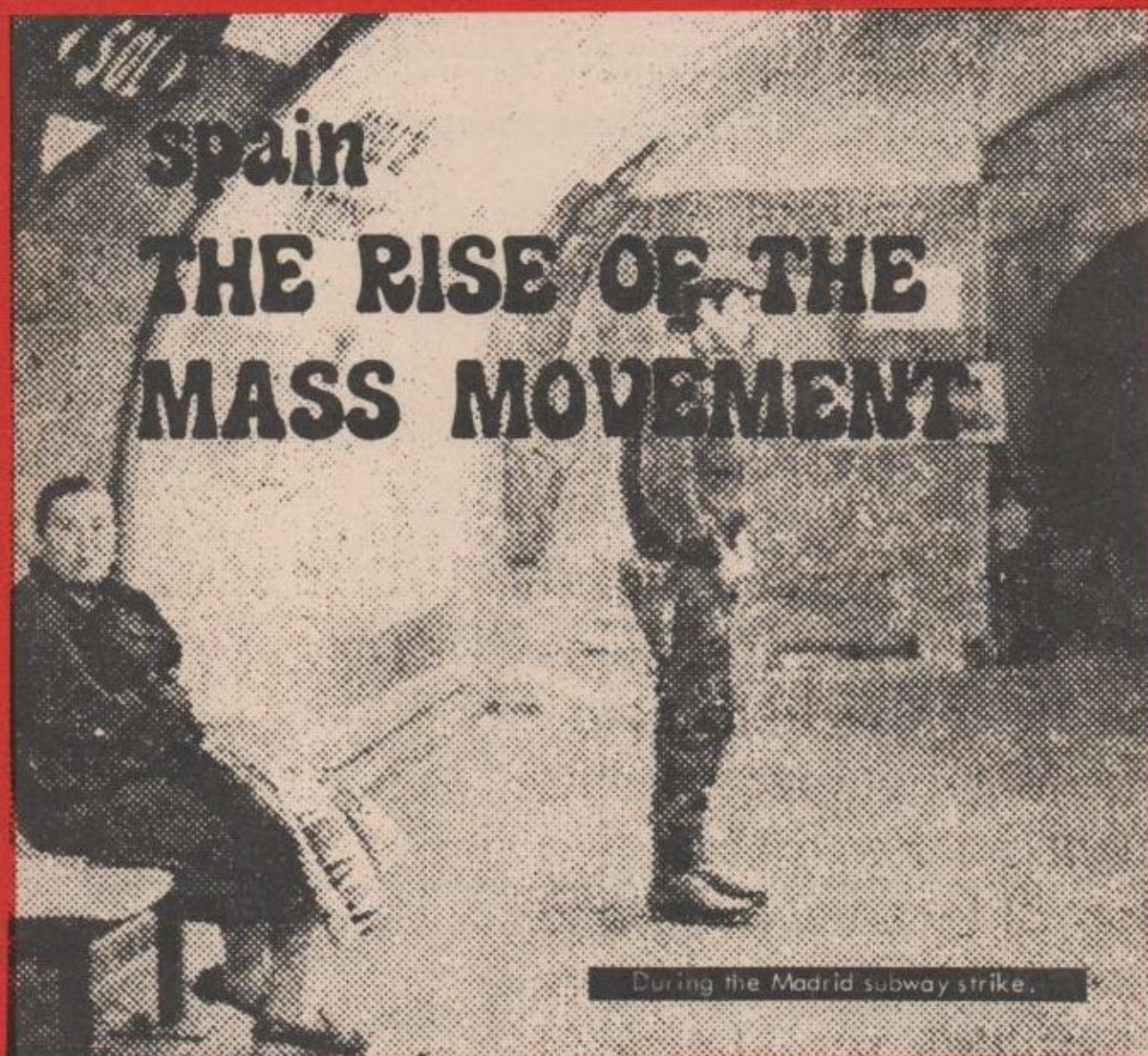


# imprecor

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During the Madrid subway strike.

## ANGOLA, THE INTERNATIONAL STAKES





## CONTENTS

### SPAIN

- The Rise of the Mass Movement — Interview with a member of the  
Political Bureau of the LCR/ETA-VI 3  
Pamplona: Prepare the Struggle! 7

### PORTUGAL

- Against the Austerity Plan —by A. Udry 9

### ITALY

- The Fall of the Government: New Stage in the Italian Crisis 12  
—by Livio Maitan

### ANGOLA

- The International Stakes —by C. Gabriel 16

### VIETNAM

- From Liberation to Reunification —by Pierre Rousset 20

### FRANCE

- The Regime vs. the Soldiers —by Paco Robs 25  
The PCF and the Crisis of Capitalism —by J. Valier 27

### SAHARA

- Against the Imperialist Repression of the Saharan People —Declaration  
of the United Secretariat of the Fourth International 32

### ISRAEL

- Statement of Three Anti-Zionist Organizations 31

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# SPAIN:

# RISE OF THE

# MASS MOVEMENT

The following interview with a member of the Political Bureau of the Liga Comunista Revolucionaria/Euzkadi ta Azkatasuna-VI (Revolutionary Communist League/Basque Nation and Freedom-VI), sympathizing organization of the Fourth International, was taken on January 13, 1976.

**INPRECOR.** How would you describe the political program of the dominant sectors of the bourgeoisie after the death of Franco and the coming to power of Juan Carlos?

**LCR/ETA-VI.** The government program now supported by big capital can be summed up in two words: reform Francoism. There are two aspects to this reform: first, give the bourgeoisie a chance to organize into political parties, and second, grant some recognition to the organizations of the workers movement, without "going beyond the limits" of the PSOE (Partido Socialista Obrero Español — Spanish Socialist Workers party, the Social Democracy). The bourgeoisie wants this carried out as a medium-term project to be fulfilled within two years. But there is more than one reason to expect that the calendar will be upset. I won't say much about the pressures of the international bourgeoisie; more important and decisive are the limits the mass movement is going to impose on the concretization of this bourgeois plan. Besides, things are still going to be complicated by the resistance of the personnel of the Francoist apparatus. This apparatus is not inclined to accept any reform of Francoism, because this would imply the loss of its privileges within the state apparatus.

But fundamentally, the crucial question for the government lies in the difficulty in what you could call coordinating the pace of the expression of the mass movement and the pace of the "reform of Francoism." The mobilizations for amnesty and against the wage freeze during the past few weeks point to the real limits of the government's whole project. As far as deciding how fast to move is concerned, they have to take several factors into account. The regime promised the bourgeoisie a series of reforms within the perspective of making sure that there would be some stability and that the mass movement would be kept under control. Now, on two important questions (amnesty and the wage freeze), if the dictatorship gives up, this will stimulate the rise of the mass movement and the government's plans will be

placed in question. But if no concession is made, there is a risk that the illusions that now exist among the sectors generally under the influence of the reformists will be dissipated; the reformists justify their policy on the basis of the results achieved by their tactic of putting pressure on the government. As for the bourgeoisie, it cannot be satisfied with a solution that on the one hand offers no clear perspective for the future and on the other hand is incapable of preventing the ruling class from being bypassed by the mass movement. That is the impasse of the present situation.

**INPRECOR.** What have been the most important developments of workers struggles in the past period?

**LCR/ETA-VI.** The first important struggles were the ones for general amnesty for all political prisoners, including those accused of "crimes in which blood was shed," who the regime wants to exclude from future *indultos* (amnesties), and for the return of all political exiles. The first demonstration took place in Madrid on the very day of the coronation of Juan Carlos. On December 7 a total of 30,000 people demonstrated in front of Carabanchel Prison and in various neighborhoods around Madrid. In San Sebastian in Euzkadi (the Basque country) there was a demonstration of 8,000 people, a very militant demonstration, with people marching through the streets for three hours chanting "Txiki, Otaegui, we will avenge you!" and "Dissolve the Civil Guard!" There was a massive movement to get petitions in all the cities and villages. But the most important thing was the extension of these mobilizations to cities where there had never been street demonstrations before. For example, 2,000 people marched in Salamanca and 5,000 in Alicante. This movement for amnesty brought new layers onto the political scene, and the CP clearly played a big role in the mobilizations, if only because of the form taken by the mobilizations for the moment (demonstrations that



were sometimes officially tolerated, petition campaigns, and so on).

The struggle for amnesty was also linked up with the struggle for workers demands against wage freezes and for the renegotiation of contracts. Sector after sector came into the battle: bank employees, telephone workers, metalworkers, construction workers, and so on.

One of the key demands of these mobilizations was "amnesty in the work place," which means the rehiring of all employees laid off because of their political or trade-union activities. This demand was at the center of the platform drawn up at SEAT, for example. (SEAT is the big auto factory in Barcelona — INPRECOR.) At the present time, the CP doesn't agree to this demand. So getting it into the platform was an important political victory for the masses of workers. In fact, with the figure of unemployed at one million, the rehiring of more than 25,000 workers would represent both a victory against the employers' policy on jobs and, above all, a de facto recognition of political and trade-union activity.

Workers struggles have been developing since the beginning of January and are tending to become generalized. Strikes have begun to break out in the big workers bastions like Standard Electric, ITT and all its state-run affiliates, Pegaso, Kelvinator, and so on. A unification of demands is taking place: equal monthly wage increases of 6,000 pesetas, social security payments to be made by the companies, forty-hour workweek, thirty days vacation a year.

The general strikes of December 11 in Madrid, Barcelona, and Euzkadi and of December 16 in Asturias were successes and marked an important stage in the rise of the movement.

The subway strike in Madrid marks the beginning of the post-Christmas extension of struggles. It is the first strike to occur since the subway was built. And it triggered a solidarity movement in other sectors: banks, telephones, metals. The solidarity was militant and economic. On January 9 about 18,000 people marched in a solidarity demonstration with the strikers in Getafe, an industrial suburb of the capital where there are many metal factories. There were demonstrations in the center of Madrid on Saturday and Sunday, January 10 and 11. The support mobilization culminated with the January 12 general strike in Madrid. In Getafe on that day there were 30,000 strikers. In the whole Madrid area, about 120,000 people were on strike. On the same day, thousands of bank employees walked out in Barcelona. The strike also extended to the dockers in the Barcelona port and to the workers of the FESCA electricity company (Electrical Power of Catalonia). About 24,000 SEAT workers took part in the solidarity mobilization. And so on. All the signs of an acceleration of the movement for workers demands throughout the Spanish state came to the fore during that week.

This development of struggles clearly shows what the next step can and must be: a centralization of struggles

and the preparation of a call for a general strike throughout the territory of the Spanish state for the overthrow of the dictatorship.

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**INPRECOR.** In this context, how is the process of re-composition of the workers movement occurring?

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**LCR/ETA-VI.** To answer that question I have to first explain the meaning of the massive participation of the workers in the trade-union elections. The entire working class feels the need to have some representation and a permanent organization that can defend its interests. The elections of the enlacs (the delegates of the CNS, the official, verticle union) were a success for the CUD (Democratic United Candidacies, dominated by the CP). The platform on which these delegates were elected is identical to the one that has been put forward in the present mobilizations. It includes a clause on the necessity of holding general assemblies to ratify any agreements that the enlacs may be led to sign.

This victory of the CUD was reflected within the workers commissions. In its relations with the mass movement, the CP is now giving priority to the enlacs rather than to the united structures of the workers vanguard in the factories: the workers commissions. For example, the CP now issues appeals for general strikes from meetings of enlacs. The December 11 general strike in Madrid was called by an assembly of 3,000 enlacs.

Nevertheless, under the pressure of the workers vanguard, the experiences in self-organization, and the basic thrust toward workers democracy, a "discussion" is now going on inside the CP. More precisely, various positions are being put forward about the future role of the workers commissions.

One strong current, concentrated in Catalonia in the PSUC (United Socialist party of Catalonia, which is the CP in Catalonia), explains that from now on the CUD should take the leadership of struggles. This goes in the direction of liquidating the workers commissions and relying only on the trade-union structures. On the other hand, some of the leaders of the workers commissions, Camacho among others, are proposing a sort of combination, using the enlacs on the legal level and the workers commissions on the factory level. Carrillo (the head of the CP), who stands in the middle, says that the enlacs cannot be the sole channel of expression for the mass movement, but that the workers commissions themselves are too narrow a framework to encompass broad sectors of the masses during general mobilizations. So he puts the emphasis on the maintenance of the apparatus of the workers commissions, controlled by the CP; the workers commissions would then be not membership organizations but a sort of movement. Also, a discussion is developing within the CP about the role of committees elected in general assemblies during struggles. This discussion covers some of the same ground as the discussion about the "delegate councils" in Italy in 1969.





**“THIS DEVELOPMENT OF STRUGGLES SHOWS WHAT THE NEXT STEP CAN AND MUST BE - CENTRALIZATION & THE PREPARATION FOR A GENERAL STRIKE TO OVERTHROW THE DICTATORSHIP.”**

It is important to note that during the struggle of the Madrid bank employees there was a linkup between the workers commissions and the CUD. In fact, a coordinating body of delegate assemblies elected by the employees during the struggle worked in close relation with the enlaces; all the decisions taken in common were ratified by general assemblies.

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INPRECOR. What are the prospects for the reconstruction of the trade-union movement?

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LCR/ETA-VI. The corporatist trade union was one of the

pillars of the regime. So any "reform of Francoism," not to mention any bigger upheaval, poses the question: What kind of trade union will be built? The position of the CP is to build an autonomous and independent union on the basis of positions that have been won inside the CNS, on the basis of the enlaces. The majority of the PSOE calls for the building of the UGT (General Union of Workers). Thus, the problems that are posed are those of trade-union division and the democratic functioning of the union. In face of this, the LCR/ETA-VI raises the slogan of a "trade-union constituent congress" based on the factory trade-union sections, united and democratic, with the right of expression for the various cur-



rents of the workers movement, that is, the right to form tendencies. It is only on the basis of such positions that it will be possible not only to fight for the unity of the trade-union movement — to wage a battle against the divisionist line of the PSOE, for example — but also to combat the bureaucratic program and manipulations of the CP. Such an orientation also permits a more effective response to the ultraleftist sectarian tendencies that may develop positions of the "red union" type.

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INPRECOR. Apart from the struggles in the factories, have there also been mobilizations in the neighborhoods?

LCR/ETA-VI. Around the two themes of amnesty and support for the workers struggles there were mobilizations that were based on neighborhood organizations, legal or paralegal tenant associations.

These associations were formed to fight against the effects of wildcat urbanization, which was a product of the economic boom. Their first battles were waged over the question of improving public services (lighting, sewers, parks, school equipment). These problems of urbanization are still themes for mobilizations. In December 1, 500 people held a nighttime torchlight march in the Orriol barrio in Valencia to protest against lack of street lighting.

These neighborhood associations have a strong base. They may include, for example, 1,500-2,000 people in a neighborhood of 15,000 inhabitants. But their politicization is mainly crystallized around the permanent bodies they set up, things like urbanization commissions or women's commissions, which usually are composed of housewives to engage in struggles around issues like childcare.

In Barcelona, for example, in protest against the closing of schools for a week during the official mourning period after the death of Franco, the women of one neighborhood decided to take their children to their work places, thus forcing some of the banks to close. The women's commissions also played a very important role in supporting workers struggles, especially through their actions aimed at convincing shopkeepers to extend credit to the families of strikers.

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INPRECOR. With the emergence of the UDM (Democratic Military Union), for the first time there is a group inside the army that contests Francoist legitimacy. What is happening inside the army, the pillar of the Francoist order?

