kevin Gately -- the first of our comrades to fall in the fight against racism and fascism."

Gately, a 21-year-old student from Warwick University and a sympathizer of the IMG attending his first political demonstration, was murdered June 15 by London cops who attacked a demonstration of some 1,000 militants protesting a meeting against immigrants being held by the fascist organization Na-

tional Front. The stated purpose of the National Front rally and march was to protest the Labour government's decision to grant amnesty to people who had been declared illegal immigrants under the 1971 Immigration Act. But beyond the immediate purpose, the National Front -- which has engaged in a not insignificant number of attacks on individuals and bookshops of the workers movement -- wanted to stage a show of force on the streets that could bolster their recent successes in several local by-elections. (In Newham they took 12 percent of the vote, pushing the Tories into fourth place and in the Leicester council by-election they took 25 percent, coming in second after the Tories.)

The counterdemonstration was supported by Liberation (a colonial freedom group), the IMG, and others. It exceeded the National Front rally in size. Jackie Stevens, a member of the IMG who had accompanied Gately to the demonstration, explained how the police attack on the antifascist militants

started: "We turned into Red Lion Square, our arms linked together. We came across a line of police, and behind them were mounted police. When we tried to get through to Conway Hall, the police drew their batons and charged. . . . fell and was trodden on by a horse and beaten on the head. Our arms became unlinked and I didn't see Kevin again. There was blood all over the place and teeth lying on the ground. The police were screaming and shouting. We were all bunched up with horses on top of us. It was an absolutely horrific scene."

'it was an absolutely horrific scene'



There is evidence that the police attack was designed not only to brutalize but even to kill. Ron Singer, a doctor at Bolingbroke Hospital in London told Red Weekly: "I was present at the demonstration and after mounted police charged in Theobald's Road I saw a man being taken by two policemen away from the crowd. He was bleeding profusely from at least one cut on his head. I went up to him and told the police sergeant that I was a doctor and would like to examine the man's wound. The policeman said that he did not care what I was and that if I did not get out of the way he would arrest me too."

Even Sydney Bidwell, Labour member of Parliament for Southall and chairman of the London council of Liberation, accused the cops of attacking the antifascist militants "with great ferocity." "Mounted police," he said, "were driving people before them. I had to nip out of the way myself, narrowly escaped being trampled by a horse."

Despite the obvious fact that the cops had viciously assaulted the antifascist demonstrators, the British capitalist press tried to present the clashes -- and even the death of Gately -- as the fault of the antifascists. ". . . much of the responsibility must rest on the organisers of the left-wing counterdemonstration to the National Front's original anti-immigration march," wrote the June 22-28 Economist. Most British papers even claimed for several days that the cause of Gately's death was not known. "There were some signs," the Daily Express wrote, "that death could have been from natural causes (!), probably cerebral haemorrhage." The June 17 issue of the Evening Standard (first edition) attributed Gately's death to "asphyxia"! Even the Guardian as late as June 18 was writing, ". . . the left has produced nobody who saw Mr. Gately actually hit. It seems more likely that he received the blow from a foot when he was on the ground in the melee."

In reality, though, it was clear to everyone except the most myopic and cynical that Gately was killed by the clubs of the London cops. And the left movement began to organize

a response. On Saturday, June 22, some 6,000 people marched in London in a memorial march for Gately. On Sunday, June 23, there was an anti-fascist march of 10,000 in London in memory of Gately. In addition to the IMG, the International Socialists, the Warwick Students Union, and other political groups, the June 23 march was attended by a number of trade-union councils. Jack Collins, Kent area representative on the National Executive of the National Union of Mineworkers, gave a solidarity statement to Red Weekly that said in part: "The TUC (Trades Union Congress) and the organised working class should demand a halt to the growth of fascism and use whatever tactics are necessary to halt the spread of this evil. . . . The question of free speech for the fascists has been decided many times -- in the Western Desert, in the cities of Coventry, London, Warsaw, and Stalingrad, and recently in the stadium at Santiago, in Chile. Allowing people to preach poison must not be confused with free speech. We have seen fascism on the march before and we do not intend to let them pass. The killing of the young student should serve as a warning to the working class, and we must demand the fullest enquiry. The guilty people, the people who issued the orders, must be brought to book. We must have unity of the working class on a united, anti-fascist front. If the working class and socialist organisations do not unite, we will not be doing our duty to the international working class."

And, in fact, the bureaucrats of the Labour party have hardly been doing their duty to the international working class. The June 20 Red Weekly pointed out the danger of the fascist threat and the necessity of a united working-class response. "Saturday is also a reminder of the fact that the National Front and the capitalist state are on the same side, that they both fight to protect the rule of the capitalists. The forces of 'law and order' will give the fascists the protection they need to carry out their dirty business, and, if the capitalist class decides it is of use to them, will provide the fascists with cover for illegal and violent actions against workers and socialists."

"The fascists are a threat. If they are allowed to organise and extend their influence, they will find a place in the plans of the bosses to break the resistance of the workers movement."

"That is why we marched on Saturday. But we were few in numbers. That is another reason why there was violence."

"If Saturday's demonstration had been supported by all those who are threatened by the fascist menace -- socialists, trade unionists, blacks, and immigrants -- there would have been no violence."

"The fascists would have been too terrified to crawl out of their sewers, and the police would have put away their clubs and turned politely to directing traffic."

"There must not be another 15 June. We must prevent it; not by bowing our heads and allowing the fascists to conspire against us, but by turning out in future in such force, in such an immense display of unity and power, that the forces of reaction and of the state will keep their distance and keep their HANDS OFF THE ANTI-FASCIST MOVEMENT!"

"For an immediate labour-movement inquiry into the death of Kevin Gately! For the immediate scrapping of the police 'special patrol groups'! The Labour government must ban all future fascist demonstrations, and the labour movement must mobilise to prevent the fascists demonstrating!"

The strength of the antifascist movement may well be tested soon. The National Front, along with the Ulster Defense Association, has called for a mass march in London on July 13, a provocation not only against immigrants, antifascists, and the British workers, but against the Irish people as well. The whole British left has demanded that the Labour government forbid this march and has called for a huge counterdemonstration in London on that day.

SPÍNOLA MOVES TO REPRESSION...

CP BACKS HIM UP

by A. UDRY

On June 10 the following announcement was made on Portuguese television screens: "The broadcast has been suspended by orders from above." Forty-seven days after the "coup," the junta was showing in the most direct way that it intended to "take things in hand." On June 14 it took direct control of television broadcasting. That measure was rounded out on June 21 by a law-decree instituting new censorship.

Concurrently, the "head of government" threatened to use troops to break the strike of the postal workers -- the same troops that intervened against the strikers at the American Timex watch trust and against the workers of the "Lisbon Water Company." To prop up measures like this, the government is preparing antistrike legislation and intensifying its repression against the far left.

All these decisions taken by the junta or by its front, the "provisional government," have been supported by the Portuguese Communist and Socialist parties. This support has been all the more necessary for the junta in that its failure to quickly achieve a cease-fire in the colonies requires that it win the greatest possible latitude on the internal front. Support from the CP and SP offers the junta a greater possibility of temporarily conserving a broad enough social base to deal with the difficult negotiations on the "status of the overseas territories."

One advantage: low wages

After the initial strike wave that followed the giant May 1 demonstrations, the government's decision to set the minimum wage at 3,300 escudos a month (about US\$145) underlined the contradiction between the interests of capital and the most immediate demands of the workers. In effect, in terms of its plan of integration into the Common Market and its appeal to foreign capital, Portuguese capitalism commands but one substantial advantage: the lowest wages in Europe. It is consequently a certainty that Portuguese capital will not easily agree to discard the only real trump card it holds in its hand.

Inflation is accelerating and is reaching a gallop: For 1973 the inflation rate was 23%; from March 1973 to March 1974 it rose to 30%; and the National Statistics Institute (INE) has announced that the rate could reach 70% in 1974! The balance of payments deficit seems to be growing as well. This results from the combination of the increase in the prices of raw materials and oil with the fall in the amount of currency sent back to Portugal by immigrant workers (in 1972 the money sent back by immigrants reached 22,388 million escudos) and the slowdown in tourism (in 1971 the income from tourism amounted to 5,313 million escudos). Rumors about a coming devaluation of the escudo and the mystification maneuvers of certain Portuguese commercial banks are considerably slowing down the shipments of money back to Portugal by the two million emigrants. The tourist industry is suffering from a

conjunctural downturn. According to the Financial Times, the crisis is making itself felt in the southern tourist province of Algrave and in Lisbon. A hotel with 660 beds, normally full this time of year, is now less than one-third occupied.

To these elements must be added the structural crisis Portuguese industry is experiencing. This is asserting itself with all the more force in that a more or less aggravated recession is hitting most of the European capitalist economies and is therefore intensifying interimperialist competition. Concentration of capital is very pronounced in Portugal; "168 companies, or 0.4 percent of the 40,051 that were active on the continent in 1971, hold 53 percent of the total capital of the whole society," wrote M.B. Martins in "Sociedades e grupos em Portugal" (p.16). But the structure of production is even more backward. Only 0.5% of factories engaged in manufacturing employ more than 500 persons; 21.5% employ between 11 and 500 persons, and 78% are either artisanal workshops or very small production units employing less than 11 persons. The process of reconverting Portuguese capital does not promise to be easy. The measures that have been taken to support the small and medium-sized enterprises appear much more as means of assuring the integration of some of them into the monopolies than as means of saving them and defending employment levels. Unemployment, which has forcefully reappeared, will grow. In the construction industry in the South more than 4,000 workers have lost their jobs in recent times, according to the June 28 Financial Times. The return of immigrant workers who are losing their jobs because of the general rise in unemployment in the Common Market countries will exacerbate this increase in unemployment.

Under these conditions, the junta and the employers are not prepared to make big concessions, especially since the Communist party is assuring them of its support. Too big a wage increase, a radical reduction in the workweek, or a drastic increase in special costs would place in question the foreign investment that is less interested in the rather limited internal market than in wage advantages. If these wage advantages cease to exist, various companies could decide not to invest in Portugal any more, especially companies producing parts for complex products that are assembled in other countries.

The opening up of certain markets in Eastern Europe (for the moment, 65 percent of Portuguese exports are sent to capitalist Europe, most of these to the Common Market countries) cannot offer real alternatives. The loans that have been offered by the Common Market countries can ease the immediate situation, but certainly cannot resolve the essential difficulties with which Portuguese capitalism is confronted. The last country to be affected by the expansion of European capitalism after the second world war, Portugal is seeking to take to the road of reconstruction just at the time that European capitalism is entering a period of acute crisis. That is the major obstacle! Hence, the options chosen by capital are predictable and have already been announced: attack on the buying power of the workers, attack on employment, and re-

restrictions on independent trade-union organization and the right to strike will be the backbone of the policy of the junta and its facade, the "provisional government."

The limits of a movement

We have already stressed the breadth of the strike movement that developed after the May 1 mobilizations. (See INPRECOR No.2.) While a workers vanguard emerged from these strikes, and while the strikes triggered a rapid development of the consciousness of certain layers of workers, it is important not to close our eyes to the weaknesses of this movement. First of all, since the first world war, the Portuguese workers movement has not had the experience of a national mobilization that would have allowed it to really express its power and would have led to a central political confrontation with the bourgeoisie. Second, the fragmentation of the workers movement has been intensified and fostered by the corporatist regime. The number of craft unions was very high. The unions were structured along district lines. Thus, just in the Lisnave shipyards in Lisbon, there are still, after the "coup," twenty-four separate craft unions. In 1969 some 80 percent of the unions had average memberships under 1,616. Only eight unions had slightly more than 20,000 members. A study of the trade-union structure under the "old regime" concluded: "The description of Portuguese trade-union structure allows us to conclude that there has been a deliberate atomization." (Analise social, 1972, No.33, p. 180.)

To be sure, the figures cited must be viewed with caution, for they count paper membership and all those who were forced to pay dues. In addition, resistance to the corporatist unionism made only a limited impression on the workers. But it is no less true that the working class is still marked by this fragmentation. This lack of a centralized movement explains in the final analysis the failure of struggles to become generalized during the upsurge after the beginning of May. On this basis it is understandable why the junta was so trenchantly determined to end the first national strike in decades: the strike of the postal workers. The Communist party, thanks to its implantation and audience, was the only organization that could have been capable of generalizing and centralizing the struggles. But it did just the opposite. Not only did it adapt to the old structures of the trade unions, it also deliberately isolated the strikes after May 1 that represented the highest points yet attained by the workers mobilization in terms of goals, methods of struggle (the Messa typewriter factory, Timex), and political stakes involved (public transport, Carris in Lisbon, the postal strike).

Thus, to understand why in spite of the very high level of combativity in many factories and in a sector like the postal workers, and in spite of the emergence of a workers vanguard, the many measures taken by the junta and the policy of the CP have not triggered a decisive response (at least for the moment), one must start from the inexperience and lack of politicization of the working class, the real betrayal of the CP, the uneven development of the mobilizations on a national scale, and the quantitative and political weakness of the far left. Furthermore, many workers won what they considered real victories during the first strike wave, and this has also had an effect in the general retreat of the mobilization since the end of May.

The way the junta intervened to break the postal strike and the Timex strike and the policy followed by the CP in these struggles allows us to get an idea what the alignment of forces will be in the coming months.

Two key strikes... broken

In the postal sector, at least in the capital, a certain militancy had been manifested since the end of 1973. Wages were very low: of 35,000 workers, 21,000 made between 2,000 and 7,000 escudos a month (that is, about US\$88-308). Since the beginning of May, workers on a national scale had been trying to build a union. Thus, on May 5, some 1,000 workers met in Lisbon and decided to set up a "trade-union commission" and to begin to work out a series of demands. The "trade-union commission" was later to be expanded by the addition of delegates elected in general assemblies in the main postal centers throughout the country. When the government refused to accept the demands drawn up by the "commission" (6,000 escudos minimum wage, immediate thirty-five-hour workweek, one month paid vacation, doubletime for overtime, revision of the job classification system), the strike was declared at midnight on June 17. This strike, unlike many of the others, immediately appeared as a confrontation with the government. Already during the public transportation strikes in Lisbon (Carris), the government had given proof of its determination not to give in to wage demands. So there was no doubt that the postal strike would be a test of strength with the government, which would try to make an example of the postal workers, as the employers were demanding.

In addition to the above-mentioned demands, the strike also demanded the right to a strong and democratic trade union. The whole organization of the strike, and the preparation for it, showed that in this sector the workers would not easily accept the bureaucratic operation led by the CP of creating a union from the top down by utilizing the Union Federation. In fact, in addition to the "national strike committee" that grew out of the "trade-union commission," various commissions were set up: news and propaganda, organization of the strike and of strike pickets, medical and social aid, mobile brigades to make contact with various centers, and so on. The workers set out to explain their case to the population, especially in Lisbon. The response of the junta was predictable. The response of the CP went beyond what could have been imagined.