LCR/ETA-VI. The UDM includes about 200 organized officers and puts out a bulletin with a circulation of 3,000 copies. Although the UDM has broken with Francoism and "Juan Carlism," its major demand remains very limited: "a technical army," that is, a modernized, spit-and-polish army. The events of November 25 in

Portugal were salutary for Spain, because they opened the eyes of broad sectors of the vanguard who were full of illusions about the contribution a "Spanish MFA" could make to the revolutionary process.

As for us, we insist on the necessity for the independent organization of soldiers, sailors, and airmen. The CP is working on building the UDM and subordinates all work among the soldiers to its attempts to sweet talk a few officers. It thus sacrifices the autonomous organization of the soldiers to respect for the hierarchy, preservation of the unity of the army, and the myth of a "democratic army."

The LCR/ETA-VI, as well as other revolutionary currents, presses for the formation of committees of soldiers in the barracks. Our work is beginning on a minimal level, around the daily problems faced by the soldiers: quality of the food, compulsory mass every Sunday, content of the barracks libraries, that is, the right of free circulation of books, including Marxist books, of course.

The committees publish a review called *El Soldado*. In certain cases these committees have been able to link up with the workers movement. In Euzkadi on December 11, during the general strike against the death penalties, contacts were established between the central strike committee and the committees of soldiers.

Finally, we should stress the demoralization actions taken against the colonial activities of the army in Sahara. There were soldiers committees in the Sahara in which militants of the Front Polisario participated. At the time of the withdrawal of the Spanish troops, for example, a truck loaded with arms was "abandoned," to the great profit of the Front Polisario militants.

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INPRECOR. What are the main lines of the action of the CP and the PSOE?

LCR/ETA-VI. The reformist organizations of the CP and the PSOE are trying to channel the rise of the mass movement toward political solutions of class collaboration.

The PSOE does not have any great political weight today, especially not in the working class. Obviously, this does not mean that there will be no favorable ground for a rapid development of this party in the near future. It is enough to recall the development of the Portuguese SP after April 1974, and that was an SP that was much less substantial than the PSOE.

There are various currents within the PSOE. One of these is prepared to collaborate semi-openly with the dictatorship and enter into the game of reform of Francoism being pushed by big capital. This current intends to make use of the maneuvering room it will be granted by the regime in order to try to grow, push itself forward, and bolster its positions against the CP. But another current is more sensitive to the dangers of any more or less



open collaboration with the present government. The possibilities for future growth could be strongly compromised. Finally, a left wing is emerging in the Socialist Youth. It puts forward the necessity of overthrowing the dictatorship, rejects any collaboration with the bourgeoisie, and demands the dissolution of the repressive corps.

The CP represents the major force for controlling the mass movement. Now, the bourgeoisie has openly said that there is no possibility of reaching any agreement with the CP for the next two years. Because of this attitude of the central bourgeoisie, the CP is trying to prove that it is in fact the essential force with which an agreement must be reached in order to guarantee the viability of any project aimed at stabilizing the situation. These are the very words of Santiago Carrillo. He says to the bourgeoisie: "If you want to sign a social pact, first you have to agree to a political pact." That is: "Recognize all the political parties, including the CP, the major force of the workers movement, and we will commit ourselves to controlling the mass movement." The CP sees the fight for the trade-union contracts and for amnesty within this perspective.

But there are now some new elements in relation to the strategy of the Junta Democrática. After the death of Franco, there were changes in the bourgeois camp, which facilitated the expression of the "peripheral" bourgeois forces, especially in Catalonia and Euzkadi. The CP approaches this situation from somewhat of a new angle. In Catalonia, where the CP is very strong and the bourgeoisie has a certain autonomy, the CP has reached a genuine political pact with the bourgeoisie. It has formed the Democratic Council of Catalonia, which is a body within which significant bourgeois forces are represented (the Catalan bank, currents of the Catalan Christian Democracy). In other words, it is not just a matter of window dressing or of "representative personalities," as is the case with the Junta Democrática. In Catalonia the CP has succeeded in carrying off an operation it has been unable to duplicate with the central bourgeoisie. In Euzkadi, in spite of the differences in the situation, a Democratic Assembly has been formed that includes the Basque CP and the PNV (Basque National party). It may be noted that in these bodies, unlike the Junta Democrática, the CP raises the national problem in some way.

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**INPRECOR.** What are the general orientations of the far-left organizations?

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**LCR/ETA-VI.** Generally speaking, the right centrist groups have a tail-endist attitude toward the CP and even toward the PSOE.

The MCE (Movimiento Comunista d'España — Communist Movement of Spain) participates in the Convergencia Democrática, while the Partido del Trabajo (Labor party, Maoist) is in the Junta Democrática, into which the Bandera Roja organization has already partially dissolved.

In Euzkadi, an Organismo Unitario (United Body) has been formed, which includes the MCE, the ORT (Organización Revolucionario de los Trabajadores — Revolutionary Workers Organization), and the ETA-V. The OU is presented as a simple body for coordinating struggles, but the reality is otherwise. In fact, the organizations that make up the OU are either members of the workers movement (MCE, ORT) or petty bourgeois (ETA-V); but they are organizations that politically tail-end the CP. Hence, the ORT and the MCE have programmatically capitulated to the CP's Democratic Assembly on two important questions:

— the question of the status of the 1936 republic, which amounts to a de facto negation of the right of self-determination;

— the formation after the fall of the dictatorship of a provisional government of Euzkadi along with the bourgeoisie, that is, with the PNV. We therefore rejected the invitation that was extended to us to join the OU. We presented the following alternative proposals: On the basis of united-front experiences, to develop bodies to coordinate struggles in close relation with the mobilizations that are rapidly developing on the scale of the entire state, based around three central themes: political freedom (right of association, assembly, demonstration); amnesty; response to the wage freeze (the platform of workers demands).

In fact, the priority remains the centralization of the movement on the scale of the entire state for a decisive offensive against the dictatorship. The experiences in coordination that developed in Euzkadi during September and October have to be extended throughout the whole Spanish state. This perspective is contrary to the tactic of "local general strikes" developed by the CP. But for such coordination to actually take place, to make sure that this extension becomes a reality, it is important not to have such coordinating bodies adopt the political program of one organization or the orientation of one party on post-Francoism. This would amount to an ultrasectarian attitude indicating a lack of any understanding of the means by which such unity could actually come about or the dynamic that would be touched off by such unity around these objectives.

Such coordinating bodies could also be the embryos of bodies of workers democracy, and then of dual power on a zonal, local, and regional scale. The examples of the general strikes in Euzkadi are full of lessons on this point. (See INPRECOR, No.34, September 25, 1975.)

More and more, the centralization and self-organization of struggles, culminating in a general strike throughout the territory of the Spanish state for the overthrow of Francoism, is being seen as the essential requirement. Against the reformist bourgeois program, we propagandistically advance the slogan of a Constituent Assembly, with the right to vote at age sixteen, and we stress transitional political tasks like dissolution of the repressive corps, abrogation of the laws and institutions of Francoism, and trials of the fascist criminals. □



# Pamplona: PREPARING THE STRUGGLE

The following report from Pamplona shows how the workers movement of Navarra organizes to make its struggles as united and powerful as possible.

PAMPLONA, January 8, 1976 — The way the workers of Navarra prepare the struggle to defend their demands has already become a tradition. The workers commissions work out a united platform which is then discussed in general assemblies in each factory before being presented to the employers on the same day, whether or not this coincides with the date called for in the contract. That is how the extraordinary united solidarity of the Navarra proletariat has been forged. And that is how some workers commissions, which have a strong organized base in each factory and an extraordinary social influence throughout Pamplona, have been strengthened.

Before the last union elections (to the official, state-controlled trade unions — INPRECOR), the workers commissions decided to launch a campaign to take over positions of responsibility in the unions. And on the whole they succeeded. But from the beginning, all these posts appeared as complements to the action of the workers commissions and never as substitutes. In the platform put forward for the second phase of the trade-union elections, the workers commissions themselves raised the slogan of "the free election and revocability of trade-union officials by assemblies."

On many occasions the employers and the official union organizations have attempted to eliminate this preponderant weight of the workers commissions. For example, they tried to make the trade-union meetings that are now open to both official representatives and nonofficial representatives closed to the latter. But the result was the opposite of what the employers had hoped for. In Pamplona today there is an assembly of workers of all the factories which meets regularly in the headquarters of the trade union. About 600 workers actively participate in these meetings, about 125 of whom hold posts in the union. It is a plenary assembly of the workers commissions open to all the workers.

During one of the recent meetings of this assembly a group of comrades said that it was necessary to work out a new platform of demands — different from the one already put forward by the workers commissions — for the entire province. They said that it was necessary to more closely integrate the small factories into the struggle, and that this implied reducing the demands in order to have them tally with those of the small-scale enterprises. After a discussion, the majority of the assembly decided to support the platform of the workers commissions. (It is precisely unity around this platform that represents the greatest guarantee that the workers of the

small factories will be able to wage their struggle along with the workers of the large factories, which makes it easier to defend their demands.) The assembly also decided to openly proclaim the role of the workers commissions in the leadership of the struggle for these demands. On this basis, the workers commissions decided to set up an "ad hoc commission" that would include, in addition to this leadership, representatives of the most important factories in order to directly coordinate their activity through the workers commissions as an instrument in the struggle for the platform of demands.

Unlike this body, the Deliberations Committee for the metalworkers contract continues to include only trade-union representatives. We believe that the composition of this body must be broadened, that when the assembly meets in the union headquarters, a numerically larger committee should be elected that would really represent all the workers of Pamplona and would be responsible to them and under their constant control.

An atmosphere of united mobilization now exists in Pamplona. An important result of this can be seen in the fact that at the Magnesitas and Asessa factories the employers decided to give in and grant wage increases of 60,000 pesetas and 54,000 pesetas respectively. In the first case, it appears that the employers even agreed to the formation of a workers security committee to control working conditions. But it would be dangerous to think that this will be the position of the employers in all the other factories. We are heading into very tough negotiations. The bourgeoisie wants to make the workers bear the costs of the economic crisis. Layoffs have already started in some factories. The unemployment figure is going up alarmingly. The fight has only just begun.

The workers commissions approved a plan of struggle during the past several days: 1) Within the perspective of preparing a general strike for the end of January, to launch various actions — assemblies, work stoppages, etc. — in all factories as of now; 2) To set January 15 as a first day of struggle for the platform of demands, with assemblies and a one-hour work stoppage; 3) To strengthen the activity of each workers commission in its factory, while continuing and broadening the sectoral meetings and central assemblies. Concurrently, an "unemployed commission" has been formed and will coordinate with the workers commissions so that the action and demands of the unemployed can be fully integrated into the coming struggles.

It is now necessary to throw ourselves into carrying out these tasks. To prepare the struggle in each factory through broad open meetings of each workers commission, which will prepare general assemblies. To get strike funds together and, like last year, to coordinate them with the neighborhoods, the peasants, and so on, in order to make sure that there will be enough money so the workers cannot be starved out. To press ahead with the activity of the assemblies, and give them the character of leadership and decision-making bodies. The struggle will be hard. And broad. We have to get ready. And organization is the best guarantee of our unity. □



# portugal

## **AGAINST THE**

## **AUSTERITY**

## **PLAN**

by A. UDRY

November 25 opened a new stage in the "revolutionary process" in Portugal. It marked the end of a phase dominated by a semi-conscious and semi-spontaneous rise of the mass movement, a phase that culminated in the autumn of 1975 with the conjunction of several factors: the deep crisis in an army in which an autonomous movement of soldiers was emerging; the broadening and strengthening of the workers commissions; the emergence of vast mobilizations for workers demands on the scale of entire branches of the economy.

The victory won by the bourgeoisie on November 25 has not provoked a qualitative change in the relationship of social forces. Nevertheless, the military blow that was dealt and the consequent recovery of political initiative on the part of the government have brought to light the weaknesses and limits of the rise of a mass movement that had not encountered any imposing obstacles, because of the decrepitude of the state apparatus. The essential expressions of the limited ebb in the Portuguese revolution can be seen in the process of recomposition of the workers movement and in the modification of the terms under which future confrontations will occur, because of the process of recomposition of the state apparatus. But the dominant feature remains social and political instability; the decisive battles lie ahead of the Portuguese working class.

### **In the wake of November 25**

Immediately after the success of the Amadora commandos on November 25, the Council of the Revolution set reconstitution of the bodies of military leadership as its top priority, especially within the Council of the Revolution itself and within the General Staff. On December 12 the Council of the Revolution issued a decree-law on the reorganization of the Portuguese Armed Forces, emphasizing the predominant role of the permanent officer corps and the elimination of political debate

within the army. According to the decree, the discussions in general assemblies will be replaced by discipline, and the traditional structures of the army will no longer coexist with the ambivalent bodies the MFA had set up after October 1974 in an attempt to channelize the rise of the movement of soldiers. In addition, the decree heavily insisted on the illegality of all popular militias. The only "legal armed forces" are the Portuguese Armed Forces and the "militarized forces," which means the GNR and the PSP, the police bodies.

Although the officer corps is not completely homogeneous, although disagreements still exist and have even intensified between the Melo Antuneses and the representatives of the traditional hierarchy, there is no doubt that the cohesion of the career officer corps is now strong. Firm defenders of Spínola are coming back into active service and taking front-rank positions, while supporters of the MFA document of June 1975 are being purged. For example, Lieutenant Colonels Almeida Bruno and Ricardo Durão and Majors Monge, Nuno Bivar, and Firmino Miguel, who Spínola relied on during the attempted "constitutional coup" launched by Palma Carlos in July 1974, have returned to their posts. In this sphere, the pace at which the previous trend is being turned around is rapid and alarming even to the members of Melo Antunes's "group of nine." To such an extent that Vasco Lourenço, commander of the Lisbon military region, gave a speech to the Amadora commandos in which he felt compelled to tell them: "Other forces will now in turn try to draw you into their service." (A Capital, January 9, 1976.) It is true that immediately after November 25 the number of commandos was sharply increased, from 400 to 1,500 men. This counterrevolutionary striking force is certainly not very strong, but it is playing an important role in strengthening the most reactionary positions in this phase of transition toward a deeper reorganization of the Portuguese Armed Forces.

For the moment, the Pinheiro de Azevedo government is relying mainly on the GNR and the PSP, which have intervened against both demonstrations and workers struggles. The government does not want to take the risk of having the army intervene against the workers, which could induce the soldiers to refuse to carry out orders and might result in new rifts in the hierarchal system, which would be fostered by the reappearance of activity among the soldiers themselves. On January 12 the Council of the Revolution discussed a new set of disciplinary regulations for the army. The major concern of the General Staff is to prevent a new resurgence of the autonomous organs of the soldiers. In this sense, new mobilizations of soldiers will once again have to be initiated on the basis of struggles against militarist discipline and for the defense of elementary democratic rights, while assimilating the experiences of the past, experiences that are not only the property of a section of the soldiers, but have also influenced the young workers now entering the ranks of the army.

Concurrent with the offensive on the military field, the government has proceeded to a vast reshuffle of the deck in the realm of the written and spoken press. Diário de



Notícias and O Seculo — Lisbon morning dailies within which the Communist party exercised preponderant influence and used in its sectarian operations — have been bequeathed to the Socialist party and the PPD respectively. (PPD: Partido Popular Democrático — Popular Democratic party, the largest bourgeois party.) República and O Setabalense, the latter a newspaper in Setúbal that had been taken over by the workers, have been muzzled. Radio Renascença has once again become the "Portuguese Catholic Broadcaster"; Radio Clube Português has been "temporarily" fused with Emissora Nacional in order to assure regular publication of official communiqués and long "educational" speeches by ministers and secretaries of state. Thus, the press and the radio, which had been expanding the audience of partial struggles and popularizing the positions of the far left, now express the government positions. In the North, Jornal de Notícias, the newspaper controlled by the Social Democracy, is an exception in the spectrum of the press through which reaction is now speaking out loud. What is now being revealed is the price all the workers must pay for the refusal of the reformist and centrist organizations to forcefully defend the principles of workers democracy in the press, the ability of all currents of the workers movement to express themselves in the newspapers, the freedom of political parties of the working class to command their own press organs, and the ability of the workers commissions to make their points of view known and to oppose articles without having to resort to censorship. The failure to apply such an orientation could only make it easier for the government to gain control of the press and the radio. In the current phase of social offensive by the employers and the government, there is an opportunity for the workers commissions in the press organs to place a struggle for workers control of the written and spoken press on the agenda, a workers control resting on the principles of workers democracy.

## Reorganization in the two camps

In the Portuguese Armed Forces, where the right commands qualitatively greater forces, it is asserting itself more arrogantly. The CDS (Centro Democrático Social — Democratic Social Center) is trying to come forward as the bourgeois opposition party against a PPD that, while clearly moving to the right, appears as tied to all the twists and turns of the various governments. The CDS is trying to gain a social base by relying on and making use of the movement of small and middle-sized landowners; the far-right organizations are making similar efforts. After the November 25 rally in Rio Maior, on January 11 several dozen thousand landowners met in Braga (about thirty miles north of Porto) to launch violent attacks on the decree-law on expropriation and more generally on the agrarian reform. Lopes Cardoso, the Socialist minister of agriculture, was the major target of the harangues of the reactionary leaders. Thus, he was accused of "directing the policy of his ministry, consciously or not, toward communism or a socialism with a pluralist facade, the objective in any case being the collectivization of the land." (Jornal Novo, Janu-

ary 12, 1976.) On this field also, the SP can measure how reaction is in position to relatively quickly take advantage of the opening it was offered on November 25.

The statements of the speakers in Braga who said that the agrarian reform law should be rediscussed by the parties and peasants and promulgated only by the legislative assembly points to one of the overall options now available to the bourgeoisie: rely on a rather prolonged ebb in the mass movement and an electoral victory of the bourgeois parties in April to reestablish a strong regime, a regime commanding an army whose operational units would be worthy of confidence. Obviously, this project does not prevent reaction from also launching intimidation operations in the North — bombings of and physical attacks on the militants and headquarters of the workers parties.

To develop a coherent program offering concrete responses to the needs of the smallholding peasantry is thus one of the important tasks of the revolutionaries today. To break down, or at least chip away at, the social bloc that has been constituted by reaction is a necessary condition for making sure that the workers will be victorious in a test of strength with the bourgeoisie.

A profound recomposition is going on in the proletarian camp, a recomposition that will determine the pace and scope of the response to the bourgeoisie's attempt to extend its low-cost military and political victory of November 25 to the social sphere. This recomposition is occurring under the shock effects inflicted by the counterblow dealt by the hardcore nucleus of the Council of the Revolution and under the impact of the bourgeois economic offensive. But its dynamic has to be linked once again to a prior evolution of the organs of "popular power." A qualitative difference is emerging between the workers commissions and the moradores (tenants) commissions, the latter of which are tending to shrivel up and even disappear.

The workers commissions emerged in the factories in opposition to the reformist apparatuses, even though these apparatuses tried to coopt them. The commissions proved capable not only of unifying the workers and overcoming the divisions introduced by the corporatist trade-union system of the Salazarist regime, but also of offering immediate and partial solutions to the problems facing the workers. The commissions were the major instruments for organizing factory occupations against layoffs, for taking measures of workers control against bourgeois sabotage, and, initially, for engaging in struggles around wages and hours. In face of the deepening of the economic crisis, the commissions, by forming coordinating bodies on a branch or interbranch basis, offered an adequate organizational framework for implementing some of the workers demands.

The moradores commissions, on the other hand, drew their spirit from housing occupations. When they were confronted by the deepening of the social crisis and the objective limits of this sort of solution to the structural



problem of housing, it suddenly became impossible to resolve certain questions (supplies, transport, housing) without moving to a qualitatively higher level of centralization. Because of the objective dispersion and heavily uneven development of the *moradores* commissions, because of the lack of a revolutionary force strong enough to stimulate such a movement of centralization, and because of the sectarian use made of these commissions by the centrist and reformist organizations, this type of transformation could not occur. The limits of the spontaneous movement of the masses came to the fore earlier and more sharply in the *moradores* commissions than in the workers commissions. This may be explained by the very context in which the two sorts of commissions arose and by the varying functions they fulfilled. Hence, it is not surprising that the *moradores* commissions should be the first to be hit when a certain ebb in the mass movement set in. As for the workers commissions, most of them still exist, although in some factories in the North they are merely marking time. The reformist project of subjecting the workers commissions to a trade-union reconversion is gaining increasing weight. But if the commissions play a concrete role in the organization of the workers response to the policy of the regime, revolutionaries will be able to defend the autonomy of the commissions and stimulate their expansion once again.

In addition to this accentuated differentiation between the workers commissions and the *moradores* commissions, the role of the trade-union organizations that were formed parallel to the organizations of the workers themselves is logically increasing during the current defensive phase. There are three combined aspects to the development of the trade-union movement: the unionization of sectors that were not unionized during the Caetano regime (public services, teachers); the broadening of unionization by profession; and the emergence of unions organized by branch and factory (postal system, chemicals, metallurgy, civilian construction). The reformists hold a grip over the majority of the unionized workers, and this grip has been strengthened since November 25. The government's economic attack (wage freeze at a time when prices are rising fast, suspension of contracts until February 29, 1976, for 759,000 workers, 250,000 of them in construction and 250,000 in metallurgy) is thus aimed in this sphere, where the workers response is strongly dependent on the policy of the reformist leadership.

Now, the SP leadership is supporting the measures of the government, within which it holds preponderant positions. This orientation will not be able to be applied without provoking increased tensions within the ranks of the SP, especially since the fact that various unions controlled by members of the SP are in the Intersindical (the trade-union federation, dominated by the CP) acutely poses the question of government policy and the response of the workers. In various SP branches in the Lisbon area (Moscavide, Amadora) and in the trade unions, an emerging opposition to the policy of the Social Democratic leadership is being expressed.

As for the CP, while taking its distance from the posi-

tions taken by the regime, it is not pointing to any concrete way of routing this attack on the gains of the workers. The CP is again taking up the theme of the "broad antifascist front"; at the same time it is launching attacks on the far left, as it did after the murder of four militants by the GNR during the demonstration in front of Custois prison. The CP refused to engage in any serious mobilization against this first criminal attack by the old Salazarist police.

The demonstration of Saturday, January 17, convoked in May 1 Stadium by the trade unions of the Lisbon region, generally controlled by the CP, reflected the situation very well. More than 40,000 workers mobilized. For two hours the trade-union leaders bombarded them with long speeches without ever saying how to respond to the provocative measures of the government. The workers began walking out in the middle of the speeches. At the end, about 10,000 workers voted for a motion calling for repeal of the suspension of the contracts. While this demonstration did not represent an extremely broad mobilization of the workers of the capital, it nonetheless indicated the significant combativity potential that exists in the ranks of the workers and is being expressed increasingly clearly in certain sectors, such as construction.

But after the period of virtually uninterrupted rise of the mass movement, the lack of any leadership is powerfully coming to the fore in face of the workers' need to respond to the austerity plan. In 120 minutes the trade-union leaders never said whether or not it was necessary to launch a strike movement to make the government back down.

Now, the relationship of forces and the experiences and instruments commanded by the working class offer the possibility of a determined response to the brutal attack of the sixth government. The priority task of revolutionaries is to put forward unifying slogans that must serve to create, in struggle, the broadest possible united front against economic and political reaction. In this sense, the demonstration of the UDP (União Democrática Popular — Popular Democratic Union, Maoist) of January 16, organized under the cover of the "organs of popular will," represented a criminal policy of division. Its failure — it drew only 3,000 demonstrators — mainly reflects the desire for unity that is growing among the ranks of the workers, a desire which condemns such operations.

Any prolongation in the delay in the workers response, even if only in a single important sector, such as construction, threatens to strengthen the grip of the reformists, to empty the autonomous organs of their content, and to deepen the uneven development among the proletariat of the Lisbon industrial belt, the agricultural workers of the Alentejo, and the rest of the working class. The bourgeoisie may try to take another step forward in its offensive by taking advantage of the elections. In coming weeks, the relationship of forces between the two basic classes will be tested.

January 17, 1976



# after the fall of the government



## A NEW STAGE IN THE ITALIAN CRISIS

by **LIVIO MAITAN**

The governmental crisis opened by the resignation of Aldo Moro was a surprise given the attitudes taken during preceding weeks by the major political parties. The Christian Democracy (DC), facing a rending internal crisis preparatory to its coming congress, did not intend to bring the government down. The PCI (Partito Comunista Italiano — Italian Communist party) was of the same view, for the PCI believes that time is on its side. Even the PSI (Partito Socialista Italiano — Italian Socialist party), which provoked the fall of the cabinet with an article published by its secretariat on December 31 and a resolution passed by the leadership on January 7, had decided to wait for its own congress and the congress of

the Christian Democracy before moving to a settling of accounts on the government level.

But the umpteenth Italian government crisis should not have surprised anyone, given the general situation in the country. In fact, the phase of deep imbalances and extreme conflict that started as long ago as 1968 has not at all come to an end. The recession that has been going on for the past sixteen months has not ended; the electoral results of June 15, 1975, with the success of the left and especially of the PCI, provoked and continue to provoke big political shakeups. In this context, the government remained in office only because no one had any interest in bringing it down. But when the PSI decided that the maintenance of the status quo was prejudicial to its tactical plans, that alone was enough for the fragile structure to come tumbling down immediately.

### The recession and June 15

The first point that must be synthetically analyzed is the prolongation of the great social and political crisis that opened in 1968-69. On various occasions the ruling class has sought to launch operations aimed at restabilizing the situation and even at actually reestablishing the pre-1968 state of affairs, resorting to the most varied means and trying out diverse government formulas. (For example, there was the Andreotti government in 1971, the center-left governments of the beginning of the 1960s, later replaced by the center-right government, with the participation of the liberals, the Socialists being thrown into opposition.) But all these operations failed one after the other, even if a few ephemeral successes were registered.

The great mobilizations of the working class, which have come one after another without interruption — even if



they were often defensive in character and wound up making rather limited gains — nevertheless proved at crucial moments that the relationship of forces continued to be favorable to the proletariat. The authority of the employers in the factories was not at all restored. On the more general political level, the bourgeois political parties, the Christian Democracy in the first place, suffered hard blows and fell into deeper and deeper crisis. The various institutions of the state apparatus functioned ever less effectively, registering increasingly less success in exercising the functions of repression and control that the bourgeoisie desired. (It is sufficient to recall the increasingly grave crisis of the judicial system, the ferment that has developed in the army, and even the events that have transpired in the police force, among some sectors of which the parties of the traditional left now have a not at all insignificant audience.) The radicalization of the working class, the other exploited layers of the population, and broad sectors of the petty bourgeoisie has not only not receded but has even been reflected electorally, as was seen on June 15. Finally, the introduction of the "representative structures" in the schools, which was called for by the so-called *decreti delegati* in 1974, in spite of the manifest diversions and the active support of the reformists, did not succeed in "institutionalizing" the student movement, which has periodically merged with the struggles of the workers around specific issues such as the fight against fascism and fascist terrorism, international solidarity, etc., giving rise to massive mobilizations in the major cities and in hundreds of smaller cities.

The generalized recession of the capitalist economy has hit the Italian economy hard. Full statistics for 1975 are not yet available, but the fall in gross national product should be on the order of 5%, with a decline in industrial production of about 10%. (In November 1975 industrial production was about 15% lower than in November 1974.) The rise in consumer prices slowed down compared to the rate of increase in 1974; nevertheless, it should still total about 15% for 1975 as a whole (the highest of any industrialized capitalist country except Britain). As for unemployment, the increase was smaller than in other countries (total unemployment stands at about a million and a half, according to approximate figures that are probably too low), but short workweeks have been introduced on a massive scale (400 million hours of short time in 1975 compared with 156 million hours in 1974, the last quarter of which was itself a period of crisis). What is worse, nearly everyone believes that the small signs of upturn that have appeared will be of limited scope and probably ephemeral. (There have been classical instances of reconstitution of stocks, for example.) No upturn is foreseen before the second half of 1976, and recently there have been even more pessimistic predictions. Agnelli, for example, the owner of Fiat and the head of the organization of Italian industrialists, gave a speech on January 12 in which he expressed doubts that 1976 would be a year of upturn at all. He said, among other things, that "our company's long voyage through crisis is not yet at an end."

Finally, the results of the regional and administrative

elections of last June 15 have had profound consequences. First, the traditional workers parties have taken on leadership responsibilities in many more localities than in the past. (In some cases, these parties rule with the participation of representatives elected from the list of Democrazia Proletaria (Proletarian Democracy), a coalition of Manifesto-PdUP, Avanguardia Operaia, and smaller formations of the far left.) This has provoked big rifts in the system of bought-and-sold interests that has constituted and still constitutes an important element in the rule of the Christian Democracy and has accounted for the survival of minor formations like the PSDI (the Social Democratic party led by Saragat-Tanassi). Second, all the bourgeois parties — from the Liberals to the PSDI, and even the MSI (Movimento Sociale Italiano — Italian Social Movement, the fascists) — have been thrown into open crisis, a crisis that had already been developing for some time, with growing internal conflicts. This phenomenon has assumed the most telling manifestations within the Christian Democracy, with the fragmentation of the old ruling group, the overthrow of Fanfani (long-standing leader of the party), and the defeat of the best qualified candidates to succeed Fanfani. The present party secretary, Zaccagnini, who holds positions close to those of Moro and was considered by all the "historic" DC leaders as a transitional secretary (to hold the post only until the next party congress), is now building himself a broader base, insisting on making deep self-criticisms, condemning corruption and dishonesty, and calling for a radical overhaul of the party and a return to its "popular" origins. In a speech given on January 11 he said, "The anticommunism of the DC must not be confused with bourgeois anticommunism. . . . We will go down to defeat again if we are satisfied to be Christians only within the limits set down by the interests and prejudices of our bourgeois protectors."

## The contract battles and the abortion campaign

Of all the problems that lie at the root of the prolongation of the Italian social and political crisis, three have assumed decisive weight during the recent period: the battles around trade-union contracts, the polemics around short- and medium-term economic measures, and the question of abortion.

In the past the struggles for the renegotiation of national trade-union contracts — which involve decisive sectors of the proletariat — have marked crucial points in the political situation. In 1969 it was precisely during these struggles that the workers upsurge reached its highest point, with the emergence of a prerevolutionary situation. In 1972 (and during the first several months of 1973) these struggles were decisive in triggering the fall of the center-right government, the government in which the members of the Liberal party had been assigned important functions. Today, the progress and results of the battles now going on will in large measure determine whether the workers upsurge will continue and



reach levels even higher than those achieved in 1969 or whether, on the other hand, there will be tendencies toward an ebb (leaving aside the question of how extensive an ebb).