The government started a campaign to denounce the strikers "who were disturbing the normal life of all Portuguese." In an official message conveyed to the strikers on the night of June 19-20, the government declared: "The government has decided to call upon the intervention of the Armed Forces, which, in complete accord with the government decision, are preparing to intervene on the morning of June 20 in order to assure the functioning of the postal services." (Expresso, June 22.)

Portuguese metalworkers. "Fighting for our rights."



But while the government was preparing the intervention of the army, it left it to the CP to denigrate the strikers and even to organize demonstrations against the strike. On June 19 the Lisbon regional leadership of the Communist party made the following declaration: "The objective (of the strike) is this: to oppose the workers to the provisional government and to bring on an atmosphere of discontent and revolt that benefits fascism and reaction." (Avante! June 20.) And it added that the "trade-union commission" -- which had been elected democratically -- had not accepted the intervention of the Union Federation, which perfectly revealed the aims of the strikers! In Porto a demonstration was organized against the strikers and the union office was occupied, thanks to the CP's agitating the population against the strikers! One of the results of this CP policy was precisely that it favored the first demonstration of the right against strikes, as was verified at Viseu. In view of the isolation of the workers that the "communists" and "socialists" were organizing, it was only logical that rightist elements would feel reassured and would initiate their antiworker campaign, utilizing the theme of the "economic crisis." When the intervention of the army was announced, the 260 delegates from Lisbon and the provinces decided after a tense discussion to end the strike, in spite of the very small gains that had been made (increases ranging from 80 to 100 escudos a month). They decided to continue the struggle under another form (working strictly "by the book"). The relative isolation of the strikers -- in spite of the intervention of the Left Socialist Movement and the Liga Comunista Internacionalista (Internationalist Communist League, Portuguese sympathizing organization of the Fourth International), which initiated solidarity actions and were followed by the other far-left groups -- could only facilitate the government's victory, even though the workers combativity remains intact, as evidenced by the "by the book" operation. Furthermore, the CP continued its campaign of vilification, declaring: "It is counterrevolutionaries who, posing as defenders of the workers' interests, are preventing a solution to the postal crisis." (L'Humanité, June 29.)

The first national strike thus ended in a relative defeat for the workers movement and strengthened the position of the junta and the employers in the battles to come. The government understood the situation quite well, and, the day after the end of the postal strike, the armed forces entered the Timex factory, which had been occupied since June 4, forcing the workers to agree to the presence of the management in the general assemblies of strikers, secret ballots, limitation of discussion, and so on. Here again the relative isolation of the strike and the policy of the CP, the SP, and the Union Federation, made the struggle turn out badly, which is an example that can be assimilated by the workers vanguard in order to prepare for coming confrontations. To be sure, combativity was not broken. On June 24 the workers went home early, putting the forty-hour workweek into effect themselves. But a strike that ends this way has a negative effect. Not only was the test of strength against the junta's policy that was possible not made -- a test that would have been generalized in other struggles -- but also the most contradictory reactions can crop up in a young and combative working class that lacks any trade-union and political tradition.

The reactionaries want strikes

The criminal role of the Portuguese Communist party in this situation can be especially illuminated if it is placed in the context of the CP's perspective during the period prior to the April 25 coup. Before that date, the CP, which commanded a rather large audience in the factories and was working within the structures of the corporatist unions, raised the slogan of minimum monthly wage of 6,000 escudos, a slogan

that it violently rejects today. This slogan had been widely taken up during the struggles at the end of 1973 and the beginning of 1974 in the construction, electrical, textile, and glass industries. In relation to the previous mobilizations, the workers participation in the trade-union assemblies (called, in fact, by the CP) immediately after April 25 was significant. This mass mobilization on the trade-union level (with a view toward creating a fighting trade union), resulted in much reticence within the Union Federation about militant unionists participating in the government. Nevertheless, the Armed Forces Movement would not have accepted the CP's participation in the government unless the CP trade-union wing was also to be involved in governmental participation. The Armed Forces Movement wanted to cover all bets!

The CP leadership succeeded in carrying out a sort of "coup" inside the Union Federation, and Avelino Pacheco Gonçalves, trade-union leader of the banking sector in Porto, acceded to the post of minister of labor. One of the functions of the CP became obvious: to control the workers movement, limit the mobilizations and strikes as far as possible, cover up the enactment of legislation that would restrict the right to strike and the autonomy and independence of the trade unions, etc. This policy has led the CP to take positions that place it in the vanguard of the struggle against the mobilization of the workers even for their most immediate demands. It is significant that the correspondent of a British employers' newspaper (the Financial Times, June 18) has written: "The minister of labour, Avelino Gonçalves, nevertheless works hard at settling conflicts that seriously affect production, and it is extremely important to note that it is nearly only the Communists who are counselling caution in the use of the strike weapon at this time." This observation is all the more relevant in that José Vitoriano, a member of the CP Central Committee, stated: "Today it is the fascists and reactionaries of all stripes who want more strikes. Yesterday they repressed them with blood and iron. Today they are their principal promoters." (L'Humanité, June 21.)

This policy is complemented by the attempt to construct -- from the top down and on the basis of the old trade-union structures -- a centralized trade-union apparatus. This instrument is intended to become the privileged interlocutor with the government and to gradually implant itself in the factories in which it has not yet a base, exactly by utilizing its centralized weight. In places where the CP could not directly transform the "workers commissions" -- bodies that led the struggles in most factories during May and June -- into "trade-union commissions" it simply tried to create "trade-union commissions" parallel to the workers commissions. Given time, and because of its hegemony in the central union federation, it hopes to be able to impose such bodies. The success of this operation depends on many factors, among them the scale of the future mobilizations in face of the crisis of unemployment and inflation and the ability of the far left to develop an alternative counteroffensive (as it partially succeeded in doing during the postal strike).

Nevertheless, one effect of the CP policy could be the emergence of an antipolitical, or even anticommunist, tendency that would draw its strength from the lack of tradition and political weakness of layers of workers who are combative but totally disoriented by the policy of the CP and the Union Federation. This could provide some room for the development of "autonomous and nonpolitical" trade unions that would play the government's game by dividing the workers movement. The reaction among certain layers of young postal workers after the halting of their strike suggests signs of such a tendency. So it is all the more important that the revolutionary vanguard not allow itself to be led astray by the nature

of the period and the consciousness of the worker masses but develop systematic work for the formation of fighting trade unions democratically controlled on the basis of a break with the craft structure of the corporatist unions. If this task is not fulfilled there is great risk of a weakening of the class as a whole and of the CP's role on a general level remaining uncontested. Moreover, it is in being able to respond to these questions, among others, that the revolutionary vanguard will deepen its influence among layers of workers that are going beyond the CP.

Spínola:



preparing for the future

Since the beginning of June Spínola has been putting the emphasis on reconstructing an apparatus with which he can control the situation through asserting his own Bonapartist role in preparation for new elections. One of the most penetrating analyses of the post-April 25 situation appeared in the employers' review *Tempo Economico* of May 25: "It is obvious that there is nothing radical in the program of the Armed Forces Movement. In the synthetic statements of its platform one cannot even find a specific attack on the class division of Portuguese society, or on the traditional existence of a ruling class, or even on the composition of the bloc in power. . . ." And it continued, "The fact that the military has been able to play a decisive role in the destruction of the political regime is a new guarantee for the maintenance of the interests of the holders of economic power. The authority that is always associated with a military government will be very useful in stabilizing a social and political situation that inevitably will be turbulent after the military coup."

Thus, the journal that represents the "Business Week" or "Enterprise" of Portugal understands very well the function of the army and the role of the junta, which clearly illuminates what the policy of the workers movement must be in face of the armed forces. Moreover, Spínola is taking many initiatives toward the Armed Forces Movement. His visit and the speech he made to the *Calda de Rainha* infantry regiment -- the regiment that launched the "premature" attack of March 16 -- indicated his desire to limit as far as possible the contradictions between the Armed Forces Movement and the junta and to win a decisive influence in the AFM. That is the policy that he and his clique have been following since November 1973, when it seems that they began to get their fingers into the "captains' movement." All the measures aimed at "bringing in new blood" allow for integrating sectors of the AFM into the state apparatus and at the same time for reorganizing this apparatus. Hence, while it is true that the AFM is not homogeneous, Spínola's whole policy is designed to

increase the weight of the sector of the AFM that is substantially in agreement with the junta's decisions. These are the forces that can stabilize the situation in the armed forces and thus lend the bourgeoisie a decisive instrument. It is instructive that on June 12 at the demonstration for the release of Saldanha Sanches (a leader of the Maoist MRPP), the military police for the first time intervened "calmly but firmly" to prevent soldiers and sailors from joining the demonstration.

Concurrently, Spínola made a tour of the provinces -- in the capital his audience is much smaller -- in order to assure himself of a certain base. At the same time, on the international field, Spínola met Nixon in the Azores and offered him all possible assurances about the "decolonization process," about Portugal's new diplomatic policy (opening toward the Soviet Union and the Comecon countries), and about Portugal's NATO responsibilities. As for Nixon, he undoubtedly assured the chief of the junta about American imperialism's interest in the decolonization process in Angola, Mozambique, and the Cape Verde Islands, where the United States has military bases.

Given the prospect of a crisis in the cease-fire negotiations and an explosion of prices and unemployment, the junta, which lacks any other real power in Portugal, is working out a policy that will rely on utilization of the army to break strikes, impose censorship, press for the passage of "labor legislation," and carry out repression against anti-militarists. The bourgeoisie is thus preparing for coming confrontations, for dealing with possible mobilizations of the workers.

The decision June 10 of Major Fernandez, a member of the junta, to interrupt the television program showing Cardinal Cerejeira giving his blessing to a cop from the PIDE-DGS (the secret police) augured the censorship measures that would be taken on June 21. Symbolically, it indicated that "certain institutions cannot be abusively criticized." Some of the television workers reacted. They released a communiqué in which, according to the June 15 *Sempre Fixe*, they affirmed their will "to continue resolutely their mission of informing and forming the public, a mission for which they are working and that they place above all else, and they reiterated their adherence to the Armed Forces Movement." The declaration indicates the limitations of the reaction of the television workers. The June 21 law-decree, issued under the authority of the "socialist" Raul Rego, was aimed at all the "flash points" of the present situation. Thus, the following "infractions" can be punished: incitation, even "indirect" incitation, to military disobedience; offenses against the president of the republic, the members of the state council, or the government; inciting strikes, work stoppages, or unauthorized demonstrations; publication or distribution of "inexact information." The legal machinery to undertake an attack on the far left, or more generally on the workers movement, has thus been set up.

Antistrike legislation has not yet been published, but it seems to be comparable to the measures instituting censorship. According to the June 15 *Expresso*, the legislation "permits expression and defends the right to strike as well as regulating the rights of associations of workers and employers' bodies in the framework of the principles of the Armed Forces Movement." The June 26 *Financial Times* was more precise. It wrote, "Reliable sources affirm that the (antistrike) measures will be tough and that they will considerably restrict the room available for the development of labor actions." The junta is carrying out the orders of Antonio Champalimaud, who said, "The workers are too free. A brake will have to be put on the demands of workers, who cannot be working less hours and making more money than anywhere else in

Europe." (Le Figaro, June 26.) It looks like the trusts don't want strikes as badly as the CP claims they do!

Finally, the junta is taking measures against the movement in the army and is trying to reestablish control over the troops. The continuation of the war can only engender the greatest tension, both on the battlefields (fraternization, refusal to fight, desertion) and in Portugal itself (action against the departure of troops, draft refusal). It is thus a top priority for the junta that the traditional organizations (the CP, the SP, the Union Federation) block the mobilizations within the army and put out all sorts of declarations affirming their attachment to the "program of the Armed Forces Movement" which can allow the junta more maneuvering room to try to regain control of the army. As "compensation" the junta allow the "provisional government" to drop a few crumbs in the financial area (increase in direct taxes that are the lowest in Europe, while preserving indirect taxes) or in the area of social security, which has hitherto been nonexistent. Obviously, these few concessions will be presented by the SP and CP as important victories.

The double function of the CP and SP is being affirmed more than ever:

- * to act as the instrument the bourgeoisie needs for controlling the mass movement after the coup d'etat;
- * to be useful in obtaining a cease-fire in order to try to institute a neocolonial solution in collaboration with imperialism, which takes time; this is all more true in that they represent an instrument capable of assuring pressure from the "good offices" of the Soviet bureaucracy on the liberation movements.

The CP has partially fulfilled the first of these functions. But there are some important hitches, and there is no doubt that within the junta some have already drawn some conclusions for the future as to the CP's overestimation of its ability to

control the working class. As for the second function, the results have been meager, in spite of the "shows" that have been put on by Soares. (See the From the Four Corners column in this issue of INPRECOR.) But the bourgeoisie is using all the time it can get to restructure its instruments and homogenize its forces in order to prepare for new battles. The dynamic of the situation will not be determined by the efforts the CP is making on the municipal level and in its many meetings in preparation for future elections. In the context of the existing economic stagnation it is the capacity of the working class to respond that will be the determining factor.

For the vanguard, the primary task in face of the chauvinist and opportunist positions of the CP and the SP is to develop the broadest anticolonial campaign and support to the struggles of the liberation movements. The junta may be able to play on the chauvinist sentiments that exist among layers of the workers. Further, in order to develop an alternative response to the policy of the Union Federation, it is urgent to link demands against inflation, unemployment, and so on, to demands in the struggle against any restriction on the right to strike or on trade-union activity, with the aim of building fighting democratic union organizations. Unless these types of initiatives are taken, there is great risk that the militant but limited struggles will run out of steam, especially since the CP would find it easier to control the whole situation, even if it were to lose some ground in the individual factories.

But it would be dangerous for the vanguard to limit its activity to this. Not to give a concrete and immediate response on the question of the regime against the force of the provisional government and the plan for "elections within one year" would simply amount to refusing to put forward an alternative solution to the one being pushed for by the traditional organizations. In this sense, the slogan "Immediate election by universal suffrage of all men and women over eighteen living in Portugal of a sovereign constituent assembly and the right of all organizations with no restriction whatsoever to participate in these elections" remains absolutely crucial. □

AFRICA

the liberation struggle in the portuguese colonies

decisive hour

—by C. GABRIEL—

Below is the second and final installment of an article whose first section was published in INPRECOR No.2, p.9. For information on the latest developments in the negotiations between the Lisbon government and the liberation movements, see the From the Four Corners column in this issue of INPRECOR.

* * *

Today, with the new situation in Portugal, the liberation struggle finds itself unambiguously confronted with the historic alternative: socialist revolution or caricature of revolu-

tion. We will examine their response to this alternative by looking at the factors that operate within the liberation movements to determine the political direction of their struggles.

The question of social structure

By opting for a strategy of "prolonged revolutionary war" the young nationalist leaderships abandoned the priority of work in the cities in order first to gain a base in the countryside bordering the enclave regions. They left an area of commer-

cial activity in which the petty-bourgeoisie (small businessmen, civil servants) were much more numerous than the working class. In Mozambique, for example, workers in small enterprises and plantations constitute 10 percent of the population. In Angola as of 1964 there were 2,840,000 workers; that represents 13 percent of the population. In the economically developed zones (the coffee-growing region, Cuanza Norte, and UIGE), in which there was no question of launching an armed struggle, the local labor force accounts for only 12 percent of the total of a semiproletarianized labor force composed mostly of migrant peasants.

The emergence of the liberation movements therefore took place in zones in which the development of the social structure, while remaining desultory, guaranteed that the petty bourgeoisie would have numerical and political hegemony within the movement. In the countryside, although the penetration by the market economy was uneven, the virtual majority of the population lived by subsistence.*

The move to armed struggle therefore meant uprooting the cadres from their original social milieu.

Moreover, Cabral explains this move of the nationalist petty-bourgeoisie from the towns to the countryside in erroneous terms. Postulating the historic gulf between the formation of the towns and the countryside, he treats the role of the petty bourgeoisie in moral terms. In 1966 during the first conference of OSPAAAL, (Organization of Solidarity with the Peoples of Asia, Africa, and Latin America), after having denounced the threat of neocolonialism, he declared: "In order not to betray these objectives, the petty bourgeoisie has but one available road: to strengthen its revolutionary consciousness. . . . This means that to completely fulfill the role that devolves on it in the national liberation struggle, the revolutionary petty-bourgeoisie must be capable of committing class suicide in order to reappear as revolutionary workers totally identified with the deepest aspirations of the people of which it is a part." This position of Cabral on the class suicide of the petty bourgeoisie has been little by little challenged within the PAIGC. Not only is this concept of suicide false, but the PAIGC has in no way achieved in practice the ideological homogeneity that is the natural implication of Cabral's 1966 statement.

Likewise, it would be necessary for these comrades to understand the class struggle not only in the restricted arena of the liberated zones, but also in the towns themselves, where in the future the viewpoint of the "revolutionary worker" would have to be imposed within a much more complex social structure than exists in the countryside, a social structure in which the market economy has led to the development of social layers hostile to the interests of the proletariat and the poor peasantry. Finally, as we shall see further on, still less has the PAIGC integrated into its analysis the class struggle being waged in West Africa, which also weighs on the development of the young Republic of Guinea.

In these writings Cabral does begin an analysis of the social structure, but it clearly seems that this analysis has been

* In Guinea among the Balantes, land is the property of the village, the means of production belong to the family or individual. Also in Guinea the Foulas have collective property in land but owe a certain quantity of labor to the chiefs. In this country only the Mandjaks lived in a society of a feudal type, one introduced by Islamicization, until the arrival of the Portuguese.

"emasculated" for "tactical" reasons that in reality obscure the historic horizon of the struggle. Thus, in 1964 at the seminar held by the Franz Fanon Center in Milan, Cabral declared: ". . . but isn't it possible . . . to define the really revolutionary petty-bourgeoisie? As an element of analysis, one could perhaps simply respond: the honest bourgeoisie, that is, the bourgeoisie that, despite all contrary tendencies, contributes to making the fundamental interests of the popular masses of its country its own."



key to organizations

MPLA	Peoples Liberation Movement of Angola
PAIGC	African Party for the Independence of Guinea and the Cape Verde Islands
FRELIMO	Mozambique Liberation Front
ANLF	Angola National Liberation Front. The Union of Peoples of North Angola was created in 1954. It later became the Union of Angolan Peoples, and the, after winning over several grouplets, became the ANLF, which for reasons of diplomacy founded the Angolan Revolutionary Government in Exile, which is based in Kinshasa and controlled by Mubutu.
UNITA	National Union for the Total Independence of Angola. It developed in 1966 after a split in the ANLF. It concentrated in the beginning on gaining a base in the south and center of the country. The main criticisms it makes of the MPLA are that the latter has a petty-bourgeois leadership and that it directs the liberated zones from outside.
FLING	Liberation Front for the National Independence of Guinea. A sort of reactionary grouplet based in Dakar, supported for several years by Senghor, president of Senegal, and manipulated by the Americans.
GUMO	United Group of Mozambique. A potential third force. Has just declared itself in favor of interracial, interreligious coexistence and for a Lusitano-Afro-Brazilian community!

These insufficiencies of analysis of social structure and class struggle have corollaries on the level of the analysis of the nature and role of the party as well as of the kind of state that should be set up. For the party, Cabral merely observes that the PAIGC has the function of a "movement." Thus, after the death of Cabral, the Executive Committee of the Struggle declared that the PAIGC united in its ranks "all the social layers of our colonized peoples." Standing mute on the question of the vanguard party, the PAIGC becomes flatly ambiguous on the question of the state: "Our party is erecting a Party-State by ensuring its control and politico-administrative management of the liberated regions." (Vasco Cabral, January 31, 1973.) This conception of the Party-State, which was developed to its highest point by Sekou Touré and Kwame Nkrumah, suggests the bonapartist function of the leader's personality and amounts to an old nationalist mystification that has been extensively utilized by the Mobutus and their ilk. Would it then perhaps be necessary to detail the nature

of the state and the function of the party? If the PAIGC unites "all the social layers of the people" it is a pretty fair bet that the Party-State does not represent simply the "viewpoint of the revolutionary worker." At least, not until the "suicide" is complete!

To be sure, the liberation movements do not today represent fully-formed multiclass movements. FRELIMO, the PAIGC, and the MPLA are movements with a multiclass conception; but the movements have not yet fulfilled their frontist aspirations, because their stable spheres of influence are limited to the countryside and because the weak layers of petty-bourgeois businessmen in the cities have already linked up with the "democratic" sectors of colonialism (the GUMO in Mozambique or the Democratic Movement in Guinea).

Dos Santos referred to this whole debate in his interview with *The African Communist* (issue no.55). By their own contradictions his words permit us to understand the ambiguities of a multiclass conception of a struggle in which it is increasingly difficult to find a common denominator for "all the layers of the people." Said Dos Santos: "There is no national bourgeoisie worth talking about." (p.35.) "But I would say FRELIMO is a front. Not a front of organizations, in spite of the fact that it was formed by three organizations that dissolved to create a new one. I would say it is a front because it groups together all the social groups or social classes with one aim of eliminating oppression. Everybody -- whether he is involved in the capitalist or traditional sector -- is suffering humiliation because of racism and economic exploitation, even the tribal chiefs." (p.35.) "Of course, within almost every national movement there are different types of nationalism: There is the elementary primary one -- what is called primitive nationalism. Some people who take part in the struggle for independence do so not to realize or to satisfy the interest of a small group. . . . So I would say that it is not a question of pitfalls or limitations but of the characteristics of some types of nationalism." (p.44.) "As always, the task of building a society economically poses the problem of the type of production and distribution, and especially who is going to benefit from what the society produces." (p.45.) "Gwenjoro, Marupa, and Simango were not taking these positions (before their expulsion from FRELIMO -- INPRECOR) openly along these lines, but they were driven by a desire for individual political power, by a bourgeois ideology and a desire to build a capitalist type system." (p.46.) "If we do not follow collectivist attitudes, we will not be able to face the enemy successfully. . . . If our organization maintains a true revolutionary leadership, the special circumstances of the process of our liberation open up real possibilities for an advance from liberation to revolution. . . . This must be the defense until the situation has been achieved where the truly revolutionary classes dominate all levels of power." (pp.48-49.)

The road is tortuous. To be sure, it is still not known whether FRELIMO the multiclass front has the objective of winning over the layers that Dos Santos denounces here. But all this comes down to an approach to the evolution of the struggle that, although it is the fruit of an empirical approach, nevertheless is beginning to be theorized.

Likewise, in 1964 Cabral made a long analysis of neocolonialism, which he defined as a "defeat for the international workers movement." He ended up by stating that such a situation as neocolonialism "calls for a socialist solution."

But it remains true that these tentative approaches to a theorization of the revolutionary process in no way constitute a guarantee. The generally significant heterogeneity of the

leaderships must be taken into account, as well as the fact that the political direction of the liberation movements will not be determined by internal factors alone. The whole continental political situation bears down on the movements, and they maintain an opportunist attitude toward that political situation that may well boomerang on them.

Internationalism

In southern Africa FRELIMO and the MPLA have been faced with a growing military intervention from South Africa and Rhodesia and have found natural allies in the ZAPU, the ZANU (Rhodesia), and the SWAPO (Namibia). They have responded to the internationalization of the conflict that imperialism has provoked by strengthening the relations among the liberation movements. To be sure, the political character of the various movements differs, but as Dos Santos said, "It is an elementary part of the tactics of a struggle such as ours always to disperse the enemy."

The real question lies in the relations among the three movements and the African regimes, as well as in these regimes' "diplomatic practices." African diplomacy bears down very heavily on and strongly preoccupies the leaders of FRELIMO, the PAIGC, and the MPLA. The neighboring countries play an especially important role in this game in which the tactical interests of the liberation movements, the ideological mystifications of supra-class pan-Africanism, and the attempts to imprison the liberation movements in the reactionary straitjacket of the OAU are all intermixed. Three examples would be sufficient to illustrate the importance of the neighboring countries. In the conflict between the FRELIMO majority and the Makonda faction led by Kawandame the mediating presence of a representative of TANU, the governmental party in Tanzania, was required at the FRELIMO congress. The MPLA-ANLF agreement and the allocation of African aid to the two movements are controlled by a trust composed of N'Gouabi, Mobutu, Kaunda, and Nyerere (respectively the heads of state of the Congo (Brazzaville), Zaire, Zambia, and Tanzania). Finally, in the conflict within the MPLA between Neto and Chipenda, the latter was openly supported by a faction of the Zambian government. In an interview with the magazine *Révolution Africaine*, Mobutu presented himself as the obligatory intermediary controlling aid to the Angolan people. Senghor (president of Senegal), who actually supports the FLING, today recognizes the PAIGC; but he met secretly with Spínola twice before the assassination of Cabral, he puts out propaganda favoring establishment of a Portuguese-speaking community, and he has just recently strengthened relations between his UPS party and the Portuguese Socialist party.

How do the liberation movements respond to this problem? It is not an unimportant question. In fact, while we believe that it is necessary to destroy the state of colonial domination through a process of anticapitalist revolution, under African conditions it is not sufficient to construct a Guinean -- or even Mozambiquian -- workers state on the ruins of the colonial administration.

Given the historical and economic development of the African countries, it is obvious that the development of the productive forces, the resistance to the international counterrevolution, the existing demographic exigencies, and so on, require first a regional and later a continental dimension for the building of socialism. A socialist Guinea is a utopia if a revolutionary crisis does not break out during the same period in the neighboring bourgeois states of Senegal and Guinea-Conakry. This implies that the liberation movements not give up the slow work of educating the revolutionary militants who are



Liberated territory. Voting for Guinea-Bissau national assembly.

fighting against these regimes. The PAIGC's practices in this area have been extremely uneven. The isolation of the Guinean revolution could occur through a right-wing compromise with the neocolonial regimes. If that happens, the PAIGC's direction of development could very rapidly turn toward capitulation under the pressure of neocolonialism. A few examples:

We have no intention of establishing an identity between Sekou Touré and Leopold Senghor. Nevertheless, it is obvious that the Guinean regime is not the "beacon" of the African revolution. To profit from Guinea-Conakry's support does not necessarily imply an apolitical apolegeticism that runs against the formation and maturing of the African revolutionary movement. But yet! Francisco Mendes declared in Lahore in February 1974 that the Portuguese government was constantly nurturing the dream of attacking "the sister republic of Guinea with the aim of liquidating its popular and revolutionary regime and of thus depriving us of the solid rear area that this brother country represents. . . of striking a blow against the unfailing solidarity and unconditional and indefatigable friendship that exists between our two parties and our two states. . . may the glorious people of the historic 'No'. . . be able to save their triumphant revolution!" Some questions could be asked about the "sister republic," "the unconditional friendship between our two parties," and the "triumphant revolution." Is Guinea-Conakry the model?

As for the Senegal aspect, the presence of Amílcar Cabral at the congress of the UPS (the reactionary and sole party in that country) was more serious. Still more disturbing was a joint PAIGC-Senegal communiqué reporting the "perfect similarity of views between the two delegations on all subjects raised during the discussions: bilateral links and the situation in Africa and throughout the world." This is in contradiction with the filthy practices of a Senghor, who proclaims his desire for a Portuguese-speaking (that is, neocolonial) community. Was Senghor among those the PAIGC was attacking in this communiqué: "the error of those who wanted to see in the former commander of the Portuguese colonial war in our country a well-intentioned man capable of orienting Portugal

in the direction of neocolonialism"? It does not seem that this was the case, for Senegal played an important role in opening the London negotiations. On the other hand, it must be noted that since the beginning of May the radio station of the "sister republic" of Guinea has only been attacking Spínola, the interlocutor of Senghor, with whom the PAIGC "has no disagreement"! In such a business what becomes of the tasks of clarification that Cabral was aiming at during the OSPAAAL conference when he attacked neocolonialism? But this same Cabral declared in the name of the liberation movements at the eighth conference of African heads of state: "Addis Ababa -- the new flower of African independence that is Ethiopia. . . We want to express all our admiration for His Majesty (Haile Selassie). . . We have followed his splendid work for the liberation and preservation of the independence of his people." As for the Chad regime, which is fully supporting the French intervention against FROLINAT: "In the name of the liberation movements we extend to his excellency President Tombalbaye our own condolences and those of all our people for the human losses already suffered. . . and (we hope that Tombalbaye will) continue working for the social, economic, and cultural progress of his people."

The traditional propaganda of African puppets never misses an opportunity to castigate "foreign ideologies," a code word for anything that bears a resemblance to Marxism. Nevertheless, at the same conference Cabral declared: "We must also affirm before you that we well understand your concern about 'foreign ideologies.' We who have taken up arms to fight to liberate our people from any form of foreign domination will never accept anyone's domination, no matter what aid we may receive from abroad." A PAIGC pamphlet reprinting the speech notes that this remark was met with "prolonged applause."*

On the international level, the PAIGC has not been free of opportunism. F. Mendes declared in Lahore at the second Islamic summit held in February 1974: "We are also certain of the victory of the just cause that is dear to our hearts, the liberation of Jerusalem. For our part, we are prepared to make any sacrifice to achieve this goal. For it would be in the interests of men of all faiths in our country and elsewhere who have always seen the faithful of Islam as the guardians of the City of Peace."