It must be noted immediately that in spite of the growing wave of layoffs and the massive extension of short workweeks, the present recession has not had negative effects on workers combativity or on the political maturity of the proletariat and the other exploited layers. All the struggles of these past months, which have ranged from particularly tough workplace struggles to factory occupations (it is estimated that about a hundred factories are now occupied) and direct actions extending outside the factories, clearly testify to this. This very persistence of combativity and the fact that the bourgeoisie and its government are quite conscious of it explain why massive layoffs have on the whole been less numerous than in other countries of West Europe (not to mention the United States). Another significant element



MORO

is that an organized movement of the unemployed has developed during past months, a movement linked to the trade-union organizations. In Naples, for example, this movement made a big contribution to defeating the demagogic maneuvers of the fascist and fascistic far right and has attained a high level of political maturity. (In the big demonstration of December 12 the most advanced speech, which called for reductions of the workweek and across-the-board wage increases, was given by a representative of the unemployed.)

It must be added, however, that the attitude of the trade-union leaderships has acted as a powerful brake on these struggles and threatens to lead them into a dead end. From the very outset the bureaucratic leaderships imposed platforms that largely emptied the struggles of their content. In substance, they renounced the fight for the reduction of the workweek with no reduction in pay; they held the wage demands within very narrow limits (in general, between 30,000 and 35,000 lire a

month), which is not much higher than the ceiling imposed by the government; they once again called for new investment programs, especially in the South, refusing to recognize the failure of this program during previous years. As for the forms of trade-union control and supervision of the companies' investment and employment decisions, the employers countered the trade-union leaderships' proposals with noisy protests only for demagogic tactical reasons. In reality, the trade unions did not demand much more than already exists. Second, the trade-union leaders exhibited great reluctance to commit themselves to the tough battles required by the situation. The contract struggles have thus been postponed, and the only show of force that has been organized up to now has been the big national demonstration that took place in Naples on December 12 (with about 200,000 workers present). By nature, however, such a demonstration can be only a means of pressure. And now the government crisis is being used as a new pretext to postpone struggles, since, according to the bureaucrats, there can be no struggle when there is no opponent.

The polemic around medium-term economic measures was the most immediate cause of the government crisis. The Moro government had approved a program calling for expenditures of 25,000 thousand million lire during the coming three to five years; these funds were supposed to be used for reconverting and developing industry, for scientific research, for special aid to small and middle-sized industry, for subsidies for state enterprises, and for pump-priming in the South. At the same time, measures were to be taken to assure that workers laid off during restructurations and reconversions would receive up to 80 percent of their wages for five years. The representatives of industry were not hostile to this program, which undoubtedly would have helped them overcome some of their present difficulties. Nevertheless, some bourgeois press organs pointed out the limits of the operation. The Milan daily *Corriere della Sera* had spoken of "another wasted opportunity," observing: "It will be difficult for this distribution of billions to go through free of the pressure of the relationship of forces and the pressure of those getting the money." Significantly, the PCI had reacted much more moderately than some of the bourgeois media, rejecting the designation of "wasted opportunity" and maintaining that the parliament would have been able to modify the government's proposals and make them acceptable.

The spoilsports turned out to be the Socialists, who, annoyed at not having been consulted, attacked the proposed measures, calling them incorrect and totally insufficient. In the course of the crisis the Socialists worked out a project of their own, only the general lines of which are known so far. The plan calls for linking aid to companies to the maintenance of employment, for increasing compensation for short workweeks, for consultation of the trade unions on company policy, and for increasing the state share of social security. In theory, it is not excluded that there could be a compromise between this position and that of the government that has just resigned. Nonetheless, the development of medium-term economic projects still remains the most difficult prob-



tem today. While on the one hand it is indeed possible to find resources to stimulate an immediate upturn in this or that sector and even to achieve some results within several months, and while on the other hand the economists may give full vent to their fantasies about the more long-term prospects provided there is a vast reconversion and restructuring of the economy in the context of a reorganization of the world division of labor, it is more difficult to indicate concretely how it can be possible to guarantee an upturn of any real scope and how such an upturn can be maintained through the rest of the 1970s. This remains the most obscure point for Italy, especially as concerns the central problem of employment, which will probably go down again even if there is an upturn in the overall economic situation.

Finally, the problem of abortion has become a burning one, both because it is now possible that there will be a referendum on the abolition of the existing repressive legislation and because a strong women's movement is developing around this question. The signatures needed to initiate the referendum have been collected, and the referendum should take place sometime during the next several months, unless the parliament votes a new law quickly (and unless the referendum is postponed by special parliamentary elections). A draft law is now under discussion, and violent polemics have already occurred. The PCI has reached a compromise with the DC: Abortion would no longer be considered a crime and would be allowed in some cases. Nonetheless, under the terms of the compromise, the demand of the women's movement, the far left, the Socialists, and the Radicals — the principle of free abortion on demand — would be rejected. (According to the PCI-DC common draft, the decision would be up to the physician on the basis of information provided by the woman.) Neither the PCI nor the DC wants a new referendum, while the church has thrown itself into the battle violently, demanding intransigence of the DC. It is clear that this conflict has already assumed the same weight as the battle around divorce; under certain conditions, it could have no less explosive consequences.



## Objectives of struggle of the working class

In a context marked by the contradictions and tensions we have listed, it is not easy to predict what solutions to the crisis are possible. The Christian Democracy still favors a government based on a center-left majority (regardless of which parties would actually be repre-

sented in the government). The PCI — which for many months had helped the Moro government survive and just a few days ago recalled that all the important laws passed in the recent period have been approved with the votes of the PCI deputies in parliament — thinks it can take advantage of a continuation of the present situation and does not intend to commit itself to giving any more support to the government while remaining outside the government. In other words, the PCI is prepared to take further steps forward toward the "historic compromise," but on condition that it enters the government. This demand, however, is directed more at the Socialists than at the Christian Democracy, for it is the Socialist party that has proposed that the Communists be drawn into the political leadership of the country, but without posing the question of the PCI's directly participating in the ministries. On the other side, everyone has so far come out against special parliamentary elections. (The regular elections are scheduled for the spring of 1977.) The impasse would thus appear to be total.

Will the current government crisis result in a new edition of the center-left or in the acceptance of the currently rejected proposal for special elections? At this point, any answer to this question would be pure speculation. But what is certain is that the Italian social and political crisis will deepen further during coming months, and new violent conflicts, explosions, and powerful mobilizations will be possible.

Revolutionary Marxists will work to make these struggles take on maximal scope and intensity, contrary to the plans of the bureaucratic leaderships. They will fight for these struggles' being waged on the basis of fundamental objectives: for the defense of employment and against the reduction of the standard of living; for the generalized reduction of the workweek to thirty-five hours with no reduction in pay; for equal across-the-board wage increases of 50,000 lire a month; for the nationalization without compensation and under workers control of companies that go bankrupt or ask for state aid to avoid bankruptcy; for workers control over all aspects of labor relations; against the measures of restructuring and exploitation. They will fight for trade unionists and all the workers organizations to undertake coordinated actions to respond to the multinational corporations, which are taking the lead in the antiworker offensive. They will fight against the government crisis being used as an excuse to postpone mobilizations and struggles, and while they will not demand special elections, they will not allow the prospect of such elections to be used as a bogeyman. They will struggle against any bourgeois government or coalition between bourgeois parties and workers parties, believing that the objective for which the working class must fight is a government that excludes all representatives of the bourgeoisie and is composed of the parties and organizations that defend the interests of the working class, based on a anticapitalist program and expressing the struggles of the masses and the bodies that represent and lead the mass movement.

January 15, 1976



The current situation in Angola has been presented to public opinion as the direct consequence of a confrontation between the United States and the Soviet Union. The "détente" is said to be "in danger"; the Angolan masses are said to have been plunged, despite themselves, into a "fratricidal war," having become cannon fodder for a conflict between two superpowers. Clearly, such a presentation of the "facts" fulfills a political function for the mass media. The point is to hark back to the good old days of the Alvor accords, when there was a coalition government and "peaceful" coexistence among the MPLA, FNLA, and UNITA.\* The partisan thrust of this sort of position becomes clear in the light of the campaign of the government of Zaire according to which "only the Angolan people must decide their fate, and according to the road already traced out by their leaders during the Alvor conference." (Declaration of the Zaire press agency, AZAP, January 6.)

To some extent, the internationalization of the Angolan conflict has obscured perception of the struggles between the MPLA and the FNLA-UNITA coalition, at least in the international press. But this is just the opposite of what ought to happen, for each group is now busy arguing, justifying, and negotiating its position. The masks are falling off. Hence, there is every opportunity to examine and nail down the analysis of factors as important as the nature of the American interests, African diplomacy, the reasons for the Soviet intervention, the projects of the MPLA, and so on.

## A new Vietnam?

The frankest American argumentation, apart from Kissinger's, was presented by Daniel Moynihan, U.S. ambassador to the United Nations, who asserted on January 12 that "the Angolan conflict is a practically inevitable consequence of the détente. . . . You must see détente as a situation in which tensions will increase, or you've missed the point altogether. . . . The United States has taken a severe setback in Southeast Asia and has gone into what I've called a failure of nerve. If in fact we are in a condition where we won't stand up to the ideological attacks, then we're not well advised to have détente." (Newsweek, January 19.) For some time now Moynihan has been known for his forthright statements. And that was another one. Thus, it is under the heading of not suffering a "failure of nerve" that the United States has been sending arms and money to the FNLA since 1962 and voting against most of the UN resolutions condemning Portuguese colonialism.

It appears that Nixon decided to ease off this support around 1969, probably under the joint effects of Portuguese and South African requests. Nevertheless, the ma-

\* MPLA: Movimento Popular de Libertação de Angola — Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola.

FNLA: Frente Nacional de Libertação de Angola — National Front for the Liberation of Angola.

UNITA: União Nacional para Independência Total de Angola — National Union for the Total Independence of Angola.



terial support shot up again after the overthrow of the Salazarist regime in Portugal on April 25, 1974. In January 1975 a meeting of the White House high-level intelligence coordinating body decided to send \$300,000 to Holden. (New York Times, December 19, 1975.) In mid-July of the same year the CIA was authorized to send \$10 million in matériel to the FNLA and UNITA. Since then, support has remained at a high level.

During the debate that broke out in Congress in December some Senators complained essentially about the secrecy surrounding U.S. activities in Angola. But it was not only this formal aspect of things that was involved in the conflicts in Congress. Senator Hubert Humphrey, who called for a halt to the U.S. commitment without demanding reciprocity from the USSR, subtly formulated his view of the conflict. "If the Soviet Union persists (in aiding the MPLA)," he said, "it will find itself isolated. This has happened before in Africa. Angolan nationalism will probably turn out to be a more powerful force (in Africa) than Soviet communism. Even if the USSR wins some immediate tactical advantage, it will probably be of short duration." For Humphrey, then, the American intervention will only radicalize the struggle, while the present nationalist line of the MPLA constitutes a last line of defense against anticapitalist struggles. The Soviets responded to Humphrey through the TASS press agency, which on January 12 asked the United States to apply the policy of peaceful coexistence with a more "consistent spirit." And the Moscow newspaper "United States: Economy, Politics, Ideology," estimated that "in general, Soviet-American relations are still tending to improve" in spite of existing "complex problems" and all the "unresolved questions." In this regard, the Soviet newspaper called for rounding out the polit-



# ANGOLA: THE INTERNATIONAL STAKES

by C. GABRIEL

ical détente with a military détente and stressed that "the question of the normalization of Soviet-American economic relations remains a current one."

American imperialist interests in Africa are not homogeneous. Some representatives of U.S. imperialism view their policy within the overall framework of the continent and reconcile themselves to the most diverse forms of political power here and there. For them, the United States has to preserve a certain image throughout the continent, reconciling the exigencies of their investments in South Africa with the needs of their investments in the independent states. American investors in Guinea-Conakry, for example, are not prepared to support the FNLA and UNITA unconditionally.

On the other hand, other imperialist factions base their attitude on unconditional support to the southern bloc and the regime in Zaïre. Even so, the American commitment in Angola is not the result of a deliberate and premeditated choice. Everything indicates that the Alvor accords represented a highly acceptable solution for the United States.

But subsequent events tore these accords to pieces. The confrontation between the MPLA and the FNLA, had it resulted in a defeat for Holden's troops, would have left a clear field for the political and economic projects of the MPLA, with the immediate prospect of nationalizations. Thus, South Africa could not accept the American government's allowing the establishment in Angola of a regime whose first act would be to set up a state economic sector at the expense of some investors. This would have been a direct threat to South African investments

in the Cunene River valley and in the Cassinga mines, for example.

Apart from the question of investments, an Angola controlled by the MPLA would be a serious obstacle to the South African perspective of a Balkanization of Namibia into autonomous Bantustans and would have aided the forces struggling for immediate and total independence of the country. The expansionist South African state, taking advantage of a large degree of independence of imperialist capital, decided on a direct intervention in Angola. While this blocked the advance of the MPLA, it forced the hand of the American government, pushing Washington into unconditional alignment behind the FNLA and UNITA. Roberto Holden described this situation perfectly when he launched an appeal to the West to "save Africa from communism." "I ask the West to save itself. I am astonished to have to cry this in the desert." "Without considering the United States as the policeman of the world, I believe that it is the guardian of world liberty." And he hailed the intervention of the South Africans, who "came to fight the fire when the house of their neighbor was burning. Perhaps they do not do this out of love for their neighbor, but simply to prevent their own house from catching fire later on. The western nations should draw the conclusions." (Newsweek, December 22, 1975.)

Thus, during the conference of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) a diplomatic trial balloon was launched around the theme of a possible withdrawal of the South African troops, the suggestion being that South Africa would be satisfied by an agreement among the three organizations. Washington put pressure on Pretoria to try to get the South Africans to make a deal with the OAU in exchange for a return of the coalition government. Such a possibility still seems to be far off, since the MPLA has reiterated its rejection of a new coalition and since there has been some conflict between the FNLA and UNITA. In Huambo (formerly Nova Lisboa) there have been murderous clashes between UNITA troops and FNLA troops commanded by Chipenda. Incapable of infusing their troops with even a minimum of national consciousness, the general staffs of the FNLA and UNITA have been reduced to cutting down their differences to the scale of tribal conflicts, of grudges and confrontations among fighting troops.

American diplomacy thus remains relatively paralyzed. Since the return of a coalition is a premature perspective, the Democratic opposition is insisting that in any case the American commitment is unjustified and that the stakes involved are in no way comparable to those in Vietnam. Washington was content to make sure that the majority of the OAU conference would not vote to recognize the People's Republic of Angola proclaimed by the MPLA.

## African diplomacy put to the test

The essential function of the Organization of African Unity is to preserve a consensus among all the African bourgeois leaderships in face of the twists and turns of continental political life and also in face of revolution-



ary struggles. The clause of the OAU charter stipulating noninterference in the internal affairs of each member state is the supreme hypocrisy of these leaderships, who know very well how extensively their interests are linked and how much their economies interpenetrate. The fetishization of petty-bourgeois pan-Africanist themes traditionally serves as an ideology for the big shows otherwise known as OAU assemblies. In the Angolan conflict, for the first time, the old routine of unanimous motions lost its effectiveness. Zaire is directly and publicly intervening in the conflict. The South African army has also intervened, forcing each African regime to take a stand on its "sensitivity" to the racist regime in Pretoria.

The governments most susceptible to following the lead of Soviet diplomacy, those that are committed to a line similar to that of the MPLA (Guinea-Bissau, for example), those for whom an FNLA victory would represent a direct threat because of internal opposition (the Congo), very quickly recognized the People's Republic of Angola. Others, clever tacticians, became convinced that it was unrealistic to support the FNLA-UNITA bloc. Nigeria, Mali, Ethiopia, and Burundi may be listed among these. Thus, a total of twenty-two countries recognized the People's Republic. The draft resolution was presented by Nigeria; it was worded so as to represent a consensus among this group. The document proposed recognition of the People's Republic but also expressed its confidence in this government to "continue to bring about an atmosphere of reconciliation of all Angolans willing to work to strengthen national unity."

The opposing camp was scarcely any more homogeneous. Along with the group of "hardliners" like Zaire and the Cameroons, there were UNITA backers who are for a new coalition government (Senegal), and the most hesitant, who were content simply to call for unity. Twenty-two on each side! The abstention of Uganda preserved this delicate equilibrium. They all condemned South Africa and then referred the whole affair to the regular bodies of the OAU.

The direct protagonists in the conflict all considered this OAU conference as a partial defeat. Several weeks before, the MPLA had believed that it would win recognition. Zaire had hoped for a decision that would change the situation inasmuch as the present dynamic has reflected itself in a succession of defeats for the FNLA on the northern front, ever since the fall of Ambriz. But the conference decided nothing and the FNLA continues to retreat. The function of the OAU had never been so badly bungled. Will those elsewhere on the continent who still have illusions in African diplomacy understand the lessons?

## The Soviet intervention

The reasons for the massive Soviet aid to the anti-imperialist fighters basically go back to a desire to break down the unconditional American support for the South African

intervention. The USSR decided to spectacularly bolster its aid shipments and diplomatic activities after the South African intervention and the U.S. aid to the FNLA had threatened the diplomatic balance in black Africa. Zambia is increasingly close to the South African policy, which in itself represents a significant shift in the region. An FNLA victory, which would strengthen the centripetal forces among the Bakongo ethnic group, would give a second wind to the opposition of Bakongo notables to the Nguabi regime in the Congo. But this regime represents a not unimportant element in the Soviet position in central Africa. The attempts at official dialogue between black Africa and the South African racists are becoming increasingly credible because of the concrete advantages Pretoria is dangling before the neocolonial regimes. Finally, an FNLA victory would permit the constitution of a Zaire-Angola axis whose anticommunist weight would be quite formidable for the future of Soviet policy throughout Africa. For the Soviet bureaucracy, the aim is to preserve its diplomatic clientele, among which must be placed the Congo, Somalia, Tanzania, Guinea, Algeria, and now Guinea-Bissau. Nevertheless, it is out of the question to equate the Soviet intervention with the American intervention. Whatever the diplomatic reasons for the Soviet military aid to the MPLA, we must consider this aid positive and reject the hypocritical attitude of those who call for "noninterference by the great powers."

The consequences of this aid on the political course of the MPLA remain to be measured. In any case, the MPLA needed no Soviet pressure to oppose any overly impetuous development of the mass movement.

Apart from that, the consequences will probably be as follows:

- a) a greater credibility for the MPLA's state capitalist projects, which will be backed up by Soviet economic support;
- b) a development of Stalinist currents within the MPLA, without this necessarily giving rise to a Stalinist faction with a political program of its own to counterpose to the rest of the MPLA leadership.

The conjunction of these two elements has already produced an astonishing mixture in the Luanda press: nationalist declarations, declarations on "the Paris Commune by Marx," and statements on "Marxism-Leninism."

And the Cuban intervention? Is it purely a matter of the Cubans in Angola serving as cannon fodder for Soviet policy? We do not think so. The Cubans have a traditional presence within the ranks of the liberation movements, especially the PAIGC in Guinea-Bissau. Moreover, it seems that Cuba strongly fears a Brazilian penetration of this part of Africa. Further, and this is an extremely important factor, the Cuban leadership, speaking through Vice-Prime Minister Carlos Rafael Rodríguez, has affirmed that it would continue to extend military aid to the MPLA regardless of the decision of the OAU: "We will not take heed of any appeal by the OAU." This breaks clearly with the OAU diplomatic game, which is at the center of the Soviet motives.



Finally, what about China? It seems that the Chinese instructors have left the ranks of the FNLA. Nevertheless, Chinese policy has preserved its tone. Let us recall that the two regimes in the region toward which Peking has been directing its charm and whose presidents have been invited to China during the past few years are Zaire and the Cameroons. These two countries were in the leadership of the anti-MPLA camp during the OAU conference, and everything suggests that Chinese diplomacy will maintain its links with these regimes. Hence, Maoist policy in Angola will preserve its cautious attitude toward and even complicity with the UNITA-FNLA camp.

## The Angolan far left

The petty-bourgeois nationalist character of the MPLA leadership stands in direct opposition to an anticapitalist development of the mass movement and real forms of self-organization.

The events of the past several months confirm this analysis. While the MPLA had waged the national liberation struggle essentially in the rural areas, after April 25, 1974, the urban milieu nurtured anticapitalist currents that emerged from the student youth, over whom the MPLA had no direct control. Thus, groups emerged like the Amílcar Cabral Committees (CAC), which were linked to the Portuguese UDP (União Democrática Popular — Popular Democratic Union, Maoist), as well as some forces upholding a revolutionary Marxist orientation, such as the distributors of the newspaper *Revolução Socialista*.

The CAC, which held a generally majority position within this far left, were able to play a decisive role in pressuring the MPLA for a whole period, particularly on the question of the neighborhood committees and their coordination and on the question of the self-defense militias. The militants of the CAC penetrated rather far into the ranks of the MPLA, taking on positions in military training and posts of responsibility. The MPLA leadership made a de facto accommodation with these currents so as not to frontally oppose a sector of the masses that was developing a spontaneous movement during the year 1975.

When the civil war began to take a different course and it became necessary to prepare for a genuine protracted war, it became that much easier for the MPLA leadership to control the neighborhood committees and isolate the far left. The first objective was to break the weight of the CAC in the neighborhood committees. For example, Nito Alves declared that after "the FNLA and UNITA, the struggle will have to be waged against the ultraleftists." The radio broadcast speeches against "partisans of Trotsky and Bakunin" and the Maoist newspaper *Poder Popular* was banned. Isolated and weakened, the far left was open to a death blow. In October the neighborhood committee of São Paulo was occupied by the FAPLA (the military forces of the MPLA) and nine committee members were arrested, along with eleven mili-

tants of other neighborhood committees. A wave of intimidation spread. In November these militants were released; some were deported to Portugal. The CAC were very much weakened and the MPLA leadership was easily able to bring the structures of "popular power" under control.

Clearly, attempting to lend these forms of self-organization an anticapitalist content provided an opportunity to wage a battle against the MPLA leadership. This battle was lost by the far left during a conjuncture of the war for which these currents offered only insufficient responses. The CAC developed opportunist and entrist conceptions in regard to the leadership of the MPLA, while others made mistakes in the abstract character of their propaganda.

This far left, which generally emerged from the Portuguese far left, was politically and organizationally insufficient. It was Maoist in its majority and hence suffered the effects of the miserable Chinese policy in Angola.

Faced with the mass movement, these Maoist currents broke empirically with the traditional "popular national democratic revolution," but without presenting any clear alternative strategy. They were up against the prestige of a leadership that had come out of the armed struggle and they overestimated their real base among the masses. The fact that the repression against them did not bring the MPLA into conflict with the masses is proof of the mass movement's increasing reliance on the MPLA.

Nevertheless, this must in no way diminish our solidarity with these militants, especially those who oriented their work toward a socialist transformation of the Angolan revolution. Some of these militants, such as Salvador Catão and José Ingumba, members of the *Revolução Socialista* group killed in Nova Lisboa, died fighting the FNLA and UNITA, giving sterling proof of their anti-imperialist courage. The political battle of these militants is still not over. The December 20 issue of the MPLA newspaper *Vitória é Certa* had a headline reading "The Struggle Against the Rightists and Ultraleftists" and the editorial was devoted to the struggle against ultraleftism. This shows that the "normalization" of Luanda is not at all settled.

A fight must be waged around the themes of freedom of expression and the right of organization for all anti-imperialists. The broadest democracy must be demanded for those who are fighting reaction. The MPLA representatives who are traveling around the world and speaking at support meetings organized by the international far left must be confronted with questions about the repression. If the South African aid to the FNLA and UNITA must serve as a lesson to the "neutralists" who see the current struggle purely as a fight among counterposed petty-bourgeois leaderships, the repression against the far left must serve as a lesson to the most varied centrist groups who have so far refused to make the slightest criticism of the MPLA.

January 13, 1976



The last American GI was driven out of Vietnam by the forces of the Provisional Revolutionary Government (PRG) on April 30, 1975. Saigon became Ho Chi Minh City. Just six months later, this city was the scene of the "consultative political conference" that was to decide on the final steps toward reunification of the country. Twenty years after the date set in the Geneva accords of 1954, elections will be held to choose a single national assembly.

## Liberation and revolution

The holding of the consultative conference, November 15-21, 1975, also provided an occasion to confirm some of the essential features of the Vietnamese revolution. The main report was delivered by Truong Chinh, a member of the Political Bureau of the Workers party of Vietnam (the Communist party) and chief of the delegation from the Democratic Republic of Vietnam (DRV). The report was dominated by two themes: the necessity to achieve reunification rapidly and the commitment of the entire country to the socialist road. Truong Chinh delivered a genuinely programmatic speech that solemnly took up the leitmotiv of the statements of the leaders of the Workers party: the link between national liberation, reunification, and the socialist transformation of the Vietnamese revolution. "After winning independence," he said, "our country can choose one of two roads: either to pass through a transitory stage leading to socialism or else to follow the path of capitalist development. . . . Our road is the one that leads to socialism . . . the only system that will create complete unity politically and economically, culturally and socially. Nevertheless, this has not prevented us from examining the question: Should the South follow the national, democratic, and popular revolution for a time before passing to the socialist revolution? . . . We believe that this postponement is not necessary. In fact, after the collapse of the American neocolonialist regime, the population could not stop without betraying itself, but had to pass to the socialist revolution. . . . And at the same time, the people had to go through a certain number of phases to carry out the tasks of the national, democratic, and popular revolution. . . . In the spirit of the 'uninterrupted revolution' of Leninism, the Workers party of Vietnam told the Vietnamese people to undertake the two revolutions (national-democratic-popular and socialist — INPRECOR) with the peculiarity of passing directly from the first to the second without stopping for a stage of capitalist development."

Of course, South Vietnam is far from having achieved the agrarian reform (distribution of land to those who till it) and the total eradication of the power of the feudalists and compradors. But, explaining the meaning of his analysis, Truong Chinh added that the South "must not wait for all the tasks of the national, democratic, and popular revolution to be completed before initiating the socialist revolution and the building of socialism." (Nouvelles de la RDVN, November 25, 1975.) The transformation is imposed as a necessity for the very achievement of the tasks of national liberation. This is the second time — the first being in 1954 — that the liberation struggle in Vietnam has confirmed this law of the colonial revolution. The lesson here is exemplary,

# VIETNAM



## FROM LIBERATION TO REUNIFICATION

by PIERRE ROUSSET

with the heritage of the American war complicating the solution to the problem of economic development.

Indeed, Uncle Sam's legacy is not a happy one. Granted, his debacle endowed revolutionary Vietnam with weaponry that makes it the third strongest military power in Asia (after China and India): 1,200-1,500 tanks, 400-500 combat aircraft, 2,000-3,000 long-range artillery pieces, an ultramodern radar and transmission system, the naval and air complex of the Cam Ranh Bay. The Americans were forced to abandon \$12,000 million worth of industrial investments and economic infrastructure, according to the estimates of Wilfred Burchett (in the Far Eastern Economic Review of October 10, 1975). This included a polyester fiber company, a slaughterhouse, a pharmaceutical company that should permit almost complete satisfaction of domestic needs, a textile industry with a capacity of 250-300 million meters. Nonetheless, the problems are considerable:

\*The physical ravages of the air war in the countryside have been terrible. According to the PRG, "43% (13,000 square kilometers) of the country's plantations and orchards have been irremediably destroyed, as well as 44% (25,000 square kilometers) of the forests." (Far Eastern Economic Review, November 7, 1975, p. 14.) In 1965 there were 34,000 hectares of sugar plantations; 12,000 hectares remained by 1972. South Vietnam used to export \$48 million worth of rubber (as of 1960); by 1973 the figure had dropped to \$5.6 million. The South



used to be an exporter of rice; it has become an importer. Water buffaloes, indispensable to agriculture, became targets of American military action; the water buffalo population dropped from 820,000 in 1963 to 420,000 in 1973.

\*A transformation of the social structure of the country came about as a consequence of this destruction in the countryside. At the beginning of the French war some 5-10% of the population lived in urban areas; in 1960 the figure was 15%; in 1975 it was a majority. The population of Saigon approached 4 million. Of this massive population, only about 300,000 were workers, 60,000 of these in the textile industry. At the time of liberation, there were about 3.5 million unemployed; 1.5 million who were unemployed under the Thieu regime, 1.5 million troops of the demobilized puppet army and police, 500,000 prostitutes, smugglers, and other persons whose resources depended directly on the U.S. presence. (Far Eastern Economic Review, October 10, 1975.)

\*Finally, on the industrial level, the dependence of the neocolonial economy was total. Raw materials and energy were largely if not totally imported. This was the case with the cotton for the textile factories and the gas; electricity was often produced by diesel engines. The structure of the university population inherited from the puppet regime reveals the gravity of the problem posed by the distortion of social development under the impact of the imperialist grip: Of a total of 98,546 students, 29,905 were in law, 26,673 in literature, 260(!) in agriculture, and zero in veterinary studies and forestry. (Far Eastern Economic Review, November 7, 1975.)

The first measures taken by the PRG (such as free distribution of rice to the needy) were only temporary palliatives. The roots of the disease had to be attacked. Those roots were social.

### Three campaigns

Three series of measures were taken in the socioeconomic realm:

\*The movement of return to the land. Vietnam cannot maintain a parasitic "urban" population out of proportion to the industrialization of the country. The plans of the PRG are ambitious. It hopes, reportedly, to return 3 million people to the countryside (the figure given in the PRG Information Bulletin, French edition, June 21, 1975). There is no lack of space and the former peasants have been encouraged to go back to their villages (when these villages still exist) or to "pioneer zones" that have been completely overhauled. But the motion toward return has been slow, partly because of the destruction caused by the war and the many land mines and mortars that still prevent the fields from being worked. This is one factor. But another factor is probably the social weight of the "semi-urbanized" population. About 100,000 departures a month are now taking place. The progress in agricultural production seems no less important, aided by the establishment of "mutual aid teams" and cooperatives for material and fertilizer. South Vietnam

is said to be on the brink of becoming an exporter of rice once again, at least in small quantities. As for the North, which is less rich than the South, it has attained the goal of an average of five tons of unprocessed paddy rice per hectare per year and has launched a campaign for winter production. The aim here is to use varieties of fast-growing rice in order to squeeze a harvest of grain, vegetables, or plants between the two yearly rice harvests (spring and autumn).