And there was a bit of shifting about in Cabral's declaration at the United Nations on December 12, 1962: "In struggling and dying for the liberation of our country, we are giving our lives in the current context of international law for the ideal that the UN itself has defined in its charter and resolutions, especially its resolutions on decolonialization. For us, the only difference between the Indian soldier, Italian pilot, or Swedish official who died in the Congo and our comrade who dies in Guinea or the Cape Verde Islands is that in acting in his own country in the service of the same ideal, our comrade is but an anonymous fighter for the cause of the United Nations." Such opportunism augurs ill for the possibility of transcending the national framework of the struggle being led by the PAIGC. In effect, if we were to summarize the above lines, at Lahore, Mendes kept quiet about the so-

* Still, it must be recognized that the forms of expression in the declaration of PAIGC militants do not necessarily represent the views of the entire movement. It is obvious that a certain latitude in terminology is tolerated -- even for certain terms in the movement for which a plurality of opinions on certain questions is recognized and accepted. The quotations cited, then, have an exemplary value, but cannot be taken as an absolute theorization on the part of the whole PAIGC.

cial future of Palestine so as to please an audience of assorted Muslim dictators; at the UN Cabral kept quiet about what remains one of the greatest counterrevolutionary blows so as to please the delegates who had voted for the intervention of the UN troops in the Congo; at the OAU he kept quiet about subjects that most of the neocolonial regimes did not want to hear about so as to reassure a bunch of puppets. Towards what end? Most likely because of many immediate concerns: diplomatic recognition, UN votes, perhaps a certain neutrality from the most reactionary regimes. But at the same time, all African anti-imperialist youth regard the battle of the PAIGC as the advance guard of the anti-imperialist struggle. What lesson does the PAIGC draw from them by making such compromises with these hated regimes? What is the best long-term guarantee of the victory of the Guinean revolution, the African regimes that support the PAIGC like a rope supports a hanging man or the rise of the African revolution? For us the answer is obvious.

But what logic motivates this sort of international policy? Finding an answer is not easy. The liberation movements are in no way integral parts of the Stalinist movement, but their international policy is strongly corrupted by Stalinism. Insufficiently critical of nationalism, they remain especially vulnerable to the diplomatic games and opportunistic conceptions that Stalinism peddles in the name of "tactics."

The question of Stalinism

The ties of the liberation movements with Stalinism have been woven in two ways.

Some present leaders of the liberation movements learned about Marxism through the distorting prism of Stalinism because of their contact with the Portuguese Communist party when they were students in Portugal. But the Portuguese CP has not discarded its social chauvinist position. A resolution passed at its Fifth Congress in 1957 declared: "Today, comrades, the problem of the Portuguese colonies that did not possess the preconditions for an independent life is no longer posed." (Ramiro was the reporter.) And in May 1961 the Beira leadership published a manifesto that has never been repudiated by the national leadership and that declares: "Workers, show the employers that only the independence of Angola will serve their interests, for once it is independent Angola will really become a market for our produce." (*Revolução popular*, No. 6, December 1965.) So there is nothing astonishing in the fact that Cabral declares that "Portuguese democrats will find it effectively impossible to understand the just demands of our peoples so long as they are not convinced that the thesis of the lack of maturity for self-determination is false."

It is therefore obvious that the relations with the Portuguese CP vary according to the individual. The PAIGC fraternally received the support of the Revolutionary Brigades (who had managed to acquire some maps of the general staff by an armed action) in spite of the Stalinist slanders against the Portuguese far left.

But Stalinist pressure can be exerted most easily through the military support from the workers states, through the military training given young cadre, and through the pressure that builds up because of the importance of material aid to the armed struggle. It is through these two methods that a "Stalinoid" conception of international politics has little by little crept in -- a result of opportunism and pressure, but without the liberation movements losing organizational independence. In fact, the liberation movements have been able to diversify

their sources of support, particularly by addressing both Moscow and Peking. But the rotten attitude of the Stalinists partially limits the sympathetic responses that the military aid from the workers states could generate within the liberation movements. We could mention, for example, the trade between Portugal and Poland, in which the latter has delivered boats, among other things, to the former. Or the current attitude of Peking, which, in the grip of its support to Mobutu, has just extended its "good wishes" to the ANLF after a trip by Holden to China.

In fact, the weight of Stalinism is exerted above all by the central role of the workers states in a diplomatic game that the liberation movements play only with difficulty.

Both for objective reasons of African social development during the 1950s and for subjective reasons relating to Moscow's foreign policy, the Stalinists did not establish real Communist parties that were Stalinist in their organizational functioning, political line, and ties with the Soviet bureaucracy (except in South Africa). Whether it be the PAI in Senegal, the Mauritian CP composed of a few merchants and registered in the book of trademarks like a soap powder, the AKFM in Madagascar, the CP of Réunion, or the CP influence in the UPC of the Camaroons, in no case (whatever the differences among all these examples may be) is it possible to speak of the existence of a real Stalinist organization or tendency. And to this must be added the systematic coincidence between Stalinist politics (democratic and national revolution) and the preoccupation of petty-bourgeois nationalism (national union for real independence). There is every reason to believe that organizations like the AKFM in Madagascar representing the interests of the Merina petty-bourgeoisie are sufficient for Moscow's defense of its diplomatic interests in Africa. Thus, in our view the "penetration" of Stalinism into the liberation movements of the Portuguese colonies (revolutionary nationalist movements) corresponds to a certain vision of the world political field and to an ossified appreciation of the world revolutionary process.

Finally, in the future it will be important to take account of the analysis that the leaderships of the liberation movements make of the policy of the Portuguese Communist and Socialist parties in relation to the work of the Portuguese far left on the colonial question. It is in fact quite possible that a section of the liberation movements will become increasingly sensitive to the themes developed by the Portuguese revolutionary movement if the latter takes up its responsibilities against any neocolonialist liquidation. That is why the construction of the Liga Comunista Internacionalista (Internationalist Communist League), the Portuguese sympathizing group of the Fourth International, is not unrelated to our discussions with the militants of the liberation movements.

Nevertheless, on such an important question as this, the heterogeneity of the liberation movements will play an important role. The gradualist schemas of Stalinism will be able to find a resonance with the multiclassist conceptions of the left nationalist tendencies, while the more conscious elements will begin to approach the revolutionary workers movement, either through analyzing the Portuguese situation or by becoming conscious of the internationalist tasks in Africa. Many other elements will come into play in the future. We can analyze only the main ones. Some, in the present situation, can only be mentioned. Thus, it will be necessary to make an analysis of the UNITA group, which has a base in southern Angola and, on the basis of rather imprecise positions, opposes the MPLA as "led by halfbreeds and petty-bourgeois elements." It will also be necessary to detail the role and importance of groups like the GUMO in Mozambique that could well play a third-force role.

There is also the question of the white community, and especially the fate of the layer of "small whites." The MPLA has already taken a position for a multiracial Angola, a position that UNITA immediately attacked as "objectively neo-colonialist." Ignoring the white community and the mestizo petty-bourgeoisie would be absurd. But these layers could opt for a Rhodesian-type solution just as easily as for independence with an African majority. They will definitively choose the solution that in their view guarantees their remaining on African soil without losing their small property. The MPLA has always addressed these layers with a view to avoiding their being swept into the camp of the hardliners. But it remains true that these layers occupy a special place in social relations, and sooner or later this position will be challenged by the African majority. Such a challenge will force the MPLA to detail exactly what it means by "a society in which exploitation of man by man no longer exists."

Finally, there is also the question of the Cape Verde Islands, which has been at the center of the London negotiations. As imperialist bases, these islands do not yet have a military implantation by the PAIGC, which must be in position to impose a common status for Guinea and the Cape Verde Islands. The fate of this small archipelago will play a decisive role during the negotiations, and the PAIGC has until now taken a position for indissoluble links between Guinea and the Islands.

A conclusion

In this article we have stressed certain features of the liberation movements:

* their definitive break with the right-wing and reformist

nationalism that held sway in the British, Belgian, and French colonies;

* their uneven penetration by Stalinist theses;
 * the revolutionary-nationalist character of their multiclassist conceptions;
 * their heterogeneity as to the social goals of the struggle;
 * their deep empiricism, which opens the door sometimes to right opportunist positions, sometimes to a nontheoretical approach to the process of the socialist revolution.

To this must be added the profound poverty of international support extended to the liberation movements by the humanists, Social Democrats, and Stalinists. Such a situation can only bolster erroneous analyses of the international political field among the liberation movements.

In the final analysis, then, the MPLA, the PAIGC, and FRELIMO constitute specificities in the history of the African revolution. Given the backdrop of the particularities of Portuguese colonialism, political movements have been constituted within the confines of petty-bourgeois nationalism and on the outskirts of the revolutionary workers movement.

The period now opening up will accelerate the tendencies we have described above. The clarification will be uneven, intensified by the current heterogeneity. Undoubtedly, during the revolutionary process now unfolding only a part of these movements will take the definitive step to a Marxist formulation of their struggle and will come to an integrated conception of the African revolution. Recompositions, divisions, splits, and regroupments -- perhaps even after independence has been achieved -- will mark the construction of the vanguard party of the African socialist revolution. □

YUGOSLAVIA

'REGAINING A GRIP'

| by C. VERLA |

"The socialist society of self-management, a 'transitional stage,' is an aspect of the dictatorship of the proletariat. While the dictatorship of the proletariat has taken an altered form corresponding to our special conditions, let no one overlook the fact that the Yugoslav system is still a form of the dictatorship of the proletariat. . . . Without consciousness of this content, the door is left open to elitism, technocracy, and bureaucracy, which open the way to nationalism, liberalism, etc."

-- Platform of the Tenth Congress of the League of Communists of Yugoslavia.

The Tenth Congress of the League of Communists of Yugoslavia (LCY), held May 27-30, 1974, was designed to "regain a grip" on Yugoslav society. More precisely, it marked the culmination of three years of internal struggles (during which some 50,000 members were purged) against all currents that rejected a return to centralization of the LCY. These strug-

gles, waged against all those who rejected making the LCY a political force monopolizing state power and controlling all decisive aspects of cultural, social, and economic life, resulted in silencing all opposition to the official line. At the same time, the prestige the Titoist leadership commands among the Yugoslav masses and the importance of that prestige in its international balancing acts made it difficult to return to a pure Stalinist "model" combining political centralization, centralized bureaucratic planning, and the consequent suppression of all self-management.

The political and economic form of the orientation adopted and the institutions set up in Yugoslavia -- not only by the Tenth Congress, but also by the new constitution adopted last February -- will therefore amount to a conflict-laden combination of accentuated political centralization effected through a tight interweaving of the leadership of the party, army, and state with an extension of the constitutional possibilities of the workers' participating in the management of factories. The workers will be granted local powers, but at the same time these powers will be rendered largely formal by the LCY's



the 'president for life' addresses the tenth congress

grip and bureaucratic control. It is not a matter of a radical change in the previous policy, whether internal or international, but rather of a serious slowdown in the process of economic "liberalization" accompanied by the forcible "bottling up" of social tensions.

Three years of 'regaining a grip'

In December 1971, after the massive strike launched by the students in Zagreb (Croatia) and the development of a Croatian nationalist movement ("Matica Hrvatska"), a massive wave of arrests, trials, resignations, and firings directed primarily against the main Croatian leaders of the LCY was begun. On September 29, 1972, President Tito and Stane Dolanc, secretary of the LCY executive bureau, went over the heads of the leading bodies of the LCY, the majorities of which were far from having been lined up behind Tito, and addressed a "letter," known as the "Letter from Tito," to "all the organizations and all the members of the League of Communists of Yugoslavia." This letter began by criticizing the "weaknesses" that had appeared within the LCY and that were preventing it from "exercising a decisive influence on social events" and by attacking "lamentably bureaucratic influence, small-scale proprietary attitudes . . . widespread implantation of opportunism . . . phenomena of ideological and political disunity . . . factional activities and the power struggles of cliques."

It was therefore necessary, Tito maintained, to straighten things out so that "corrupt, petty-bourgeois individuals, advocates of bureaucratic arbitrariness, opportunists, careerists, and other ultraleftists, liberals, nationalists, and so on, who by their behavior are damaging the LCY's reputation" could be "removed from the ranks" of the LCY. "There cannot be any place in the LCY," Tito wrote, "for those whose incomes have been acquired by means that are contrary to socialist norms and laws." On the basis of this straightening out process, accompanied by the greatest "theoretical and ideological rigor," "the leading bodies of the LCY should act directly and concretely so that responsibility for managing social affairs and affairs of state may be consigned to persons who will acquit themselves in the interests of the working class and the development of socialist self-management. . . ."

For months this letter was reprinted in the press and read, commented on, and discussed on the radio and television.

This was accompanied by a small-scale "cultural revolution" during which everyone expressed his complaints and those who had enriched themselves too blatantly had to account for their resources; some were even brought to trial. The egalitarian aspirations that permeate Yugoslav society had some chance to come to the surface. But what was the real effect? It was negligible, for the system that is at the very root of the existing privileges and social inequality was not challenged. A few scapegoats were brought to trial, but there was scarcely any confiscation of the goods they had accumulated. Many factories are temporarily without managers, and for a few months many persons with petty-bourgeois and bourgeois aspirations had to pack their bags, fearful of some kind of forced collectivization. But that did not happen. Nor is it on the agenda today. But the campaign was able to ease social tensions. The open public debate on the new constitution and the preparations for new elections provided a respite enabling the bureaucracy to draw a balance sheet on the whole "campaign against the billionaires."

Concurrently, the Titoist leadership fired enough officials to install teams faithfully devoted to the new policy in all leading posts. The new leaders were often not "apparatchiks" of the usual Eastern European type, but people who had been prestigious leaders during the second world war. This indicates a continuity of the grouping that stimulated the break with Stalin, the initiation of self-management, and the Reform. Long-standing political leaders like Kardelj, Bakaric, Stane Dolanc, etc. remain at the head of the team that is now in power and leading the party. Those who were shunted aside did not necessarily have great disagreements with the orientation being applied in economic, social, and foreign policy. Often it was those who had been the most faithful advocates of what had been the official policy of the present leaders until the turn taken in 1971-74.

The major point of division was over the new role assigned to the LCY. But even here there may be a few surprises. The party "liberals" who were fired might have been afraid that the "hard" neo-Stalinist wing would take advantage of the recentralization to carry the day. Such a wing does seem to exist, especially within the army among a few Serbian bastions in Croatia. These currents (some have even spoken of a "faction") seized on the "Croatian crisis" of 1971 to demand that the process of "regaining a grip" be pushed forward toward a total political and economic centralization that would have involved a more ferocious repression against dissidents and

even leaders who were still holding their posts but were regarded by the neo-Stalinist current as too "liberal" or "nationalist," Bakarić being an example. The last Croatian congress, held in preparation for the Tenth Congress of the LCY, indicated that this "hard" wing had been defeated. The Tenth Congress confirmed this.

Hence, it is not surprising that in a recent speech (see Politika, June 8) Tito was able to raise the possibility of rehabilitating some of those who were purged. These "former comrades in arms," Tito said, "should not be left out of social life." Certain of them "could return to the fold of the revolution. . . . Let us help these people return to our ranks. . . . They were valuable cadres and we need such people for our future development and struggles." To be sure, this speech was addressed to members of the League of Communists of Serbia who are especially discontented with the removal of their most popular leaders (Marko Nokežić and Latina Perović, who were fired in 1972 and 1973, among others). But the speech was similar in tone to the one delivered by Kardelj (see Dela, May 1), who also spoke critically but fraternally of Ranković.⁽¹⁾ Ranković, Kardelj said, had made the mistake of "underestimating the means of state constraint and discipline" that "were pushing the LCY toward centralism," and he was also guilty of an "insufficiently developed sensitivity on the national question," but he remained a "very competent cadre."

In other words, it seems that since the positions of the leading groups have been assured, the political line has been voted on, discipline has been affirmed, and the new institutions have been set up, the Titoist leadership has everything to gain in forces and prestige -- in order better to struggle against the "extremists" who will continue to be repressed -- by reintegrating all those who when all is said and done do not stand so far from the political orientation passed at the Tenth Congress and who, it can be assumed, would eagerly return to the party fold. (Outside the ranks of the LCY they will have less and less of a political and professional future, at least over the short term.) Apart from the purely corrupt motivation that could push such people to rejoin the LCY, they will also be sensitive to the fact that the policy now being pursued is not one of pure obedience to the Kremlin, that it is in the final analysis preserving a certain equilibrium among the various nationalities, and that they are better off preparing for "post-Titoism" inside the LCY than from the outside.

Main features of the new policy

* The foreign policy is aimed at seeking to maintain a balance among allies. There is no doubt that the critical reconsideration of the Sixth Congress (the 1952 congress, the first to be held after the break with Stalin) and the so-called weaknesses of the congress ("imprecision" on the reality of the "dictatorship of the proletariat," "premature" proclamation of the withering away of the state, "premature" abandoning of the notion of the working class in favor of the notion of the "toiling people" -- weaknesses that were essentially attributed to the revisionist Milovan Đilas) were viewed with favor by the Soviet bureaucracy. "We told you so," the Soviet bureaucrats have responded. And, as if by accident, the last few months have seen a flourishing of adulatory articles about Yugoslavia in the press of the once-again "fraternal" parties. The French Communist party, forever at its post, has had the pleasure of organizing repeated trips to Yugoslavia. France Nouvelle, the CP weekly, reprinted major excerpts of the Letter from Tito in September 1972⁽²⁾ and the CP monthly La Nouvelle Critique in April 1972 reproduced "Three Speeches by Tito" that were apparently speeches delivered during the "regain-

ing a grip" campaign. The LCY's Ninth Congress, which was held in 1969, was boycotted by the "fraternal" parties, as were all the other congresses held since the second world war (except the Eighth Congress in 1964). Only the Rumanian CP showed up at the 1969 congress. But everyone was on hand for the Tenth Congress.

The intervention of Soviet troops in Czechoslovakia had introduced "a certain chill." In fact, the Titoist leadership had called for armed resistance in the event of a Soviet invasion of Yugoslavia! An ounce of prevention. . . . And there is a deep enough tradition of resistance in Yugoslavia to suppose that a Soviet intervention there would have immediately touched off a civil war. The membership of the LCY suddenly swelled after August 1968 and the condemnation of the Soviet intervention by the Yugoslav leaders. On the other hand, the relative rapprochement with the Soviet bureaucracy after initiation of the "regaining a grip" campaign clearly resulted in a decline in membership. (Apart from the 50,000 purged, about 90,000 people have not renewed their membership since 1968.) Nevertheless, for the current leaders there is no question of returning to the bosom of the Soviets. They know this, and they scarcely have any illusions in the "proletarian internationalism" involved in relations with the Soviet bureaucracy. In addition, the maintenance of their independence is possible because of their balancing policy; and their own prestige in the eyes of the Yugoslav masses would drop drastically if they were to abandon this policy.

The Soviet bureaucrats have certainly tried to exert some pressure through economic "aid." Who wouldn't extend aid when a fraternal party is in crisis! There have been negotiations involving \$1,300 million of Soviet credits invested in various branches of industry. But to utilize these credits the Yugoslavs would have had to have enough money on hand! And besides, it is all the better for the Soviet bureaucracy if the Yugoslavs use Soviet material instead of developing their own infrastructure. So only \$40 million was able to be used. On April 25 new negotiations were opened to try to reach agreement on an additional \$500 million. But on the whole, Yugoslav trade with the Comecon countries remains relatively weak (about 25 percent of imports and exports).

The policy of opening Yugoslavia to investments by western capitalists is therefore continuing. It is aimed at introducing modern technology into Yugoslav industry and agriculture, whose productivity remains low. This is being done in the form of creation of "mixed companies" in which a maximum of 49 percent of the capital can be foreign-owned and the companies are subject to the control and regulations of self-management. (These controls are often more formal than real, for "parity" management committees have been set up in which the foreign investors can bend the legislation that is formally in effect.) The open crisis and the reorganization being pressed by the Titoist leadership have engendered a certain reticence among capitalist investors, who are naturally ill at ease when a hunt for "billionaires" is going on. Nevertheless, the LCY's regaining a grip on the situation and the protective guarantees offered invested capital will again stimulate investment in Yugoslavia. The recent signing of agreements between Yugoslavia and U.S. companies, of which there were twenty-five in 1973, is proof of this.

This policy of seeking allies "in both camps" has been accompanied on the internal political level by the ousting of the most hardened advocates of rapprochement with the Soviet Union. At the same time as foreign CP delegations were arriving in Yugoslavia and receiving warm welcomes, two important newspapers (Viesnik of February 27, 1974, and NIN of February 24, 1974) published articles criticizing the internal system in the USSR as a cause of the emergence of a Sol-

zhenitsyn. All the works of this author have been published in Yugoslavia, and two publishing houses have decided to publish his latest efforts. Thus, as we have stressed, the main thrust of development should not be sought in international politics; and what might appear as ideological "concessions" made to the Soviets in reality correspond much more to the internal problems of Yugoslav society in crisis. The principal response of the Titoist bureaucracy to that crisis has been the policy of centralization.

* Toward a total control of political and cultural life by the LCY. This is evidenced by the leadership's will to regain control over the youth organizations (sometimes by merging organizations of dissident students with those of high-schoolers who are more tightly controlled, as has been proposed in Slovenia and Serbia) and to establish ideological control over education, philosophical reflection, and culture. For several months the professors working with the review Praxis, who favor democratic centralization of self-management as against the LCY's monopoly of political power, have been subjected to pressure: There have been threats, demands for their expulsion from the university, withdrawal of their passports. (See INPRECOR, No. 2.) But because the organs of the faculty are not yet direct instruments of the LCY's policy and because the professors are highly esteemed and quite popular, the bureaucracy has not yet been able to remove them from their posts. But the pressure is continuing -- financial pressure on Praxis and the Korcula cadre school that is led by Praxis, administrative measures that will surely be intensified (Tito has just declared that it would be necessary to figure out how to take them), and measures of police repression against students (eleven indictments have been handed down against people in Ljubljana, Zagreb, and Belgrade who held a meeting not only to defend the Belgrade professors, but also to affirm their desire to struggle against all bureaucratic privileges and for real self-management "from the bottom up"). It is not impossible that the bureaucracy will take advantage of the aftermath of the Tenth Congress (which has effectively guarded its rear) and the coming demobilization during vacations to intensify this repression and possibly to combine it with pressures aimed at trying to corrupt the professors.

But this political centralization is also asserting itself on the constitutional level through the new statutes adopted at the Tenth Congress, through the institutionalized interweaving of the party and the state. During the earlier period of decentralization and federalism (which also affected the LCY), party congresses forbid party leaders to simultaneously hold leading positions in the state apparatus (with the exception of Tito). This was a corollary of the new conception of the role of the party that was introduced at the Sixth Congress, namely that the party was an adviser rather than the "vanguard of the working class in power." To assert this new conception, the Communist party changed its name to the League of Communists of Yugoslavia. It was said that the state was starting to wither away. But the Tenth Congress analyzed the recent crisis as a serious one marked by an intense class struggle:

"The role and power of the banks and the large commercial establishments was growing greater and greater, while the resources of the productive organizations were declining and their share in the division of the social product was diminishing still more. . . . The forces of self-management were running up against the union between the bureaucratic-technocratic and bourgeois-liberal forces." (Platform of the Tenth Congress, p. 17.) This was why there was a return to the "dictatorship of the proletariat," which for the bureaucracy means dictatorship of the party.

A nine-member collective body was placed in charge of the state. This body was composed of the top officials of the various republics and provinces plus the president of the League of Communists of Yugoslavia, who is automatically a member. In practice, the eight other members of the current presidency also come from the presidium of the newly elected LCY central committee. This collective presidency of the state will permit the representation of the various nationalities and help the struggle against the tendency of the federation to fall apart after the death of Tito. But at the same time it synthesizes the de facto political centralization of the highest leading bodies of the state in the hands of the party.

In addition, the republican and communal bodies will henceforth have three "chambers": one composed of delegates of producers, one of those citizens considered consumers (based on where they live), and one composed of representatives of "sociopolitical organizations" as such, namely the LCY, the trade unions, and the Socialist Alliance, which is more than ever controlled by the LCY. This means that members of the LCY will be represented as such within the state bodies, in addition to the fact that they will certainly be represented in the other delegations as well. Compulsory mandates have been instituted. Since the hardening up of the internal life of the LCY has meant forbidding any oppositional current to express itself, the delegates of the "sociopolitical chamber" will be unconditional supporters of the leadership's policies. And at the same time, for any member of the LCY to be able to be delegated to express positions that might be supported by his work or neighborhood unit but be in contradiction with the LCY position, there would have to be at the very least a conflict with party discipline. We will see how this system works in practice.

In sum, then, the affirmation of the "dictatorship of the proletariat" in Yugoslavia today means in reality the control of the state by the party and the suppression of all opposition. But this policy is not enough. The only force that has remained relatively centralized and under Tito's control has been the army. Moreover, the army's traditions give it some prestige. So it is to the army that the Titoist leadership has turned to assure "stabilization" of the situation.

* Strengthening of the weight of the army within the party and the state. First, in the party: The Tenth Congress set up a Central Committee to replace the old Conference. This Central Committee was elected as follows: Apart from Tito (who is president for life), it has twenty members of the League of Communists organization in each of the six republics, fifteen delegates from the LC organization in the two autonomous provinces, and fifteen delegates of the LC organization in the army. This is an unprecedented innovation, and it must also be remembered that military men can be delegates from the republics and provinces as well. The Presidium of the Central Committee (which has thirty-nine members) will also have two delegates elected by the party organizations in the army. Finally, the president of the LC organizations within the army is automatically a member of the Central Committee. And for the first time in many years the Executive Committee of the Presidium includes an active-duty general, Ivan Kukoc. In all, about 12 percent of the members of the Central Committee are military men (whereas at the Ninth Congress there were two military men in the Conference, and at the Eighth Congress, there were only 6 percent military men in the leadership). And this military presence has been institutionalized through the method of electing the leadership of the LCY.

The military presence is even further strengthened by the possibility of the army accumulating posts within the party and the state and by some recent decisions about the state appa-

ratus. On May 17, 1974, General Franjo Herljevic was elected minister of the interior. That means that the civil branch of the UDB, the State Security Service, comes under the control of the army. Moreover, during a recent speech celebrating the anniversary of the UDB, Tito criticized "errors" that had been committed previously, namely that the UDB had been "too federalist." He claimed that the UDB would have to adopt a new course in which the unity of the various services (civil and military) would become "essential" for the UDB to be able to fulfill its "political role." This general who is now minister of the interior is also a member of the new Central Committee of the party. The minister of defense, Nikola Ljubicic, is also an active-duty general and a member of the CC.

The army is thus the force that will assure cohesion and defense against "the internal or foreign enemy" in times of crisis. And this is exactly what Tito meant when, during the Croatia crisis, he referred to the possible role of the army in the event of a civil war.

But this "harmonious" fusion of the powers of the party, the army, and the state is not enough to assure social stabilization. In Yugoslavia it is not possible to assert the central role of the party by explicitly challenging self-management. Nobody thinks that there is real self-management, but it is a formal right that the workers have won. In addition, self-management has some advantages from the standpoint of the bureaucracy. So long as self-management remains decentralized, it allows for much more flexible links with the workers and lets the bureaucracy maintain all sorts of intermediary "officials" between the factories and the summits of state power in order to muffle outbreaks of discontent. And it also allows the bureaucracy to base itself on an atomized working class in order to control the development of technocratic forces that are simultaneously "enemies of self-management" and opponents of centralized bureaucratic power.

* Strengthening of the party's political and economic control through the extension of self-management. This is clearly a contradictory process. The role of self-management and the participation of the workers in the managing bodies not only of the factories but of the state apparatus as well cannot be expanded willy-nilly without this having an effect on the demands raised by these same workers, even if the expansion occurs under the strict control of the party and outside the realms of real power. The proof of this is that there have been many strikes waged around the explicit or implicit themes of the struggle to really carry out the decisions of the self-management bodies and the struggle against "abuses" of power committed by factory leaderships or the management bodies. At the same time, it is certain that in a society in which the LCY is the only force that has the right to organize, decentralized self-management as it presently exists is also a means by which the bureaucracy can take the edge off conflicts and keep control of the situation.