\*End speculation. A series of measures have been taken to guarantee control of the money supply and prices by the revolutionary regime. A single national bank has been formed; the private capital deposited in its accounts and coffers is controlled. But the vast majority of owners had withdrawn their holdings from the banks before the liberation of Saigon. According to Nayan Chanda (Far Eastern Economic Review, October 10, 1975), a total of about 150,000 million piasters were withdrawn from the banks. The PRG decided on a radical measure. On September 22 a monetary reform was announced: a new piaster, worth 500 times the old piaster, was distributed. Everyone had to exchange the total of his liquidity with designated functionaries in one day. The total amount of liquidity was thus measured. Moreover, the entirety of big sums was not immediately handed over in new piasters. A ceiling was set on the value that could be handed out per month and per individual, the surplus being stockpiled by the administration, which redistributed it during succeeding months. The revolutionary regime thus took control of a large money supply and made more difficult the speculative actions that feed inflation on the Saigon markets.

\*"Abolish the class of compradors." This financial operation was probably only partially effective, certain fortunes being parcelled out among several individuals. But a broader campaign was later launched. The object: break the power of the "comprador" bourgeoisie. This is what Huynh Tan Phat, president of the PRG, explained in an interview granted to Wilfred Burchett: "We have plenty of difficulties and our enemies have exploited these to sow dissension and to direct discontent against us over prices and food shortages. We have to admit that we have no real organization to run economic affairs. . . . Everything was in (Chinese compradors) hands. They disrupted the markets, artificially created shortages, and sent prices spiralling upward, and there was little we could do about it. They controlled everything. . . . Obviously, it was in the interest of the compradors to see our regime fail and probably they even dreamed of the possibility of it being replaced by a reactionary regime." (Far Eastern Economic Review, October 10, 1975.)

On September 10 the PRG published a declaration on its economic policy that announced its desire to "severely punish the bourgeois compradors." It was stated that in the cases of those who "participated in speculation during the war, based themselves on the American imperialists, and associated with the chiefs of the puppet administration and army, whether they later fled abroad or remained in the country, all their property



will be managed by the state." (PRG Information Bulletin, French edition, September 21, 1975.)

Following the publication of this declaration, mass demonstrations were organized in which many Chinese workers of Cholon participated. Stocks of hidden commodities were discovered: 4 million meters of silk and cotton at La Nghia, the "king of textile"; considerable stocks of Bastos cigarettes at Siou Phong, the "king of tobacco." The fortune of Ma Hi, the "rice king," was inventoried and estimated at about US\$400 million. Thanks to the sales of these stocks, the market prices of many commodities fell 30-50%.

## The urgency of reunification

While the September 10 declaration of the PRG opened the campaign against the "compradors," it also offered state aid to "national bourgeois, small industrialists, artisans, and small-scale merchants." The explanation advanced for this measure was simple. The new regime was already having big trouble taking over the management of the property that had passed under the control of the state or the workers committees. The productive machine absolutely had to be started up again (about 50% of all enterprises were operating at the end of 1975). The technical qualifications of the industrialists who remained in Vietnam are irreplaceable under the current state of affairs.

At the present time there is no comprehensive figure giving a precise picture of the development of the various sectors of the economy. There are now five sectors in South Vietnam: the state sector, the cooperative sector, the mixed state-private sector, the private sector, and the artisanal sector. In fact, there seems to have been a real class polarization since April 30, 1975: While the great majority of technicians are said to have remained, 70% of industrialists, directors, and administrators fled abroad as the PRG forces approached.

For the most part, private capital is concentrated in the small enterprises (generally with 10-50 workers, but sometimes with several hundred). This capital is controlled on two levels: on the one hand by the "free trade unions," which have expanded widely, and on the other hand by the state, which organizes the supply of raw materials and the sale of commodities and can therefore dictate production choices. In October the insurance companies came under the same measures as the banks had previously. At the end of September lists of fixed prices were posted and control over foreign trade was imposed.

The fate of foreign investments has not yet been clarified, at least in the case of non-American capital, the French plantations, for example. Nevertheless, these investments are under the de facto control of workers committees and the PRG and their future may be predicted. The state will take over effective control but will reach specific agreements with the imperialist governments or companies that wish to cooperate. Vietnam wants to diversify its trade, if only to assure a minimum of indepen-

dence. In this area the choices of the Workers party differ radically from those of the "Khmers Rouges": "We are not interested in economic autarky," said Huynh Tan Phat, "and have no intention of pursuing a closed-door policy as far as foreign investments are concerned." (Far Eastern Economic Review, October 10, 1975.) The oil policy of the PRG is probably reflective of its choices. On August 6 the PRG reaffirmed that "any accord signed with the Nguyen Van Thieu administration on prospecting and exploitation of natural resources in South Vietnam, oil included, is nul and void. Now . . . the PRG has decided to undertake exploration and exploitation of oil in South Vietnam. The foreign governments and oil companies that want to take part, including companies that had previously engaged in such activities in South Vietnam, will be well received by the PRG." (PRG Information Bulletin, September 1, 1975.) Nevertheless, the welcome will be extended only if the new accords are under the control of the PRG and are beneficial to Vietnam.

It is nonetheless true that the half-measures proved insufficient. Radio Saigon continued to denounce the action of the "compradors" and of speculators who provoked price instability on the market. Important mistakes were made. In September the revolutionary regime ordered a sharp increase in rice prices in an attempt to satisfy peasant demands. This provoked violent discontent in Saigon, and on October 6 the regime had to make a public self-criticism and return to the old price scales. The existence of two currencies (the northern dong and the southern piaster) created monetary difficulties and nervousness about the future value of the piaster, which fostered speculation. A five-year plan was worked out in the North and is supposed to take effect this year. But the plan also concerns the South and requires a unified government if it is to be applied.

"Today," declared the DRV radio, "the quicker national reunification is achieved, the sooner it will create conditions for the South Vietnam market to stamp out the vestiges of a decayed and moribund economy. Unification of the country will also create favorable conditions for the northern and southern markets to exchange goods produced in the two zones, supplement each other, and create a prosperous and steady market." (Nayan Chanda, Far Eastern Economic Review, December 5, 1975.) And the PRG radio repeatedly refers to the errors and difficulties that have piled up because of the lack of proper planning, which can be worked out only with the North.

But the urgency of planning, and therefore of unification, flows from long-term objectives as much as from immediate problems. According to Nguyen Khac Vien, the director of Vietnamese Studies, "it may be hoped that in about fifteen years, by the 1990s, the first stage, that of mechanization, will have been completed and the country will then be able to confront the stage of automation and cybernetics, the first elements of which are already being established. In about thirty years the country should catch up with the world scientific and technical level." (Malcolm Salman, Far Eastern Economic Review, December 12, 1975.)



## What political regime?

The social and economic crisis born of the victory is impelling the South to make a forced march along the path toward socialization followed in the North after 1954. In spite of the maintenance of the private industrial sector and the delays that have been permitted in agriculture before undertaking the socialist reform, the evolution of South Vietnam today is dominated by the dynamic of permanent revolution. But the impending constitutional reunification does not concern the South alone. For its part, the North is trying to make the transition from the end of the war to large-scale socialist production in the realms of both agriculture and industry. Large-scale cooperatives have been set up; factories that were dispersed at the time of the bombing have been partially concentrated again. The province borders have been redrawn.

In itself, the governmental reunification poses no great problems. In fact, it has already been realized to a substantial extent. Truong Chinh recognized this in his report to the consultative conference: "At present, the two zones of Vietnam are reunified on several levels . . . as concerns the leadership of the revolution: The populations of the North and South have always been led by a single Marxist-Leninist party." "The task that must be carried out immediately is national reunification on the state level to make official the reunification of our people." But this "officialization" provides an occasion to pose the problem of the political and constitutional regime of united Vietnam. Here again, Truong Chinh noted the dynamic now under way: "To reunify the country formally on the state level . . . also means to unify the political and social regimes, that is, the economic structures, the relations of production, the social composition, the state organization, the constitution and the laws, the culture and the ideology." (*Nouvelles de la RDVN*, November 15, 1975.)

Unfortunately, while the reunification is purely revolutionary in the economic realm in that it accelerates the overturn of the relations of production in the South and considerably broadens the basis for planning, it is more ambivalent in the political realm. It guarantees the crushing of the forces of capitalist restoration and the triumph of the proletarian forces, but it also offers an institutional framework for the bureaucratic deformations of the revolution in South Vietnam.

The political apparatus of the bourgeoisie and imperialism was destroyed in South Vietnam at the time of the liberation. This apparatus could not resist the destruction of the puppet state and the elimination of the neocolonial alternatives to Thieu of the type defended by "Big Minh." There is no political formation that really represents the bourgeoisie (it being understood that the so-called industrialists association of the NLF does not do so). The only organized forces capable of representing the bourgeoisie indirectly would be the religious circles and above all the Catholic hierarchy. But this hierarchy seems now to have been neutralized — the PRG carefully avoided clashing with religious sentiments — while the

Hoa-Hao and Cao-Dai sects seem divided by the success of the revolution. The political power of the Workers party is attested to by the very decision it took not to repress former collaborators. The hegemony of the Vietnamese Communist party is solidly based; the whole of the Saigon workers movement has been reorganized in the "free trade unions"; the various organizations of the former "third force" have been integrated into the corresponding formations of the NLF. Finally, the infrastructure of the popular committees has been set up everywhere. The neocolonial bourgeois state has been destroyed and is being replaced by a workers state in formation. And the former soldiers of the puppet army who took to the hills to fight the new regime — estimated at 10,000 to 12,000 — cannot make any big changes in this. It is not even very likely that they will be able to resist the operations that have been launched against them.

But the relative weakness of the Vietnamese revolution could be seen in the liberation of Saigon itself. There was neither a "purely military seizure" of the city, nor a generalized uprising. The workers committees and underground trade unions occupied the factories before the final liberation, apparently on April 29, and thus prevented the destruction of the factories. According to Huynh Van Tam, leader of the trade unions, the Americans had actually worked out a plan to sabotage the industrial areas. (See *Far Eastern Economic Review*, October 10, 1975.) But while the workers organization of the CP was able to protect the apparatus of production, it was not able to do any more than that. Today it seems that most of the "people's committees" of the Saigon region are led by local cadres, people who had been underground, former prisoners, and so on. But the DRV had to send several thousand cadres to the South to aid in the establishment of the management apparatus.

In spite of the repression, the Workers party had managed to maintain the continuity of its urban action and base. The decay of the puppet regime and the shaking of American domination also occurred "on the inside," in Saigon. But primarily because of the forces brought to bear, U.S. neocolonial policy made some significant gains. With the liberation, there was no mass revolutionary upsurge resulting in the emergence of genuine soviet-type committees. Many of the people's committees arose only after April 30. Consequently, the relations between the Workers party and the masses were not overturned. These relations are characterized by a very deep popular base and a paternalist mode of leadership. The debate on the pace and manner of reunification is significant in this regard. It took place only at the summit of the party and the state. Then the decision was first presented to the consultative conference and only later to the Congress of Representatives of the Population of South Vietnam, which was held December 20-30.

This ambivalent relationship between the party and the masses first of all reflects the social weakness of the Vietnamese revolution — a peasant majority and an urbanized population with a low level of proletarianization. But the line of the party has adapted to this instead of fighting against it. More serious, the institutional



model upheld by Vietnamese communism is the model that had been transmitted to the Vietnamese CP by the Stalinized Communist International. The terms of the discussion may be posed more clearly when the draft united constitution for Vietnam is revealed. But there is a good chance that it will resemble the constitution in effect in the North, which stipulates a one-party state and a monolithic party and carefully separates the organization of the local popular committees from the National Assembly, which is elected under a "classic" form that prevents it from being a direct extension of soviet-type structures.

Finally, the same ambivalence may be seen in the international policy of the Workers party. The Workers party guards the independence of its orientation and asserts its clear differences with the Kremlin and — in a more obvious way — with Peking. It calls on the peoples of Southeast Asia to seize the "favorable moment" opened by the victory of the Indochinese revolution. It repeatedly stresses the worldwide import of the imperialist defeat of April 1975. More, the Vietnamese revolution plays an active role of revolutionary ferment in the region and especially in Thailand. But the Workers party also sees the "official" world Communist movement — Stalinist and Maoist — as the reality of the workers movement. It acts within that movement. And although it supports, against China, the Portuguese revolution, the "principle of internationalism," the Angolan MPLA, and the Polisario Front in West Sahara, it can also characterize — discretely — Indira Gandhi as a progressive. Soviet diplomacy holds sway here.

The revolutionary dynamic of the struggle of the Vietnamese people is far from exhausted; on the contrary, it remains quite deep. But it is now running up against the twofold problem of the Vietnamese CP's conception of the state — that is, the problem of socialist democracy — and internationalism. It is impossible to avoid these questions. The future evolution of the Vietnamese revolution will partially depend on the answers that are given. In turn, the very difficulties of the phase of transition to socialism underline the fact that they are of importance right now. The party leadership's reiteration of warnings against "bureaucratic attitudes" since the April victory, like the tensions that now exist between Vietnam and China, testify to this. Future articles in INPRECOR will return to this point.

Nevertheless, the continuation of the revolutionary forward push in Vietnam is assured by the reunification, the overturn of relations of production now going on in South Vietnam, and the transformations initiated in the North since the end of the American bombing. The grave disequilibrium into which world imperialism was thrown by the victorious resistance of the peoples of Indochina just at the moment when a new wave of international class struggle was taking shape, the shock wave that spread throughout the entire region in the wake of the American debacle, and the consequent process of recomposition of the revolutionary movement in Southeast Asia continue to make the Vietnamese and Indochinese revolutions an example and a stimulant. □



It is now a month and a half since the government launched an unprecedented repression against the movement of soldiers and the sectors of the workers movement supporting that movement. Last November 26 Prime Minister Jacques Chirac told the National Assembly that an investigation would be opened by the State Security Court. As of now, forty-eight people have been indicted, and ten of them are still behind bars in various prisons in the Paris area. Among those indicted are fourteen soldiers, as well as many local leaders of the CFTD (Confédération Française et Démocratique du Travail — French Democratic Confederation of Labor, the country's second-largest trade-union federation), among them Gérard Jussiaux, a leader of the CFTD in Besançon, member of the Parti Socialiste Unifié (PSU — United Socialist party), and one of the major leaders of the struggle at the Lip watch factory in 1973; among the others indicted are trade-union militants, some of whom had just been released from their military service, and militants of the far-left organizations, including Armand Creus, a member of the Central Committee of the Ligue Communiste Révolutionnaire (LCR — Revolutionary Communist League), French section of the Fourth International.



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# REGIME VS. THE SOLDIERS

by PACO ROBS

Most of the indicted militants are accused of having participated in the activities of soldiers committees or of having supported these committees; some are being detained purely because of their political affiliations. This is the case with our comrade Armand Creus. In spite of the zeal demonstrated by Judge Gallut, who is leading the investigation, in spite of the scope of the police forces that have been mobilized for several months now, and in spite of the interrogation of dozens of soldiers and civilians and the measures of intimidation that have been taken, the unanimous view of the defense lawyers is that the dossiers of the prosecution are empty. There is no justification whatever for the resort to the Security Court, whose jurisdiction is quite specialized. It was created by de Gaulle in 1963 to wage a struggle against the OAS (Secret Army Organization); the parties of the Union de la Gauche (Union of the Left, the CP-SP electoral bloc) and the trade unions have demanded its dissolution.

The accusation the government has made to justify the present repression — "engaging in the demoralization of the army" — is not supported by any serious facts. The poisonous campaign that accompanied the opening

of the investigation portrayed militants of the Portuguese SUV (Soldados Unidos Vencerão — Soldiers United Will Win), who had come to France to speak at a series of meetings in solidarity with the Portuguese revolution, as dangerous conspirators who had come to teach techniques of subversion to French soldiers. Along similar lines, the bourgeois press denounced the support extended by some West German organizations, notably our comrades of the GIM (Gruppe Internationale Marxisten — International Marxist Group), to the struggle of the French soldiers doing their military service in West Germany. But the investigation has been unable to turn up any international conspiracy to subvert the army.

## Development of the soldiers committees

The real reasons for the regime's offensive — an offensive it seems prepared to continue by trying to ever more directly take on the organizations committed to active support of the soldiers struggle, primarily the PSU and the LCR — lie elsewhere. First of all, the intent is to break the mass movement that has been developing in the army for the past two years, a movement that neither the various meager reforms of the Ministry of the Army nor the daily repression in the barracks has been able to roll back. Attaining this objective required not only moving to a higher level of repression against the soldiers, but also directly going after the sectors of the workers movement supporting the soldiers. That is what accounts for the political operation the regime plunged into by taking the risk of directly attacking the CFDT, invading the CFDT headquarters and arresting some of its leaders in provincial cities (Bordeaux, Besançon, Chaumont). The scope of the forces involved and the risks accepted by the government indicate the importance of the stakes.

Indeed, the regime is confronted by an unprecedented crisis in its military institutions. This crisis is primarily expressed by the entry of masses of soldiers into struggle. The jumping-off point for this movement came in June 1974 with the publication of the "Appeal of the 100," a manifesto publicly signed by 100 soldiers and addressed to the candidates for the presidency of the republic. This manifesto reiterated the essential demands put forward by the soldiers: free choice on date and place of induction into the army; elimination of overseas duty; halt to all forms of harassment; genuine right to leaves; pay equal to the minimum wage; the right to receive news, and the right of free expression and organization in the barracks. In spite of the immediate repression against the initial signers of the appeal, within a few months nearly 5,000 soldiers had signed the appeal. It became the struggle manifesto of the masses of draftees.

Soldiers committees then began to spring up in the barracks. Necessarily clandestine, they drew in a minority of the soldiers, but they soon won the confidence of the masses of draftees by becoming the spokesmen for their demands and by organizing their struggles. Today there are a hundred of these soldiers committees. In spite of the severe repression and the difficulties related to



the continual rotation of the ranks of draftees, most of these committees manage to produce more or less regular barracks newspapers.

## Battle for a soldiers trade-union

Barracks struggles proliferated in the wake of the issuing of the Appeal of the 100. These struggles took spectacular forms at first, with demonstrations of soldiers in Draguignan, Karlsruhe (in West Germany), Nancy, and Verdun; soldiers in uniform marched in the workers demonstrations in Paris on May 1. But there were also collective actions in the barracks themselves.

In itself the rise of this mass movement was sufficient to make the regime uneasy, especially since the concessions to certain demands (pay increases, improvement of the leave system, authorization of some of the workers press in the barracks) only boosted the combativity of the draftees.

But what provoked the offensive of the regime was its determination to block the increasingly close linkup between the soldiers movement and the workers movement before it was too late. In fact, for more than a year some of the trade-union bodies, mainly the CFDT but also the CGT (Confédération Générale du Travail — General Confederation of Labor, the largest trade-union federation, under CP hegemony), had given direct support to the struggle of the soldiers, particularly by loaning out their headquarters for soldiers meetings and by guaranteeing that the barracks newspapers would be published. Moreover, because of their consistent mass work, the soldiers committees were able to win a growing number of worker militants to support of their struggles; trade-union militants, members of the CP youth, and members of the SP youth joined the struggles of revolutionary militants, thus contributing to making the soldiers committees real united mass bodies.

The soldiers committees had placed on the agenda the holding of a national conference with the support of the workers movement in order to work out a new platform and take steps forward in the fight for a soldiers trade union. In fact, the question of the right of organization was increasingly at the center of the demands of the mass of soldiers; far from complacently wallowing in clandestine organization, the soldiers asked that they be recognized as having all their rights as workers in uniform, in the first place the right to freely organize to defend their demands.

Thus, most of the soldiers committees declared themselves in favor of a trade union of soldiers, supported by the workers trade unions. The CP, the SP, and the CGT continuously rejected this demand, even though it began to get a broader and broader response among the workers, as was indicated by the position recently taken by the CFDT in favor of such a union.

It was thus clear that the regime no longer had the choice of making real concessions to the soldiers movement, mainly on the right of organization, or brutal repression.

It opted for the second road, keeping in reserve the possibility of accompanying its present offensive with a few concessions.

## Reactions of the workers movement

Such an attack, particularly since it was aimed at the CFDT, one of the major workers trade unions, required an immediate united response of the entire workers movement. But there was nothing of the kind. On the basis of inadmissible pretexts, the CP, the SP, and the CGT rejected any united response, leaving the CFDT to take to the streets alone after the arrest of some of its leaders and the searches of its headquarters. Georges Ségué, secretary general of the CGT, marked this occasion with a statement that will surely go down in history: "We are not unconditional defenders of trade-union solidarity."

In fact, the CP, like the SP, was immediately forced to retreat in face of the regime's offensive on a field on which they had no desire to fight. They joined in the chorus denouncing antimilitarism and were mainly concerned with setting themselves off from the action of the revolutionary organizations on all fields, thus fingering these organizations as special targets for the attacks of the regime. They condemned the soldiers committees, even though a growing number of their own members had joined these committees during the recent period, counterposing "harmonization commissions" in the barracks in which delegates elected by the soldiers would sit side by side with representatives of the military hierarchy.

The regime thus had a clear field to push ahead with its offensive. This is what enabled the government to continue to bring indictments, even though the prosecution dossiers were empty, and to imprison militants who were nothing but hostages.

It is high time to halt this repression. In face of the default of most of the workers organizations, a "national committee for the release of the imprisoned soldiers and militants" has organized the response on a basis on which nonexclusive unity in action was possible from the outset: immediate release of all those arrested and a halt to the prosecutions; dissolution of the State Security Court; support to the struggle of the soldiers for their democratic rights, notably the right of organization.

The stakes for the workers movement are high. What is now up for grabs is whether the soldiers will be able to struggle, that is, their ability to assert their rights as workers in uniform, to oppose the role the regime intends to make them play, to oppose the utilization of the army against the workers. As is recalled by the crushing of the Chilean working class in September 1973, in the final analysis what is really at stake is the very possibility of the victory of socialism.

January 15, 1976



# The French CP & the Crisis of Capitalism

by JACQUES VALIER

1. The point of this brief article is not to make an exhaustive presentation of the overall positions of the French Communist party (PCF — Parti Communiste Français) on "state monopoly capitalism" and its crisis, but rather to highlight the proposals the PCF makes for bringing the crisis to an end.

2. In this regard, the PCF begins by stressing that what is being manifested today is not only a particularly serious cyclical crisis of overproduction, but also a lasting crisis of the capitalist system, a crisis of "state monopoly capitalism" that began in 1967-68 and marks the opening of what the PCF calls a long period of persistent overaccumulation.

3. Let us note, moreover, that this theme of the crisis of state monopoly capitalism, which is very extensively developed by the PCF, is in large part in contradiction to what the PCF calls the nucleus of its theory of the functioning of state monopoly capitalism: the theory of the overaccumulation-devalorization of capital.

Indeed, although we cannot deal extensively with this point here, it is important to stress that this theory begins with a falsification of the writings of Marx. Whereas Marx explained that devalorization, which he defined simply as a decline in the value of capital, could be a provisional solution to overaccumulation as a consequence of overproduction crises, the PCF lends a different meaning to the devalorization of capital, defining it as the totality of solutions to overaccumulation.

Thus, in an absurd manner, the PCF assimilates:

1) Devalorization and valorization at reduced rates (public capital or the capital of small and middle-sized enterprises) or outside national borders (exported capital);

2) Valorization at reduced rates or outside national borders and the absence of valorization.

Thus, when the PCF speaks of "devalorization" of public capital under the pretext that this capital yields a rate of profit inferior to what it could yield in view of the importance of this capital, the PCF's point is simultaneously:

- absurd, because it amounts to speaking of the valorization of capital that is not valorized; and
- doubly false, because in the first place public capital certainly is valorized. The state does not substitute itself for the law of value. Any transfer of surplus value from nationalized enterprises to monopolies involves an intensification of exploitation by the state (whether of the workers of the nationalized enterprises themselves or of the workers as a whole). Second, because in the course of this process, public capital does not suffer a fall in value (devalorization in the sense in which Marx used the term). It is true that the state fosters devalorization by taking measures that accelerate the concentration/centralization of capital. But it is out of the question to speak of devalorization of public capital when what is involved is a transference of surplus-value to the monopolies.

The consequence of the PCF's attitude is:

- to give the impression that the PCF believes that the state substitutes itself for the law of value;
- to give the impression that capitalism without crisis is possible, at least as long as the entire private sector has not been nationalized. The public financing of private production about which the PCF speaks seems to be put forward as a lasting cure for overaccumulation so long as nationalizations can continue. This logical conclusion of the pseudo theory of the PCF is contradictory to the very idea of the crisis of capitalism.

Nevertheless, beginning with the years after 1965, it appeared so clearly that the twenty years of relative prosperity that had been enjoyed by the developed capitalist countries were going to be followed by exacerbated and lasting difficulties and contradictions that the



PCF had to begin speaking of the crisis of state monopoly capitalism.

4. From the moment that the crisis is defined as a crisis of capitalism, one could expect that the solution envisaged for ending the crisis would be to raise the perspective of the destruction of the capitalist system and the bourgeois state.

Not at all! In fact, after making the affirmation — purely verbal, as we shall see — of the link between the crisis and the capitalist system itself, the PCF effects two "slides" that will take it a long way:

- As far as ending the crisis is concerned, the PCF is content to propose not the destruction of the capitalist system and the bourgeois state, but instead the elimination of the major monopolies (through nationalization) and a change in the government;

- Or, in the absence of any immediate electoral target dates, the PCF is content to try to influence the policy of the existing government in order to begin to end the crisis! In this article, we will concentrate on analyzing these two "slides."

## Nationalize the monopolies and change the government

1. The analysis presented by the PCF consists of explaining that the crisis is jointly due:

- To the policy of the monopolies, which is isolated from the overall functioning of the capitalist system and is viewed as a simple and removable wart marring the face of the capitalist system rather than as an inevitable product of the development of the system.

- To government policy, which has been placed in the service of the monopolies but which, under a different government (a "left" government), even with the same state ("democratized" but not destroyed as a bourgeois state), could be placed in the service of the workers.

It should be noted that this manner of separating the monopolies from the functioning of the capitalist system as a whole is at the heart of many of the "counter-truths" served up by the PCF. This is the case, for example, with its refusal to consider the social character of capitalist exploitation, which leads it to speak of "indirect monopolist exploitation" in regard to the exploitation of workers by the owners of small and middle-sized enterprises. The aim of this is to mask this exploitation and present these owners essentially as "victims" of monopoly plunder, just like the workers. To what lengths they go in justifying the alliance with the "antimonopolist layers"!

If the crisis is jointly due to the monopolies as such and to the government, then to end the crisis it is sufficient:

- To nationalize the major monopolies (this is the well-known "minimum threshold");

- To change the government and "democratize" the state.

This is the model of "advanced democracy," or what would result from the application of the Common Program of the left (the program of the bloc of the PCF and the Socialist party); it would, according to the PCF, establish a society in transition to socialism.

This society would be characterized by:

- A state that would not yet be a workers state but would no longer be a capitalist state; in short, a half-way house between the two;

- The end of the rule of capital. In fact, the public sector would be a socialist sector immune to the laws of capitalist valorization; in addition, this public sector would envelop and even dominate the private sector, which would consequently no longer be subjected solely to "the logic of profit" but also to the "logic of needs." In any event, it is the "logic of needs" that would be dominant in society as a whole. And that is precisely why the crisis would end.

2. Unfortunately, the truth is otherwise. "Advanced democracy," or even the complete application of the Common Program, would leave the essential levers of political and economic command in the hands of the bourgeoisie.

1) The bourgeois state would be maintained. In fact, revolutionary Marxists know:

- that the state is not neutral, that the bourgeois state apparatus is organically linked to the bourgeoisie, that it represents the "concentrated and organized social violence of a class" (Marx), and that the bourgeois state cannot be placed in the service of the working class;

- that there can be no state whose class character is ill-defined.

The transition to socialism begins only after the destruction of the bourgeois state and the establishment of a workers state. It is here — and not in a so-called gradual transformation of the bourgeois state into a workers state — that the transition really takes place. So long as the bourgeois state is not destroyed, the bourgeoisie conserves its power.

2) The reign of capital would also be maintained.

First of all, as far as the public sector is concerned, let us note two important points:

- Given the maintenance of the bourgeois state and the existence of a very large private sector, including a monopoly sector, there is no reason to believe that the public sector would be a socialist sector. Only the destruction of the bourgeois state, the establishment of a workers state, and the initiation of central planning within that context would create the conditions for the destruction of capital. In the framework of "advanced democracy," the public sector would remain subject to the law of value and the workers of the nationalized enterprises would remain subject to capitalist exploitation. In short, in the context of the maintenance of the capitalist state, nationalizations would not at all eliminate capitalist relations of production.

Under these conditions, to extol the "efficiency" of the nationalized enterprises would purely and simply amount to hailing the development of public capital, that is, the exploitation of the workers.

It is true that the PCF is accustomed to doing this, even in the context of present society (whose capitalist nature the PCF cannot deny), for the Communist party hails the merits of efficiency and productivity of Renault (which "runs faster than Citroën"), of the state electrical company, of the nationalized railroads, etc.; that is, it hails the accumulation of capital, which is



itself the bearer of relations of exploitation!!

- So long as the bourgeoisie conserves its levers of command:

- Either the bourgeoisie can oppose the extension of nationalizations, or, if it is compelled to accept them under the pressure of struggles, it still has means by which to roll them back (denationalizations) as long as these struggles do not destroy the bourgeois state and thus fall into an ebb sooner or later.

The example of Portugal, where some 60% of industry has been nationalized (that is, much more than is envisaged under "advanced democracy"), shows that so long as the bourgeoisie conserves its power and so long as the bourgeois state has not been destroyed and replaced by a workers state, a march to the rear remains possible. Isn't this asserted by the Portuguese CP itself?

- or else the bourgeoisie accepts the nationalizations, but still has ways to use them to promote its own class interests.

This is the way the nationalizations were used to reconstruct capitalism in France in 1945-47 (even though in a certain sense the nationalizations were products of workers struggles).

This utilization consists both of taking a series of measures favoring accumulation by monopolies and of developing the valorization of public capital itself.

Further, as far as the private sector is concerned, two additional remarks may be made:

a) The application of the Common Program, even its total application, would leave a private sector that would still represent 86% of production, 87% of the working population, and 55% of investments. Within the private sector itself, many important monopolies would continue to exist: Michelin, Hachette, Shell France, Peugeot, etc. In short, neither the capitalist economy nor big capital itself would disappear.