The new constitution dumped the earlier "parliamentary-type" electoral system. From now on the delegate system will hold sway in all areas (except on the scale of the central state power!). The Base Units of Associated Labor (BUAL, Yugoslav jargon denoting one or several workshops or related factories and the whole labor community) will form a General Assembly that will make decisions, elect and control delegates, and will be able to recall them. Any worker is eligible, regardless of age. Those who are not working must be at least eighteen years old to be part of a local delegation. Elected delegates retain their positions on the job. (This is aimed at increasing the number of workers participating in the communal, republican, and federal General Assemblies and reducing the

number of full-timers.) A delegate can be re-elected only once, and no one can be a delegate of two or more General Assemblies simultaneously (as a producer, a consumer, and LCY member, for example). In other words, self-management is no longer restricted to the factory level; it will also go into effect in state bodies (but not in the highest bodies), which will become varieties of assemblies of delegates. The immediate effect of this is that the number of workers in the Federal Assembly, for example, will rise from about 1 percent (6 out of 620) to about 30 percent (some 100 out of 320). Thus, a whole series of demands of the left opposition have been adopted by the present leadership and coopted by the LCY's political monopoly.

On the economic level, some measures (still imprecise) will be taken to counter the "spontaneous" effects of the laws of the market. Without eliminating the Reform, the Tenth Congress stressed the underestimation of the effects that the market would have: "It is only through conscious social action, through creating the economic and sociopolitical conditions, through placing the highest priority on the concerted common conception of self-management development . . . that this situation (of disintegration of the economy) can be overcome." (Platform of the Tenth Congress, p. 20.)

But such assertions remain vague. There is talk of "suppression of the anonymous funds of the banks," of "concentrated coordination of the organs of self-management from the viewpoint of both price policy and investment and income policy." The "natural omnipotence" of the laws of the market is being referred to again. But only the left opposition is speaking of real centralization and self-management as a means of carrying out democratic planning. In the minds of many, the word "planning" is still associated with "bureaucratic," even though the lessons of decentralization are being increasingly drawn. The "solutions" being put forward by the Yugoslav bureaucracy tend to assign a certain centralizing role to the central economic decisions made by the LCY through the trade unions, the more "political" election of factory managers (which probably means that only members of the LCY will be elected), the presence of the LCY in the organs of self-management, and the strengthened control over banks and commercial enterprises. (There is talk of "self-management" of banks! But by whom? Those who have deposited money? The employees? And with what national ties? This has not been explained.) In other words, it will take several months to test the reality of the LCY's economic control of the situation and the degree of control that it really wants to exert (in price policy, foreign trade, etc.).

A provisional conclusion

None of the economic and social problems related to the recent crisis have been resolved. Social inequality and inequalities among regions have been aggravated by decentralization, and it would take a completely different economic centralization to resolve these problems. Productivity of labor remains generally low and this ceaselessly increases dependence on imports, creating a permanent deficit in the balance of trade. Price increases, unemployment, and the large number of Yugoslav workers abroad (there are more than a million Yugoslav workers now subjected to the vagaries of the economic situation in the capitalist countries) remain fundamental sources of discontent, particularly since the workers are beginning to understand the demagoguery and ineffectiveness of the "campaign against billionaires." A brake has been put on the spontaneous assertion of the laws of the market, but that is not enough. To be sure, the technocratic forces in charge of the banks and the export and commercial industries have been denounced as "enemies of self-management," but they remain at their posts.

But it is likely that the totality of constitutional measures taken and the changes made in the structure of the LCY represent elements of a conjunctural political stabilization in Yugoslavia. The death of Tito is the real test that the LCY will have to undergo to find out if it is really capable of keeping control of a situation in which various contradictory forces will inevitably arise to take advantage of the disequilibrium. That will be true of those who favor a "hard" policy as well as of the technocratic "liberals." In this context, the possibility of a convergence of the Marxist intelligentsia, especially the revolutionary Yugoslav students, and the workers who have asserted their demands by launching strikes will be a decisive element for the future of Yugoslav socialism.

Footnotes

1. The former head of the civilian division of the State Security Service and an advocate of a "centralist" orientation, Rankovic was fired in 1966. He had to pay the price of the "liberalization" begun by the Reform of 1965. (Tito himself is said to have found that his office was bugged!)
2. There was an introduction by Roland Leroy: "At a time when the reactionary press is abundantly commenting every day in a malevolent and distorted manner about the slightest event in Yugoslavia, . . ." We should remember with what "malevolence" the press of the French Communist party "abundantly commented" on Yugoslav events at the time that Titism was a synonym for "Hitlerite-Trotskyism."

LAOS

'government of a national union': third time

by PIERRE ROUSSET

"The Pathet Lao is already running the country," a Western diplomat recently told a correspondent of the Far Eastern Economic Review. "All the initiative is coming from their side. . . . The Pathet Lao is making all the decisions and the Vientiane side is doing nothing. I haven't seen one so-called unanimous decision of this new cabinet that hasn't stemmed from something the Pathet Lao wanted and pushed for. The rightists have no leader, no one to follow. That may be changing slowly -- there are signs that they are beginning to collect their wits and think about who they should have as a leader -- but it does describe the situation at the moment."⁽¹⁾

That seems to be the opinion of many "observers" in Indochina since the formation April 5, 1974, of the bipartite Vientiane-Pathet Lao government a little more than a year after the signing of the February 21, 1973, accords. And yet, Laos has had two previous governments of "National Union" (in 1957 and 1962) that were turned to the advantage of the right. Some of the personnel in the new government are identical to those of the two previous ones. But to see the extent to which the Western diplomat's estimation was correct -- and to see how this third experience differs from the first two -- we must take a look at the paradoxical situation of Laos. It is this paradoxical situation that permits an understanding of the very particular place this country occupies in the Indochinese revolution.

The Laotian paradox

The strategic position of Laos has made it one of the principal battlegrounds of the world revolution and counterrevolution. A buffer state between French and British spheres of influence, it became the main hinge between the Indochinese revolution and the revolution in the rest of Southeast Asia. It borders on Cambodia, north and south Vietnam, China, Burma, and Thailand. This induced the leaders of the Pentagon, imbued as they were with the spirit of the "domino theory," to assign a choice place to Laos in their plans to deal a decisive blow

to the revolutionary process in Asia. The Plain of Jars and the Bolevens Plateau formed the best platform from which to observe and attack the rest of Indochina. The Annamite mountain range was supposed to "hem in" the Vietnamese fighters. John Foster Dulles dreamed of transforming Laos into an "anti-Communist bastion." Consequently, per capita U.S. aid to Laos was higher than to any other country. And the American tactic of air escalation was in many respects tested first in Laos.

When the first steps in the imperialist intervention against the Vietnamese revolution were taken, nothing in the history of Laos prepared the country for playing such an international role. On the contrary, of the three Indochinese countries, Laos appeared perhaps least "ripe" for revolution in its two combined processes of national liberation and social struggle.

Its population, estimated at 3 million, was by far the smallest of the three countries (Cambodia having 7 million inhabitants and Vietnam having nearly 40 million), and the population density was especially low. Above all, its lack of homogeneity was extreme. Laotians are divided into three large ethnic groups (which are in turn divided into multiple subgroups) with distinct cultures and very different economic and social development. The oldest group, an "Indonesian" type (including the Khas), is made up of the Lao Theung, who live on the slopes of the mountains, carry on a "burned earth" agriculture (growing maize and rice without irrigation), have a polytheistic theology, and only recently developed a written alphabet. The most recently developed group, of the "Chinese" type; including especially the Meos, are the Lao Soung, who live on the heights of the mountains and have an intermediary productive system based on maize, grazing animals, and poppies. The third group, which is dominant today, of the Thai-Lao type, includes the Lao Loum, who occupy the Mekong plain and the principal valleys of the interior. Buddhists, they practice irrigated rice agriculture.

The population of Laos is not only much more heterogeneous than that of Cambodia (the Lao Loum account for barely half

the total); in addition, each ethnic group, except on the Mekong plain, is dispersed along the mountain tops and slopes or in the valleys, broken up as on a checkerboard. It was consequently more difficult for "insurrectional zones" controlled for a long time by a minority (like the Shans regions in Burma, for example) to emerge in Laos -- regions from which a communist guerrilla movement could develop (as in Thailand). Finally, the Lao Loum did not demonstrate the same sort of expansionist "dynamism" as did the Kinh, the dominant ethnic group in Vietnam.

This problem is important. The Vietnamese revolution was able to tap a thousand-year-old tradition of popular struggle and an acute consciousness of belonging to a single people in order to redevelop the anticolonial and anti-imperialist fight. The Laotian revolution had to create this national consciousness in the course of its development. To be sure, colonial Laos had seen a fair number of uprisings, but they remained regional in character. In fact, it was not until the holding of the "Lao National Congress" August 13-15, 1950, that a united line for the resistance emerged. Further in the past, a united kingdom had been formed in 1350, the Lan Xang ("kingdom of a thousand elephants"). But it was broken up after 1700, its territory falling under Siamese and Vietnamese rule. Colonization made the Mekong a frontier, dividing the population living along its banks. In fact, even today there are more Laotians in Thailand than in Laos.

Furthermore, the French saw Laos, like Cambodia, as a "buffer state" and did not seek to exploit its resources, apart from tin and wood. (Even though Laos is rich in various minerals.) At the end of the second world war, there were only five miles of railroad in all Laos! The economy was in the hands of metropolitan capitalists and Chinese traders. The Laotian bourgeoisie was then nonexistent (with the exception of enterprises employing less than twenty persons); it was later to develop ever so slightly under the Americans, but in the form of a comprador or bureaucratic bourgeoisie frequently tied to the Thai bourgeoisie.

Above all, whereas in Vietnam a numerically small but concentrated proletariat soon emerged and rapidly took on a very clear political role, the Laotian working class was to remain weak, composed largely of Vietnamese immigrants working in the mines and on the plantations. The economic and social integration of the various regions and ethnic groups was also to remain weak. And colonization tended to dissolve the old society without creating new classes that could have accelerated the process of permanent revolution. A strategic situation that made Laos a key battleground between the revolution and counterrevolution. A history that lagged behind this situation. This dichotomy between the "external" and "internal" dynamic of the Lao revolution is crucial. The Vietnamese revolution was the backbone of the Indochinese revolution. The two other countries of former French Indochina were integrated into it. The general rhythm of history then became common to them all: the August 1945 revolution, the anti-French resistance, the Geneva accords of 1954, the second Indochina war. Cambodia asserted the weight of its particular characteristics, notably through "Sihanoukism." Laos was also to experience a special, often exceptional, development. Today it is the only Indochinese country in which a cease-fire has gone into effect and a government of "National Union" has been set up. But regional and international factors weigh more heavily there than anywhere else.

1957 - 1962 - 1974

The Geneva accords of 1954 provide the clearest example of this. It was in Laos that they were most unfavorable to the revolutionary forces. They did not sanction the emergence of a new workers state as they did in Vietnam. Unlike in Cambodia, where the armed resistance was supposed to cease (but where the Pracheachon, the Communist party, was weaker than elsewhere), a period of white terror opened up. The Lao revolution had to pay the highest price for the "peaceful co-existence" in which the USSR and the Peoples Republic of China were engaging and for the choices made at the time by the Indochinese communist movement. The Pathet Lao forces regrouped in the two northeast provinces, Sama Neua and Phong Saly, largely abandoning the liberated zones where they had the longest-standing base. The administration of these two zones was handed over to the government of "National Union" after its laborious formation in 1957. And the major part of the revolutionary troops was demobilized.

The repression was terrible. The Pathet Lao recognized its gravity. "In the occupied zone between 1954 and 1957," wrote Phoumi Vongvichit, "they arrested and assassinated thousands of patriots, nearly all of them old resistance fighters." (2) And, according to Wilfred Burchett, after Souvanna Phouma (3) was overthrown in 1957, "a slaughter went on in the two northeast provinces." "In Phong Saly . . . not a single cadre of the Pathet Lao escaped." (4) The Pathet Lao leaders who had been participating in the coalition government in Vientiane (among them Souvanovong (5)) were arrested and survived only because they managed to escape. (They were able to recruit their jailors to their cause.) The two battalions that had kept their arms had to break out of their encirclement by Vientiane troops at a very heavy cost in order to withdraw to the mountains. The first coalition government thus ended in disaster.

The second one arose in 1962. By then, the Neo Lao Haksat (NLH, the Pathet Lao), had again taken up arms and had liberated two-thirds of Laos. It undertook its offensive before "taking account," as Burchett put it, "of the situation of the socialist camp and the general line of peaceful coexistence." (6) This time the NLH kept its forces intact, but it still agreed to send some of its main leaders to Vientiane. They were supposed to be protected by the neutralist troops of Kong La. (7) But he was corrupted and his battalions were infiltrated. On April 1, 1963, the minister of foreign affairs, a neutralist who proved to be incorruptible, was assassinated and Nosovan, the leader of the far right, launched battles against the neutralist troops who remained faithful to the alliance with the Pathet Lao. Souvanovong, Phoumi Vongvichit (leaders of the NLH), Colonel Deuane and Khamsouk Keola (neutralist leaders loyal to the NLH) withdrew to the liberated zones. Once again all out war erupted.

Thus, two very bitter experiences preceded the signing of the February 21, 1973, accords and the establishment of the third coalition government on April 5, 1974. When the Pathet Lao leaders speak of the accords of 1954, 1957, and 1962, it is generally to present them as "glorious victories." But a closer reading of the most basic work published in a foreign language and produced by Vongvichit, a leader of the Lao Revolutionary party (the Lao Communist party), shows that his judgment is rather more "nuanced." (8) "The imperialists combine military, political, and diplomatic procedures in a Machiavellian manner. . . . When they are in difficulty and experiencing setbacks, they perfidiously resort to political and diplomatic procedures. . . . They even went so far as to sign the Geneva Accords of 1962. . . ." (9) "Then, (after 1954), because of the demobilization of the majority of the troops of the Lao Patriotic Front (the NLH), the relationship of forces between

the revolution and the counterrevolution was temporarily in favor of the latter. Thus, on the strategic level, the imperialists had the initiative in their operations against the Lao revolution." (10)

In these pages, Phoumi Vongvichit well explains why the Americans were led as a last resort to participate in the accords of 1962. He does not explain so well why the Neo Lao Haksat was led to do the same.

It is not simply a matter of writings. From 1954 to 1957 the Laotian resistance accepted a major retreat — and paid a very heavy price for it. In 1962 it suspended its offensive, allowing the enemy to reorganize its forces, and once again exposed some of its main leaders in Vientiane, where they were protected by unreliable troops. It then had to relaunch its fight in a much less favorable situation and was subject to significant risks. But it did not give up anything of what it had won. In 1973-74, for the first time, the accords favor a positive shift in the material relationship of forces. The content and context of the accords have changed.

The division of the right

Not that the policy adopted in 1973 and 1974 by the NLH deserves no criticism. But to understand the character and importance of the criticism it is necessary to concede that the process that has led to the formation of the third coalition government is in several respects opposite to the process that led to the formation of the first two.