In this regard, one may note many turns made by the PCF, turns that must surely make the party's rank-and-file militants a bit seasick. In the program of the PCF, for example, twenty-five nationalizations are called for. Then, in the Common Program, the "minimum threshold" in the industrial sector was reduced to nine nationalizations and four cases of state "participation"; an ambiguous formulation envisages a possible extension of nationalizations beyond this "minimum threshold." Later, during the presidential election campaign, François Mitterrand, the candidate of the united left, explained that there was no question of going beyond the nine nationalizations (which were even reduced to eight under the pretext that in the meantime one group had been taken over by a German group) and four cases of "participation." He also declared that even these nine (or eight) nationalizations would not be enacted immediately, in any case not before they were approved by parliament. But parliament had a majority opposed to the nationalizations; hence, new elections might be necessary, and it was not certain that even then there would be a parliament favorable to nationalizations. In other words, a lot of water could run under the bridge before the nine nationalizations were enacted. At the time, the PCF stood for all this with a straight face and even approved it. In addition, during the weeks following the elections, the PCF tried to find theoretical pseu-

dojustifications to explain that the criteria that had been used in limiting the nationalizations to nine were serious and scientific. The degree of interpenetration of capital was notably mentioned!

Then came the polemic with the Socialist party. This time the PCF upped the ante on its demands for nationalizations. Where the PCF previously had explained that the minimum threshold was not a "door ajar," it now claimed that it was not a "fixed catalogue." Where it had previously explained that the limitation of nine nationalizations was the result of "scientific" criteria, it now explained that in fact it was the fruit of a compromise with the SP, which advocates class collaboration! We await the next turn!

b) The existence of the bourgeois state, of a public sector still subject to the laws of capitalist valorization, and of a large private sector (monopolist in part) renders absurd the idea that the "logic of needs" would be dominant and would even hold sway in the private sector itself. The nationalizations of banks (in any case reduced to two by Mitterrand during the election campaign) would change nothing here: The bourgeoisie would still have means of using the banks to support its own interests.

3. It follows from our remarks that "advanced democracy" (or the application of the Common Program), would not be able to solve the crisis, which is precisely a crisis of capitalism, so long as the existence of the bourgeois state and the reign of capital are maintained. Unless one believes that there can be capitalism without crisis. In any case, that would be the logical consequence of the PCF's erroneous "theory" of overaccumulation-devalorization, a theory that leads to the idea that the Common Program, by permitting the extension of nationalizations, would permit the increase of what the PCF (falsely) calls the devalorization of public capital and would thereby provide a lasting cure for overaccumulation.

The idea that the Common Program is a program for the transition to socialism cannot be accepted any more than the vision of a capitalism without crisis can be accepted. To claim to attack the "logic of profit" and to arrive at socialism while leaving the capitalist system and the bourgeois state intact is, let us say as a first approximation, contradictory. The contradiction can be resolved in one of two ways:

- Either through a violent and unprepared confrontation with the bourgeoisie, if the Stalinist and Social Democratic leaderships do not succeed in stifling the workers struggles and their advance;

- Or else through a successful preventive capitulation on the part of these leaders, who would then get the workers to accept the elimination of their demands in whole or in part. It was this policy that came through in a striking manner during the presidential election campaign: The PCF explained that with a left government it would be necessary to be able to moderate demands (for example, to accept a minimum wage of 1,200 francs a month — about US\$300 — even though just before the death of Pompidou, Georges Séguy and Edmond Maire (leaders of the CGT and CFDT, the two largest trade-union federations) had told the workers that it



was impossible to live decently on less than 1,500 francs a month) and that it would also be necessary to emphasize the increase in production and productivity (and therefore of exploitation).

The electoral defeat and the absence of new immediate electoral target dates allowed the PCF to raise its tone on demands somewhat. But, under the pretext that political conditions were not yet ripe for the application of the Common Program (which means that getting rid of the Giscard-Chirac government could not be placed on the agenda before the elections of 1978), the perspectives for ending the crisis had to be changed.

Whereas previously it had been a question of changing the government, now it would only be a question of putting some pressure on Giscard and Chirac to make them adopt a different policy. A new "slide" and an important one. For it was to give rise to the illusion that it is possible to begin to end the crisis even with the present government.

## **Influence the policy of the present government**

In examining the proposals for beginning to end the crisis made by the PCF in September 1974 (speech of Georges Marchais in Albertville) or in August 1975 (press conference of Marchais), two remarks must be made.

1) As we have seen, it is asserted that the crisis is due to the capitalist system, but the illusion is propagated that Giscard and Chirac could begin to end the crisis provided "effective" solutions were forced on them.

Well, what are these solutions? In reality, the proposals advanced by the PCF are a mixture of objectives of struggle around questions of buying power and employment and proposals, illusory in part, for a different management of the capitalist system.

For example, the PCF proposes to develop a certain number of branches of production (in the public and private sectors) and asks the government to take measures in this direction. What does this amount to if not a policy that is content to demand a different allocation of capital instead of setting the perspective of the elimination of capital?

Thus, the PCF constantly insists on the fact that wage increases allegedly not only correspond to the interests of the workers (which is obvious), but also would permit the beginning of the end of the crisis, thanks to a priming of the economy (the capitalist economy, in case the PCF has forgotten) through consumption.

In regard to this reasoning, one may say:

a) That it is scandalous, because to hail the possible establishment of better conditions for the development of the accumulation of capital, to hail for example, the increases in productivity that followed the wage increases won in May 1968 (as the PCF did), is to hail the development of the exploitation of the workers!

b) That it is false. In fact, wage increases mean an attack on profit. Hence, they can be beneficial for

the functioning of the capitalist system only if a certain number of preconditions are fulfilled. Notably, the bourgeoisie must be able to take back with one hand (through speedup, price increases, tax increases, etc.) what it has given away with the other hand. Indeed, that is what happened after May 1968, when previously unutilized production capacities were set to work again.

Obviously, it is an absolute necessity to fight for wage increases. But it is a profound error to suggest that economic activity can emerge from the crisis through wage increases (and that unemployment will thus decline). Moreover, isn't the PCF caught in a sharp contradiction when it affirms that the crisis is a crisis of overaccumulation — that is, that it is due to the fall of the rate of profit — but also claims that what is needed to end the crisis is an increase in wages, which amounts to an attack on profit?

c) That the PCF has never really believed in its own reasoning. Its insistence on declaring that it does not want to attack the great "economic equilibriums" (that is, in the final analysis, profits); its moderate declarations on wages during the presidential campaign; its refusal to advance the perspective of a generalization of struggles even when the situation permitted such a generalization (during the postal strikes of autumn 1974, for example); its manner of making the opening of negotiations an objective in itself — all this shows that the PCF is not unaware that the crisis of capitalism cannot be ended through simple wage increases extracted from the bourgeoisie.

It is true that the PCF always adds that in order to consolidate wage increases and assure their "beneficial" effects on the development of economic activity it would be necessary to win some nationalizations from Giscard (banks, Citroën, steel, etc.). This amounts to a new illusion, which consists of suggesting that even without changing the government it would be possible to impose a new "logic of development," as the PCF puts it.

2) In fact, what clearly appears in the proposals of the PCF is an attitude of total capitulation.

In reproaching the SP for proposing a government program when, according to the PCF, such a proposal is not on the agenda and in attacking the SP for not pressing for the demands of the workers and not waging struggles to win these demands, the PCF is simultaneously:

- seeking to spread illusions about its own will to do everything possible to foster the development of struggles, a will that is belied notably by the PCF's systematic refusal to unify and centralize struggles;

- openly exposing its determination not to challenge the existence of the Giscard-Chirac regime. Its polemic with the SP and its verbal "leftism" are only feeble facades for a policy that is no less class collaborationist than the SP's, for its refusal to work for the unity and independence of the working class, and for its refusal to pose right now the problem of bringing down the Giscard-Chirac regime through the development of struggles.



# DECLARATION OF THREE ANTI-ZIONIST ORGANIZATIONS IN ISRAEL

When the General Assembly of the United Nations adopted the resolution condemning Zionism as a form of racism, the Zionist authorities in Israel and their spokesmen in the imperialist world protested. They hurried to utilize their old mystifying weapon, which consists of identifying anti-Zionism with anti-Semitism. It is an old maneuver aimed at keeping the Jews in Israel united around the leadership of Zionist adventurers, united in support of the worst crimes against the Arab people of Palestine. Doing this requires maintaining the besieged-ghetto atmosphere in Israel itself. Against this propaganda, revolutionary anti-Zionists in Israel united around the position expressed in the following statement, which was issued in Jerusalem on November 23, 1975. It was signed by three organizations: the Israeli Socialist Organization (Matzpen), the Revolutionary Communist Alliance (Ma'avak), and the Revolutionary Communist League (Fourth International).

Long before the UN General Assembly resolution condemning Zionism, to be exact, eighty years before, Theodore Herzl, the author of *The Jewish State*, wrote: "We will constitute a bastion against Asia and a forward post in defense of civilization against barbarism. As a sovereign state, we will ceaselessly constitute a link and will be related to the peoples of Europe; for their part, they will guarantee our existence." And thus it is. Of all the predictions and judgments pronounced by the founder of Zionism, this is perhaps one of the few that retains its full validity and significance today. It concisely describes, in bourgeois language, the situation of Israel today. The Zionist state stands against the Arab masses (Asia, barbarism) because it is linked life and death to imperialism.

As revolutionary socialists, our rejection of Zionism is profound and basic. We have adhered to this rejection ever since we began to organize ourselves into political formations in order to advance the struggle for the socialist revolution in our region. Through their anti-Zionist position, the Jews among us represent the best of the revolutionary and democratic traditions of the Jewish masses throughout the world. Through their anti-Zionist position, the Arabs among us represent not only the aspirations of the Arab masses for national and social liberation, but also the best of the spirit and traditions of tolerance that were enjoyed by the Jews who lived among the Arab peoples in the past. Together, Jews and Arabs, we constitute a single bloc, which we put forward as an example and which we point to as the only alternative to the present situation in which Jews and Arabs pay in blood for occupation and oppression, discrimination and expulsion.

In proclaiming this, we say in fact that the resolution of the General Assembly does not concern us. For what would have happened if the General Assembly had ruled otherwise on the question of Zionism? Would we have changed our views on Zionism? Absolutely not. Especially since among both the adversaries and defenders of Zionism in the General Assembly we find representatives of governments that make exploitation and oppres-

sion, discrimination and even racism, the basis of their policies. At the same time, there is no doubt that the General Assembly resolution expresses the fact that Zionism is increasingly being laid bare and exposed and that its good old days are at an end. And it is the Zionists themselves more than anyone else who have contributed to this. Through their words and through their deeds.

We base our opposition to Zionism on the fact, among others, that Zionism implies the establishment of a Jewish state in violation of the human and national rights of the Arab people of Palestine. And it is a fact that every step taken by Zionism in this country implied the expropriation of the Palestinians' land and their expulsion from their homeland. The Zionists themselves proclaimed their intentions when they arrived in this country: "the conquest of Hebrew labor, the conquest of the land, the constitution of an entirely Jewish society." It so happened that they purely and simply denied the facts and spoke of a "land without people for a people without land."

Zionism implies discrimination by one national group against another. Zionism implies a privileged situation for Jews in Israel and throughout the whole world and simultaneously transforms the Palestinians under its power into second-class citizens. Look, for example, at the famous "law of return," which accords automatic Israeli citizenship to any Jew in the world, while the Palestinian masses are still denied the right to return to their homeland. Look, for example, at the statutes of the of the Jewish Agency, drafted in 1929 and still in effect today: "The land has been acquired as Jewish property and shall remain the inalienable property of the Jewish people and shall not be transmittable. The Agency shall encourage agricultural colonization based on Jewish labor, and in all enterprises that it carries out or encourages, it shall be a principle to employ Jewish labor." Look, for example, at the policy of confiscation of Arab lands and their transfer into Jewish hands — a policy common to all governments of Israel from the establishment of the Jewish state to today. It was not us, nor was it any other anti-Zionist, who coined the racist



term "Judaization of Galilee." It was the leaders and spokesmen of Israel that did so.

Zionism implies the acceptance of imperialist patronage and labor in the service of imperialism; in this sense, Zionism is an instrument against the Arab national movement and a policeman against the struggles of the Arab people to break the yoke of local and foreign exploitation. Let us simply recall the support and guardianship extended to the Hashemite monarchy for several decades and the war waged against Egypt in the service of Britain and France in 1956.

Zionism implies resignation to anti-Semitism, which is considered as a universal phenomenon, natural and eternal.

That is only a little, but it is enough. The more courageous and frank a Zionist is, the more he recognizes these facts openly. The more a Zionist tries to disguise himself as a liberal, a democrat, or even a socialist, the more he tries to hide and camouflage, muddle or deny these truths.

Zionism, which claimed to offer a solution to the evils plaguing the Jews, itself constitutes a genuine evil for the Jews. Capitalism, not content with striking mortal blows against the Jews, also provided them with a "solution" to the evils plaguing them that was no less tragic than their sufferings themselves. In a certain sense, one

can say that the Jews, oppressed under the boots of the lord, have themselves become a new lord oppressing another people: the Arab people of Palestine.

That is why it is not enough simply to say that Zionism created the Palestinian problem. Zionism also created a Jewish problem, a concrete danger for the Jews of Israel and for those Jews elsewhere in the world who tie their own fate to the fate of Zionism.

Our struggle against Zionism is a struggle to win the human and national rights of the Palestinian Arab people, but it is also a contribution to saving the Jews of Israel.

The Zionists, who claim to represent the Jews of the whole world, tell them: "The whole world is against us. We, on the other hand, say that the Jews, like all other peoples, are an integral part of humanity. The Zionists say that the Jews exist in spite of history, and we say that they exist through history. The Zionists sanction and perpetuate enmity between the Jews and other peoples, while we work to eliminate enmity among peoples in general and to eliminate enmity toward the Jews in particular. We are struggling against Zionism, for the integration of the Israeli-Jewish people into the Arab East. Our struggle for socialism includes the struggle for the respect of the human and national rights of both the Arabs of Palestine and the Jews of Israel. For socialism is the liberation of humanity. Of Arab humanity and of Jewish humanity. □

# AGAINST IMPERIALIST REPRESSION OF THE SAHARAN PEOPLE!

## DECLARATION OF THE UNITED SECRETARIAT OF THE FOURTH INTERNATIONAL

The Fourth International draws the attention of the international working class to the ruthless massacre of the Saharan people perpetrated by the Moroccan and Mauritanian collaborators of international imperialism since the invasion of the ex-Spanish Sahara by the troops of these two countries. The annexation of this territory by Morocco, under the pretext of a "self-determination" move made by the Moroccan-controlled reactionary Yemaq, has in fact led to a massive slaughter of Saharan youth, and of defenseless women and children, both in the territory's capital and in the desert, by the Moroccan and Mauritanian armies. The Spanish army has covered up and collaborated with this slaughter.

The Fourth International calls upon the workers and soldiers of Spain, Morocco, and all other countries to actively oppose this vicious attack on the right of self-determination of a small people. It calls for active support of the Polisario Front, the only organization trying to resist this neocolonialist massacre. It calls upon the Spanish, Moroccan, and Mauritanian soldiers to fraternize with the oppressed people of the Sahara and to turn their guns against those who ordered this inhuman slaughter, who are also their own oppressors.

DOWN WITH THE REACTIONARY ANNEXATION OF THE SAHARAN PEOPLE BY MOROCCO!  
FOR THE FULL RIGHT OF SELF-DETERMINATION OF THE SAHARAN PEOPLE!

DOWN WITH THE BLOODY BUTCHERS OF RABAT AND MADRID!

VICTORY TO THE POLISARIO FRONT!

December 22, 1975