* On the military level the NLH, by accepting the ceasefire of February 21, 1973, has obviously refrained from launching a generalized offensive that could have enabled it, according to most observers, to take over the last occupied zones. But the signing of the accords was accompanied on the one hand by a real military disengagement (even if not a total one) with the United States: halt of the bombing, weakening of the "special forces" of Vang Pao and the Thai forces, decrease in the number of "advisers," even the ones disguised as civilians. Above all, the "neutralization" of Vientiane (seat of the new government and administrative capital) and of Luang Prabang (seat of the mixed National Political Council and royal capital) was at least partially realized. This time, NLH soldiers preceded the ministers into Vientiane. More than 2,000 Pathet Lao troops with modern weaponry are in Vientiane and about a thousand are in Luang Prabang. The NLH has thus won the battle with the right as to the number of soldiers authorized to penetrate the puppet zone.

The police patrols will be mixed, and while it is not certain that the right has effectively withdrawn all its forces in excess of those of the Pathet Lao from the region, the "commander of the forces of bipartite defense" has ordered (under penalty of arrest) all armed forces not included in the accords to withdraw ten miles from the center of Vientiane. The NLH will launch no generalized offensive. But it commands the means to block any resort to force on the part of the right.

* The NLH no longer represents a small minority in the governmental bodies, in which the principle of bipolarity is strictly adhered to (even in the number of cabinet ministers, each of which is "seconded" by a secretary of state from the "other side"), and the fiction of Souvanna Phouma's "neutralism" has been abandoned. The National Political Council (presided over by Souvanovong) has been scrupulously set up with the same weight as the government (presided over by Souvanna Phouma). In reality it has replaced the "National



Souvanovong in Vientiane.

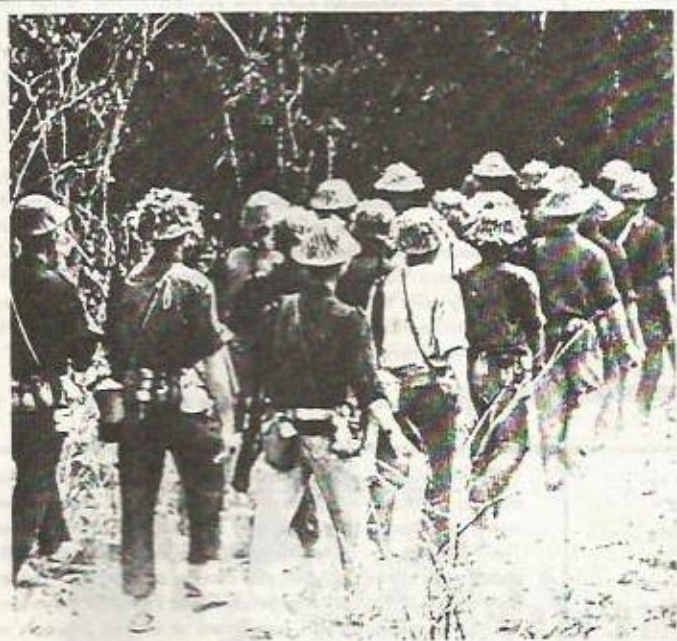
Assembly" of Vientiane, which is dominated by the far right and whose cabinet has decided unanimously (the rule for all decisions) not to meet even though the accords do not require that. On this question the NLH made a gain between the signature of the accords and the belated formation of the government. At the beginning, the mixed Political Council was to be a subordinate body.

* In a general manner, the signature of the accords and the formation of the government deeply divided the Laotian right. The "National Assembly," dominated by the "great families" and particularly by the Sannanikone family, was opposed to what Souvanna Phouma was doing. In fact, Souvanna Phouma had to block an attempted coup d'état fomented in August 1973 by General Thao Ma, who was supported by the Thai military and the Laotian far right. In spite of the participation of the Champassale, Insisiengnai, and Sannanikone families in the government, this division is continuing and constantly weighs on the situation, while the Pathet Lao, as we shall see, is maintaining the initiative.

The process now under way excludes any stabilization. There can be no "concord" between the puppet zones subject to the domination of neocolonialists and the traditional great families on the one side and the liberated zones on the other. A basic compromise could have been reached through a disguised north-south division of Laos. Thailand could have controlled the left bank of the Mekong and the Pathet Lao (which holds four-fifths of Laotian territory) could have taken the highlands, protecting the Vietnamese frontier. But the interpenetration going on today, the fraternization that is occurring between the ranks of the armed forces and the population, the effort the Pathet Lao is making to multiply contacts between the two zones, the right's inability to stop all this, and the political initiatives that the Pathet Lao is undertaking in Vientiane and Luang Prabang all demonstrate that there has been no such de facto division. The NLH wants to win the political battle. It knows that it won the elections in 1958 — Souvanovong in Vientiane got more votes than anyone else. This time the NLH has the means to control the process, or to be in position to react immediately.

The choice of "political struggle" made by the NLH and above all the establishment of the coalition government illustrates the change in context that has occurred in Indochina and the desire of the NLH to align itself as far as possible with the choices made by the Vietnamese CP.

From its refusal to sign the Geneva accords of 1954 until very recently, Washington had supported the far right of the Vien-



behind the
apparent 'concord'
a struggle is
continuing...

tiane regime (Nasovan, Sannanikone). This time Washington allowed Souvanna Phouma to crush Thao Ma's attempted coup in August 1973. This switch cannot be understood in terms of Washington's regional choices. Laos continues to occupy a strategic position, for it borders certain important insurrectional regions in Thailand (and today the Vietnamese and Laotian communists are very much stressing the activity of the Thai CP). Furthermore, oil deposits have just been discovered in Laos. Should they prove to be extensive, imperialism's interest in economically exploiting Laos could be re-awakened. But in the search for new "lines of defense" in the region, American imperialism has visibly decided to give priority to Saigon and Phnom Penh.

The reason is understandable. The military relationship of forces in Laos is such that it would have required considerable U.S. investment -- and probably direct intervention -- to resist a possible general offensive by the Pathet Lao. And that sort of investment of energies was made that much more difficult in that the political crisis of the puppet regime was clear and Souvanna Phouma appeared as a political figure of some vigor. Shortly after the signing of the February 21 accords, Washington bombed positions in the liberated zones in the southern part of the country. This was probably a final test of the capacities of the puppet army. And the puppet army seems to have flunked. The American government today has opted for a political test: the evolution of Laos will clarify the orientation of each party throughout Indochina. This certainly does not mean that American imperialism has now renounced any intervention.

It is not victory

"We are going to help this side (Vientiane) win the elections," a member of the U.S. Agency for International Development brazenly declared to Marc Filloux.⁽¹¹⁾ Souvanavong, president of the Central Committee of the Pathet Lao and of the new National Council, did not fail to stress: "The Americans have not given up their neocolonialist aims in Laos, and the reactionaries are ready to do anything to preserve their privileges."⁽¹²⁾ And the NLH is raising all sorts of warnings. The strategic position of the NLH is favorable. But the pres-

ent situation remains indecisive, susceptible to being turned around. The February 21 accords transformed the context of the struggle; they did not represent the final victory of the Lao revolution over all the territory of Laos. It is in this framework that a critique of the Pathet Lao's orientation is necessary, for that orientation rests on a twofold hypothesis about the course of the Lao revolution.

First, it intensifies the dependence of the Lao revolution on the development of the Indochinese and world situations. This dependence is in the first place objective, linked to geographic proximity, common history, and the paradoxical relationship of "internal" and "external" factors in the revolutionary development of the country. The dependence is also reciprocal and nurtures the solidarity that unites the various components of the Indochinese Revolutionary Front. But, just the same, it is what determined the attitude of the NLH in 1954, 1957, and 1962, and is determining it today. The Lao revolution adjusts its rhythms to those of South Vietnam (and not to those of Cambodia), where they are slower. In this the NLH accepts a threat that is very probably justified less by the danger of American re-escalation than by the policy of the Soviet Union and China. The Khmer Rouge have not desired to link the course of their revolution to South Vietnam in this manner.

Second, this political choice is not unrelated to the character of the future Laotian workers state. It is probable that such a state will emerge at the conclusion of the process now going on. But while the NLH has liberated four-fifths of the territory of Laos, half (two-thirds according to Vientiane) of the population remains in the zone controlled by puppet troops. This is especially true of the big concentrations of population. The experience of revolutionary struggle among this important section of the population threatens to be very limited. Refugees returning to the liberated zones will be integrated into the existing NLH administration while a revolution "from the top down" will unfold in the areas of population concentration, at least unless a more violent reaction from imperialism or the right triggers a proliferation of insurrectional processes. Here again, the Laotian situation differs from the Cambodian one, in which the struggles even in Phnom Penh are quite numerous. Under these conditions, the development of ex-

periences in proletarian democracy, especially in the "cities," will be more difficult. And this can only introduce bureaucratic deformations into the future workers state. There again, the choices made by the Indochinese communists are not the sole factor. The extreme economic backwardness of the country, the extreme gravity of the destruction caused by the war ("From North to South, there is no longer a single village standing" in the liberated zones, Soth Pethrasay told Marc Filloux(13)), and the world situation, over which the Indochinese communists have no control, will be above all responsible for these bureaucratic deformations. But the orientation of the NLH partially adapts to these difficulties instead of fighting them systematically. This is not a particular problem of governmental formula, but one of the consequences, one of the most serious aspects of the orientation of the Indochinese communist movement as to the nature of Stalinism, the place of soviets in the socialist revolution and the workers state, the internal regime of the party, and so on. These are weaknesses of orientation that today are bolstered by the bureaucratic deformations of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam.

The key question remains that of the attitude of the NLH toward the armed forces and the regime. From 1954 to 1957 "National Union" was purchased at the price of abandoning the liberated zones and demobilizing the liberation army. In 1962 it allowed the proimperialist forces to catch their breath. But in 1973 and 1974 it seems that the NLH will not content itself with maintaining its existing forces, but is seeking to decompose the bourgeois army and to erode the foundations of the puppet regime in its last bastions. But even under the assumption that this is the perspective of the NLH, and taking account of past experience in Laos, the intensification of the dependence of the Lao revolution on the regional and world context, like the implications of the policy of "National Union" on the emergence of soviet forms of power illustrates why the Trotskyist movement as a matter of principle is against any coalition government with bourgeois formations, even when the coalition does not necessarily prevent the victory of the revolution.

Finally, on an international scale, the orientation of the NLH makes more difficult the education of the new revolutionary generation, facilitates the job of the petty-bourgeois nationalist and bourgeois leaderships in other countries and derails the socialist movements. Here again, it is not a matter of an isolated case, but of a particular aspect of the dichotomy that exists between the objective lessons of the Indochinese revolution and the capacity of its leaderships to fully draw these lessons for the benefit of the world workers movement.

Since April 5

The development of the situation in Laos since the formation of the coalition government confirms both the position of strength of the NLH and the road that remains to be traveled.

The response of the population was immediately favorable. When Souvanovong arrived in Vientiane he received a triumphant welcome, tens of thousands of demonstrators massing along the road between the airport and the city. Even before the formation of the new government the student movement in the provinces had for the first time massively demonstrated against the puppet regime. The declarations of the student movement in Vientiane since then confirm the tendency of this milieu to move toward the camp of the Pathet Lao. Further, the soldiers of the NLH are multiplying their initiatives: setting up a free hospital in Luang Prabang, participating in works of construction and agriculture, etc. The mixed Political Council has just adopted a program calling for the fusion of the armies to create an integrated army that will participate in production and be self-sufficient. More than 50,000

refugees (10 percent of the estimated total) have returned to the liberated zones so far.

On the governmental scale the success of the Pathet Lao has not been limited to sweeping aside the "National Assembly" (which was provoked by King Savang Vathana's disapproval of this body). The ten-point action program quickly adopted by the government was presented by Phoumi Vongvichit and is of clear Pathet Lao inspiration. The eighteen-point program that has just been adopted by the mixed Political Council reproduces, sometimes verbatim, the theses of a speech given a short while ago by Souvanovong. A majority of the Council seems to be leftist. Generally speaking, journalists see Souvanovong becoming the most important leader of the regime and Vongvichit as the number two governmental personality able to replace Souvanna Phouma, and they wonder if the mixed Political Council is not in process of supplanting the government.

Nevertheless, confrontation seems to be inevitable on three questions:

* On the nature of international aid. The United States is making no secret of its desire to make use of its economic power and Laos's extreme need to bolster the "Vientiane side." The NLH has not failed to detail the mandatory conditions under which international aid can be accepted. "Those who give us aid," Phoumi Vongvichit told François Nivolan, "must not pose political conditions or impose projects on us . . . or force us to buy everything from the donating countries or demand control over our utilization of funds."(14) Conflict threatens to develop between the two parties over the problem of concrete control of the funds received.

* On the recognition of the PRG. The South Vietnamese PRG has demanded recognition from the new government. Souvanna Phouma immediately answered that "the time was not ripe." Phoumi Vongvichit, however, replied that the government had not yet discussed the question but that he was favorable to recognition of the PRG. There is little chance, however, that the real conflict will develop on this point.

* On the foreign troops stationed in Laos. It is on this decisive question that the first public confrontation has just occurred. On June 4 the Pathet Lao published a communiqué indicating that important problems had not been resolved, especially that the withdrawal of Thai and American forces had not been carried out in time. On the contrary, "the U.S. special forces in Laos have not been dissolved but strengthened," aided in this by the return in civilian guise of soldiers who had left the country while the United States was continuing to use military bases in Thailand against Laos. Hanoi protested officially and violently, demanding the dismantling of these bases. The (puppet) minister of defense counterattacked, denouncing the presence of North Vietnamese troops (not mentioned by the accords of February 21) on the Ho Chi Minh trail and along the Mekong.

What surprised journalists was that the Pathet Lao took for granted the presence of North Vietnamese forces. For example, Phoumi Vongvichit told the Paris daily Le Figaro: "We have no reason to be suspicious of the North Vietnamese. They are also fighting against the Americans. They and we are fighting together in accordance with the conclusions reached at the summit meeting of Indochinese revolutionary movements held in April 1970. If the Thais and the Americans are really withdrawn, I could guarantee that not a single foreign soldier would remain in Laos."(15)

The situation in Laos, as in the rest of Indochina, is unstable. Behind the apparent "concord" a struggle is continuing that must result either in the birth of a socialist federation of states of Indochina or in a serious retreat for the Asian revolution. The analysis of the development of the situation must set supporting that struggle as its highest priority.

Footnotes:

1. Far Eastern Economic Review, June 3, 1974, p.28.
2. Phoumi Vongvichit, "Le Laos et la lutte victorieuse du peuple lao contre le néo-colonialisme américain." Editions du NLH, Hanoi: 1968. French edition, p.121.
3. Souvanna Phouma: member of a princely family, participated in a resistance government at the end of the war, then rallied to Vientiane. Supposed to represent the "neutralists," he was to become the main political leader of the puppet regime.
4. Wilfred Burchett, "La seconde guerre d'Indochine." Seuil. French edition, p.144.
5. Souvanovong: Souvanna Phouma's half-brother. Joined the resistance following the disintegration of the postwar resistance government. Participated in the National Union gov-

- ernments of 1957 and 1962. Has just returned to Vientiane after eleven years in the hills. Best known political leader of the Neo Lao Haksat.
6. Burchett, op. cit. p.158.
7. On August 10, 1960, Kong Le was chased out of Vientiane by the far-right coup that initiated the process that was later to lead to the formation of the second coalition government.
8. Phoumi Vongvichit, op. cit. Vongvichit is general secretary of the Neo Lao Haksat and is today vice prime minister and minister of foreign affairs in the new government.
9. Ibid. p.87. (See also pp. 70 and 148.)
10. Ibid. p.128.
11. Le Monde Diplomatique, April 1974.
12. Ibid.
13. Ibid.
14. Le Figaro, June 22, 1974.
15. Ibid.



ARGENTINA

thousands at funeral for slain pst militants

INPRECOR No. 2 (June 20) reported the murder of three worker militants of the PST (Partido Socialista de los Trabajadores -- Socialist Workers party), an Argentine sympathizing organization of the Fourth International. The murders took place at 12:30 a.m. on the morning of May 30, when an armed gang broke into a northern Buenos Aires headquarters of the PST, kidnapped six PST members, and assassinated three of them, Antonio Moses, Oscar Dalmacio Mesa, and Mario Sida.

The murder of the three PST members, all of them worker militants playing active roles in the trade-union movement, is part of a mounting campaign of terrorism launched by the fascists and the union bureaucracy aimed at crushing workers opposition to Perón's efforts to "institutionalize" his rule. INPRECOR No. 2 also reported several other instances of violent attacks on the PST. Since then, yet another attack has come to light. On the evening of May 30 -- the very day of the Buenos Aires murders -- eight armed individuals kidnapped three members of the PST in Lanús. "We already killed three of you and now there are going to be six," the victims were told. They were beaten, blindfolded, and taken to a house where the abuse continued for about an hour before they were released alive. The attackers identified themselves as being "from the administration" and "from the Lanús police."

The attacks of the fascists and bureaucrats have fallen not only on the PST. During April and May an estimated fifty attacks were made on offices of left Peronist groups and their sympathizers; death threats were received by leaders of the Frente de Izquierda Popular (People's Left Front) and the

PRC; Rubén Poggione, a member of the Communist Youth Federation was killed in northern Buenos Aires a few hours before the opening of his organization's Tenth National Congress; the previous weekend the residence of a Communist doctor and two of the party's headquarters had been bombed. In addition to the murders, there have been arrests of militants demonstrating for causes frowned upon by the Peronist government. On May 25 some 250 demonstrators demanding the release of political prisoners still being held in Villa Devoto prison were arrested; on May 29 sixty people were arrested in Córdoba at a rally commemorating the 1969 insurrectional uprising in this city.

The funeral for the three murdered PST militants, held June 1, was turned into a rally in solidarity with the victims of the attacks. Between 4,000 and 5,000 people attended, including members of many trade unions and political organizations. Dozens of labor, student, and political organizations throughout Argentina sent messages of solidarity.

The Buenos Aires daily Noticias quoted Juan Carlos Coral, one of the central leaders of the PST and a speaker at the funeral rally, as stating that terrorism was being "used as an instrument to enforce the Social Pact" (the government's antiworker policy) and as blaming the government for not having taken the necessary steps to prevent assassinations like the ones in northern Buenos Aires. He accused the union bureaucracy of carrying out such crimes in response to the "combative activism" of the workers.

The PST has called on "all workers and people's organizations, and all political parties and their youth groups who are for

the defense of democratic rights to unite in action" to demand an investigation and punishment of those responsible for the killings in northern Buenos Aires and elsewhere.

Coral also announced that the PST had demanded that the government grant it the right to have heavy arms in its headquarters for self-defense. This demand was made at a May 31 meeting between Coral and Minister of the Interior Benito Llambí, during which the latter claimed that the Argentine federal police were the best in the world. If that is so, demanded Coral, "Why haven't they found a single one of those responsible for the hundreds of attacks against the working class?"

At the funeral rally Coral summed up the PST's stand on the next steps necessary to protect the workers and left movement from violence: ". . . if there is no concrete result within fifteen or thirty days from the promised investigation of these terrorist activities, we will consider ourselves notified of the complicity of the government with the right-wing gangs of assassins. In these days of back-room pacts, secret agreements, hand-to-hand fighting, and conspiracies, we call for the formation of a Pact of Unity in Action for the defense of civil liberties. And as for General Perón, who seems to be

involved in so many pacts against the workers and the people, we also call on him to take a clear stand in support of this action, which we must take without delay to ensure democratic rights. Finally, we demand the formation of a parliamentary commission, with the power to arrest and interrogate. This commission must have the support of all organizations under attack by fascist terrorism and of all sectors of the labor movement that have suffered the violence of the bureaucracy's gangsterism."

Speaking at the rally for the executive committee of the PST, Nahuel Moreno stressed the need to form worker and anti-fascist people's brigades and pickets to defend the movement against continuing attacks.

Avanzada Socialista, the newspaper of the PST, has reported positive reactions to the PST's call for a united front on this question from spokesmen of the Bloque de Base and Peronismo de Base (left Peronist formations), Pharmaceutical Workers Union, Lista Marrón Metalúrgica from Villa Constitución (a class-struggle tendency in the metalworkers union), UDELPA (Unión del Pueblo Adelante -- People's Movement for Progress), Partido Intransigente (Intransigent party), and the Communist party.

fracción roja: organize workers self-defense!

The following leaflet was distributed by the Fracción Roja (Red Faction) of the PRT (Partido Revolucionario de los Trabajadores -- Revolutionary Workers party), an Argentine sympathizing organization of the Fourth International, and the Grupo Obrero Revolucionario (Revolutionary Workers Group) at the funeral demonstration for the three assassinated worker militants of the Partido Socialista de los Trabajadores (Socialist Workers party), also a sympathizing organization of the Fourth International.

* * *

The parapolice armed bands of the bureaucracy have committed a new crime: Three worker militants, Antonio Moses, Oscar Dalmacio, and Mario Sida, militants of the Partido Socialista de los Trabajadores, were kidnapped from their headquarters and summarily shot.

The names of these three fallen comrades, new martyrs in the struggle of our people for workers power and socialism, are added to the already long list of victims of police repression and far-right assassination that have been carried out since Peronism's return to power on May 25, 1973. The very day Cámpora assumed office two comrades were killed during the demonstration for the release of the political prisoners at Villa Devoto prison. Since then, there have been many deaths in the ranks of nearly all workers and peoples political tendencies: revolutionary Peronists and fighters like Delleroni, Liliana Lanoff, Grinberg, Rozzati, guerrillas of the ERP (Ejército Revolucionario del Pueblo -- Revolutionary Army of the People) like Gimenez, Roldan, and Antelo, revolutionary Marxists like comrade Nancy Magliano of the Fracción Roja of the PRT, militants of the PST like Inosencio Fernández, and so on.

The exploiters and their allies, the bureaucrats, are thus using rightist terror as a weapon to decapitate the workers movement, the student movement, and the other popular sectors and to deprive them of their militants. This repression is not aimed solely at one organization or tendency but at all those struggling in a determined fashion to defend the interests of our people.

Who benefits from this rightist terrorism? It is always the exploiters and profiteers and the policy that they are currently using to defend their interests: the social pact of the bureaucrats and employers, the Ley de Prescindibilidad (law on security and employment of civil servants), the law on foreign investments, the law on professional associations, the reform of the penal code, the university law, and so on. Repression and intimidation are necessary to succeed in imposing this policy that is contrary to the interests of the workers and the people.

This rightist terrorism that is developing with impunity is directed in the first place from the highest levels of the government. The gangs of assassins from the fascist groups and the bureaucracy, like the CNU or the C of O, are armed and furnished with ammunition by the police and the army. The ones responsible are those who gather around assassins like Villar and Margaride (chiefs of police under the military dictatorship reappointed by Cámpora and Perón), Lopez Rega and Osinde, Brito Lima and Lastiri. The real responsibility lies with the government, which has nothing in common with a popular government, but is rather a government of the employers, the bureaucrats, and the profiteers. The responsibility lies with this government, which has never lifted a finger to look into the Ezeiza massacre and which protects the torturers of the military dictatorship. The responsibility lies with this government that continues to use repression against striking workers, as was done just yesterday at Propulsora, or against those who demonstrate for their rights, like the inhabitants of the slums of the Plaza de Mayo. The responsibility lies with this government that covered for the "coup" in Córdoba and that every day tramples on freedom of the press (El Mundo, Descamisado, Militancia, and the revolutionary press), freedom of assembly, freedom of demonstration, etc.

We can expect this government of exploiters and bureaucrats to do nothing to end the rightist terrorism. We must have no confidence in bourgeois legality. We must have confidence only in our own forces. The only inquiry that will bring results is one conducted by the workers and peoples organizations and parties, united without sectarianism in the struggle against repression and assassination.

Against the fascist groups and parapolice gangs no discussion or beating around the bush is possible. We will be able to halt their crimes only if we are able to confront them in a united fashion and by force. No militant must fall without a retort, no crime must stand without response.

Against repression and assassination let us organize workers self-defense. We must not sit with folded arms while the fascists strike. Revolutionary militants and the most conscious militants have a very concrete responsibility: to prepare themselves and to prepare all those around them. In all mass struggles and all mobilizations let us organize pickets and self-defense groups capable of confronting the attacks of the right in an organized manner. Let us create vigilance committees in the work places and schools, carrying out united

action without sectarianism against repression and in defense of militants. The fascists and murderers will retreat only if they find us blocking their way, united and organized and ready to crush them.

AGAINST REPRESSION AND MURDER:

- FORM A COMMISSION OF INQUIRY AND SOLIDARITY UNITING ALL THE WORKERS AND PEOPLES ORGANIZATIONS AND PARTIES!
- ORGANIZE WORKERS SELF-DEFENSE IN ALL STRUGGLES AND MOBILIZATIONS IN THE WORK PLACES AND SCHOOLS!
- DON'T DISCUSS WITH THE FASCISTS AND MURDERERS! CRUSH THEM!

AFRICA

LIBERATION MOVEMENTS DEMAND FULL INDEPENDENCE

While strikes are breaking out in Mozambique and Angola, and while mass movements in favor of the PAIGC are unfolding in Guinea-Bissau, two declarations sum up the current state of the relations between the liberation movements and the Portuguese government. On June 11, on the occasion of the inauguration of the new governors of Mozambique and Angola, Spínola reaffirmed the strict positions of his regime (Mario Soares, shape up!): cease-fire, reconstruction and development, establishment of democratic structures of participation (?), reconversion of political and economic structures, referendum. Thus, Spínola recalled his refusal to abandon the Cape Verde Islands to the PAIGC and his plan to construct a third force to use against the liberation movements. A few days later in Algiers, negotiations with the PAIGC were suspended indefinitely. On June 10 Marcelino Dos Santos explained on British television that FRELIMO would halt the sale of energy produced by the Cabora Bassa dam to South Africa and Rhodesia, would strictly apply a blockade and would totally support the cause of the African nationalists of these countries.

The present hardening of the situation is not surprising, given the function of the Spínola regime. The reformists in the government of National Union have played their first card: an attempted seduction of the liberation movements. Cunhal, the general secretary of the Communist party, has just repeated the nub of the matter in an interview with Agence France-Presse: "the recognition by the Armed Forces Movement that the solution is political, not military. There is also the recognition of the right of peoples to self-determination and independence. And that is important." As for Mario Soares, he simply went to the NATO meeting in Ottawa. He has sworn up and down that he is not seeking a neocolonial solution. But everyone knows that this is the sole objective of the NATO countries. So what does Soares say about that? "For a long time I have criticized NATO publicly and sus-



from
the
four
corners



School in liberated territory, Mozambique.

pected that it had given much aid to the old government. . . . Nevertheless, there must be a system of Western security, just as the East has military alliances. We are part of the West. We are therefore faithful to this alliance, we would only want to give it a more political content, to axis it around defense of democracy and the rights of man." A good trick!

The nomination of General Silvino Silveiro Marques as governor of Angola and of Alfonso Mendes as secretary of labor clearly indicate the regime's desire to gain control of the political and social situation. Important personalities in the old colonial administration, they were appointed to satisfy the colons and stop the development of workers struggles. In Guinea the general staff is deliberately provoking a shortage of food products. In Mozambique the army has announced a new offensive, and South Africa has declared that its army is blocking 1,500 miles of the border and reserves the right of pursuit if Angola or Mozambique serve as sanctuaries for the armed nationalist movements in South Africa. Simultaneously, it was announced that Mario Soares had arrived in Pretoria.

Nevertheless, the Portuguese colonial army is suffering from an advanced state of decomposition. In Guinea-Bissau there are more and more cases of fraternization between the ranks of the army and the liberation movements, and the PAIGC is seeking to definitively detach the African regiment from the tutelage of the general staff. In Mozambique an entire regiment in the combat zone has published a communiqué supporting FRELIMO and affirming its desire to lay down its arms.

As for the liberation movements, the PAIGC has just affirmed the principled basis for all future negotiations: recognition of the state of Guinea-Bissau and independence for Guinea and the Cape Verde Islands. In an interview with the French weekly *l'Express* Samora Machel of FRELIMO reaffirmed: "The only thing we will agree to negotiate is mechanisms of the transfer of the government to FRELIMO. . . . As for the war, it will last as long as colonialism and neocolonialism last."

Finally, in Angola UNITA has just signed a cease-fire accord with Lisbon, allowing Lisbon the chance to demonstrate its "good will." In addition, the formation (in Zaire!) of a Liberation Front of Cabinda that is prepared to negotiate has been announced. But it is still the Angola National Liberation Front, the puppet of Mobutu and the CIA which has just acquired the support of Peking, that represents the main danger to the liberation struggle. The crisis in the MPLA, in which three factions are competing, can only favor Holden's reactionary right-wing movement. For its part, the Portuguese government sees in Holden the silent partner of American policy in a future neocolonial Angola. Recalling the fate of the hapless Belgian bourgeoisie in the Congo, Holden is still refusing to play that card, hoping to profit from the crisis in the MPLA. That is the decisive factor in the immediate future of Angola. Will there be a break or a compromise among the three factions? A clarification and the independent emergence of an anticapitalist left tendency or a patchwork that will favor the right? The coming congress of the MPLA will be decisive.

